

HILLSBOROUGH RAIL STATION SMALL AREA PLAN



Hillsborough, North Carolina

September 2010

Hillsborough Rail Station Small Area Plan Contributors

Rail Station Small Area Plan Task Force

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The Task Force is especially appreciative of all of the community members who provided their input throughout the process.

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- 2: Photo by Roland Giduz, March 18, 1964. Last scheduled passenger train to stop in Hillsborough.

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Chapter 1: Plan Development

Background

A Rail Station Task Force was formed in October 2008 to determine the best location for a Hillsborough rail station. In February 2009 they submitted a report that listed the Town-owned “Collins tract” as the best site for an Amtrak and commuter rail station that would serve Hillsborough and Orange County. The reasons for selecting this location included the ample space for a major regional station as well as parking and related facilities, the fact that it is not immediately adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods, its location between two major arterial roads, and its proximity to downtown Hillsborough.

A second Task Force, the Rail Station Small Area Plan Task Force, was formed in June 2009 with the goal of recommending appropriate land uses for the chosen property as well as supporting land uses on the greater Collins property to the south. While the selected site was referred to as the “Collins parcel” in the first Rail Station Task Force report, in this report it will be referred to as the “Hillsborough tract” or “Hillsborough parcel” so as not to be confused with the greater property, referred to in this report as the “Collins property,” that is still owned by the Collins family.

Study Area

The study area is composed of two tracts of land identified as the Hillsborough tract and the Collins property (see map on page 2). The Hillsborough tract is a twenty-acre parcel located just above the 134-acre Collins property. Two major arterial roads, S. Churton Street and U.S. 70-A East flank the site, providing easy access to important north-south and east-west routes. Orange Grove Street connects the southwestern corner of the Hillsborough tract to S. Churton Street. The railroad track runs in a straight line along the northern edge of the parcel. The only development on the site is four ball fields leased by the Hillsborough Youth Athletic Association (HYAA). The site is also within a fifteen-minute walk to downtown Hillsborough.

The Collins property is a large property in an ideal location. It is bounded by Interstate 85 to the south, the railroad corridor to the east, and the Daniel Boone shopping center and other retail uses along S. Churton Street to the west. Along the northern edge is the twenty-acre Hillsborough parcel and a 5-acre parcel owned by Lillie Partin that houses a manufactured home park. The greater Collins property is undeveloped and entirely wooded, with the exception of a Duke Power easement that runs east-west across the northern part of the property. A map of the study area is shown on page 2.

Developers have expressed interest in the Collins property for large-scale projects. In 2007 American Assets, Inc., a national real estate and development corporation, applied for a Special Use Permit for a mixed-use development that included commercial uses as well as single-family and multi-family residential uses. However, the application was withdrawn before the Special Use Permit approval process finished and, to date, the property remains undeveloped.

The Collins property could have a large impact on Hillsborough both visually and in terms of potential for commercial and residential development. The purpose of including the Collins property in the plan is to present a vision of what the Task Force and the public want to see there and to guide its development towards that goal.

Rail Station Small Area Plan Task Force Study Area



Passenger Train Interest

Two Amtrak passenger train routes travel through Hillsborough. The Carolinian travels between Charlotte and New York City twice daily. The Piedmont travels between Charlotte and Raleigh, making eight trips a day. Both routes come through the Triangle region in the morning, at midday, and in the evening, for a total of six passenger trains passing through Hillsborough per day. In 2012 Amtrak plans to add another two trains to the Piedmont route, increasing frequency and service.

Amtrak conducted a feasibility study of adding a station stop in Hillsborough in early 2007. Cost calculations were based on having only the operating costs of stopping at the station and maintaining self-service Quik-Trak kiosks. It was assumed that a station platform would be provided and maintained by the local community. The study found that a new station stop would draw approximately 2,600 passengers annually and yield a net gain of \$56,000. Although the study is dated, Amtrak has still expressed interest in providing a station stop here. Increased frequencies from the additional trains and more convenient schedules will undoubtedly increase the number of passengers boarding in Hillsborough.

In the future, Hillsborough may also be a stop for regional commuter rail lines. A North Carolina Rail Road (NCRRT) Commuter Rail Ridership & Market Study, published in May 2010, looks at the potential viability of a commuter route between Greensboro and Goldsboro, with trains running every 40 minutes during the AM and PM peak periods. The report projected that ridership would be very low in the Burlington-to-West Durham section of the corridor and suggested that the area may be better served with an expanded bus service. The report noted that in Orange County, and particularly in the Chapel Hill area, commuters already have several efficient and inexpensive transit options.

The Task Force respectfully disagrees with this evaluation based on public responses received regarding the rail station, as well as general public interest in having efficient commuter rail in Hillsborough. The Task Force hopes that the Burlington-to-West Durham section of the corridor is re-evaluated prior to establishing a commuter rail route.

Related Planned Area Improvements

The **Triangle Transit Route 420** provides bus service between Hillsborough and Chapel Hill and passes by the Hillsborough tract nine times a day. Currently fares are \$2.00 each way.

An in-town **circulator bus route** operated by Orange Public Transportation is planned to begin in 2010. The route will be fare-free and will make eight trips a day, serving most of the neighborhoods and commercial destinations in Hillsborough with thirteen stops around town. The Town has committed to fund the circulator for a 3-year period. At the end of the three years they will evaluate the service and determine if it is fiscally viable to continue providing service.

The **Churton Street Corridor Strategic Plan** (2006) was developed to improve the appearance and economic vitality of the Churton Street corridor while protecting and celebrating the diverse historic and cultural identity of the town, promoting environmental stewardship, and encouraging and supporting an active lifestyle. The recommendations from this plan may guide the development and design of the Hillsborough tract as well as the greater Collins property. Recommendations from the plan relating to the land use and design of the study area are as follows:

- Develop a small area plan for the Churton South district.
- Discuss the potential of high speed rail through Hillsborough with NCDOT’s Rail Division.
- Develop a landscaping plan for gateway areas.

- Develop pocket parks and pedestrian plazas along the corridor.
- Install crosswalks and signals at signalized intersections and at mid-block locations.
- Encourage shared parking arrangements.

The **Community Connectivity Plan** (2009) is a comprehensive plan that looks at the pedestrian and bicycle environment in Hillsborough with a holistic approach. It recommends improvements to existing sidewalks as well as the installation of new sidewalks, bike lanes, and greenways in locations that will provide greater access to community destinations and regional trail and transportation systems.

- The plan recommends a pedestrian connection from the Tuscarora neighborhood and S. Churton Street to downtown.
- The planned Cates Creek Greenway connects the Cornwallis Hills neighborhood on Old N.C. 86 to the Classical American Homes trail system on Elizabeth Brady Road. The proposed route passes along the south-eastern edge of the Collins property and crosses over Valley Forge Road. This is a connection that should be considered when the property is developed.

The **Wayfinding Signage Plan** (2009) is in the process of being implemented. The plan recommends that directional signs be installed at the S. Churton Street and Orange Grove Road intersection to direct motorists towards the site. Initially, the signs would read “HYAA Ball Fields,” but “Train Station” and “Transit” would be added to the signs as those portions of the site develop.

North Carolina Railroad Company / North Carolina Department of Transportation Rail Division Planned Improvement Projects

The North Carolina Railroad Company (NCRR) owns approximately 317 miles of continuous railroad line between Charlotte and Morehead City and is responsible for the leasing of railroad facilities, construction of railroad improvements, economic development, and corridor management. Much of their improvement projects are completed in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Rail Division. The following are several ongoing projects affecting the Hillsborough area:

- **Curve Work:** This involves realignment of curves and modifying the superelevation of certain curves or on bridges to accommodate higher speeds.
- **Double Tracking or Passing Tracks:** The addition of a siding or another track in certain congested stretches of the rail corridor allow an increased capacity of trains using the railroad.
- **Grade Separation:** Grade separations are the construction of a bridge that carries rail traffic over the road or carries road traffic over the rail. Grade separations are preferred because they create safer grade crossings, allow trains to travel faster, reduce both vehicle and train idling times at crossings, and ultimately increase the capacity of the rail corridor. NCRR and NCDOT are interested in closing the at-grade crossing on U.S. 70-A East that provides access to the manufactured home park on the Lillie Partin parcel adjacent to the Hillsborough tract. An alternate access to the Partin property would be needed as part of this at-grade closure.

The Rail Station Small Area Plan Task Force

The Rail Station Small Area Plan Task Force was appointed by the Town Board of Commissioners in June 2009 and was charged with developing a small area plan that addresses the following tasks:

- 1) Recommend a set of land uses that will complement a multi-modal (rail station/bus station, etc.) transportation hub on the Hillsborough tract;
- 2) Recommend a set of desirable land uses for the greater Collins property, and
- 3) Formulate a transportation network within the confines of the plan area boundary to support tasks one and two. A consultant may be needed to assist with this part of the project.

Timeline for Plan Completion

Month	Plan Stage
July 2009	Begin collection of necessary information including existing site data, utility data, and road networks. Preparation of base maps.
August 2009	Review of Amtrak Ridership Study and station depot plans from similar-sized station stops. Discussion of proposed street alignments for Orange Grove Street extension, density levels and parking requirements.
October 2009	Review of NCDOT American Reinvestment and Recovery Act Grant status and other possible funding sources, discussion of acreage requirements for municipal and other land uses.
September 2009	Discussion of NCDOT Rail Division's planned improvements to the rail corridor; general outline of plausible internal transportation networks and external connections.
October 2009	Obtain final list of municipal uses for Hillsborough tract; preparation of conceptual plan (s) for both the Hillsborough tract & greater Collins property.
November 2009	Formulate conceptual plan(s) for the Hillsborough tract.
December 2009	Discussion and refinement of Hillsborough tract conceptual plan(s). Begin discussion of proposed land uses and transportation network for the greater Collins property.
January 2010	Continued discussion of Collins property recommendations and refinement of conceptual plan; preparation for March public input session.
February 2010	Continued refinement of conceptual plan; preparation for March public input session.
March 2010	Public input session to evaluate final conceptual plans for both properties.
April 2010	Presentation from Craig Newton from NCDOT Rail about their Station Improvement Program. Discussion regarding comments from the public input session. Make amendments to the conceptual plans as needed.
May 2010	Update given by William Deal on the City of Lexington's Rail Station efforts. Discussion of Draft Small Area Plan Report.
June 2010	Finalization of conceptual plans and Small Area Plan Report. Report presentation to the Town Board.
July 2010	Town Board public hearing and adoption of the report.

Public Input

A public input session on the Rail Station Small Area Plan was held on Wednesday, March 31st, 2010 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Orange County Library. The conceptual plans were posted on boards for public viewing, and beginning at 5:15 p.m. the room was opened for the public to look over the plans and ask questions. At 6:00 p.m., opening comments were given by Mayor Tom Stevens and Rail Station Task Force Chair Mike Gering. A formal presentation was given by Task Force member Thomas J. Campanella that gave an overview of the conceptual site plan and land uses for both the Hillsborough tract and the Collins property, and addressed road networks, pedestrian issues, and larger site connectivity. In addition to the conceptual site plans, Thomas J. Campanella showed several conceptual perspective renderings of what the site may look like when fully built-out. Mike Gering then discussed potential funding strategies and next steps. Time was given for questions and further discussion. There were comment cards on hand at the meeting and an online comment card was also made available on the website for two weeks following the public input session.

The comment card that was distributed is shown to the right.

Thirty-three comments were submitted during the comment period. The majority of them came through the online comment card, but several were submitted at the public input session and several were emailed to staff.

At the April and May Rail Station Task Force meetings, the Task Force culled through the comments and determined where the conceptual site plans needed to be amended. The resulting conceptual site plan for the Hillsborough tract and conceptual land use plan for the Collins property incorporated these suggestions and concerns.

A list of the questions and comments made during the discussion of the public input meeting can be viewed in Appendix A. The submitted comment cards may be viewed in Appendix B.

Rail Station Small Area Plan Comment Card
HILLSBOROUGH TRACT <i>Please provide your comments on the below aspects of the site plan.</i> The proposed transportation network:
The proposed land uses:
The overall site plan:
Please list any concerns you have with this site plan:
COLLINS PROPERTY <i>Please provide your comments on the below aspects of the conceptual plan.</i> The proposed transportation network:
The proposed land uses:
Please list any concerns you have with this conceptual plan:
OTHER GENERAL COMMENTS:

Chapter 2: Opportunities and Constraints

The study area site has opportunities and constraints inherent in its location, nearby connections, and potential land uses.

Opportunities

- **Town ownership** of the selected Hillsborough tract streamlines the construction process and allows for the expansion of municipal uses to complement the rail station.
- The site is a **greenfield** with very little development that is partially cleared for the HYAA ball fields. This provides great flexibility for site design and layout.
- The site's **central location** and **proximity to downtown Hillsborough** will encourage dense development close to existing shops, restaurants, and services and will foster greater pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.
- There are opportunities for improved **street, pedestrian, and bicycle connectivity**. A multi-modal transportation hub in this location will be the keystone for connecting currently separated parts of town including downtown, S. Churton, and the Tuscarora neighborhood. Churton Street, Orange Grove Road, U.S. 70-A East, and possibly Valley Forge Road are important thoroughfares that can be connected to the site, providing great connectivity to points east and west of S. Churton Street. This site will also be near and can connect into the Riverwalk greenway and North Carolina Mountains-to-Sea trail as well as the proposed Cates Creek greenway.
- The site is **well-positioned on both existing and proposed transit routes**, including the Triangle Transit bus route 420, a proposed in-town circulator bus route, as well as the Charlotte-Raleigh Piedmont Amtrak route and the Charlotte-New York Carolinian Amtrak route. Its central location makes it a good destination for both public and private feeder systems, such as taxi services, shuttle buses, and public transit buses.
- Due to their central location and proximity to downtown, commercial areas, residential neighborhoods, and major transit routes, there is an **incentive for mixed-use development** on both the Hillsborough tract and the Collins property.
- The **HYAA ball fields** are operated by the community nonprofit Hillsborough Youth Athletic Association. The four fields on the Hillsborough tract are one of several playing locations, and approximately 50 teams with about 530 children play baseball in HYAA annually. Because it is a low-impact land use that requires little infrastructure, the ball fields are a good transitional land use, as they can share parking and other amenities with other land uses while the site development is phased in.
- The proposed **land uses** on the site are complimentary to each other and would easily accommodate shared parking.

Constraints

- Providing **access** to the site for all transportation modes may prove difficult. Major arterial roads are nearby, however connecting Orange Grove Street to U.S. 70-A East will require crossing the rail corridor; most likely by tunneling under the railroad. Currently there are no sidewalks or bike lanes along U.S. 70-A East, Orange Grove Street, or S. Churton Street. The Eno River and the rail corridor are both significant impediments to pedestrian and bicycle connectivity. The S. Churton Street bridge that crosses the Eno River is not wide enough to safely accommodate pedestrians or bicyclists.
- The **low visibility** of the potential station is an inherent constraint of the Hillsborough tract. The site sits below the grade of S. Churton Street and is somewhat concealed by existing commercial strip development and vegetation located along the east side of S. Churton Street. The

parcel is an interior parcel, bounded on all sides by commercial or residential properties. It most likely will not be visible from the major roads, and thus will need to have adequate signage on the major roadways to ensure its success.

- There is a ***lack of adjacent supportive land uses*** in the site area. Much of the existing development in this area is very low density commercial and residential development. There is a need for moderate and high density residential development to support the transit station and surrounding land uses.
- While the ***HYAA ball fields*** present an opportunity, they also can be considered a constraint. The ball fields take up potentially valuable land and are not a draw for business or commercial development. In addition, they will require a large amount of parking, mostly during off-peak hours. While this parking can be shared with other land uses, the other proposed uses most likely will not generate enough parking spaces to meet the needs of the ball fields.

Chapter 3: Considerations

As with any site development, there are certain factors to take into consideration. This section details anticipated community and municipal needs that could complement a multi-modal transportation hub, as well as future improvements along the rail corridor.

Community Needs

- Recreational Facilities: maintain existing HYAA ball fields as long as it is a viable land use, provide other recreational facilities where possible.
- Civic Building or Arts Center: may include a 300-seat auditorium, balcony, orchestra pit, administrative offices, museum, heritage center and community space.

The table below shows the estimated space required for each use:

Use	Land Area Needs (acres)	Building Area Needs (square feet)	Parking Needs (# of spaces)
Recreational Facilities / HYAA Ball Fields	3.3	—	100
Civic Building or Arts Center	0.5—1	32,000	160

Town Needs

The Hillsborough tract provides a good location to consolidate municipal services. Currently, many of the Town facilities are located in downtown Hillsborough in older buildings with limited growth capacity. This location is particularly difficult for emergency services such as the Police Department and Orange Rural Fire Department as at certain times of day it can be hard to maneuver through the congestion on S. Churton Street crossing the Eno River bridge. Ability to access outlying areas of Hillsborough would be greatly improved if located on the Hillsborough tract.

The table below shows the estimated space required for each use:

Use	Land Area Needs (acres)	Building Area Needs (square feet)	Parking Needs (# of spaces)
Rail Station	0.5—1	6,500	156
Municipal Offices/ Meeting Facility	Could share with rail station	2,500	Could share with rail station
Police Station	Could share with rail station, or if built separately: 0.5—1	11,500	51
Fire Station	2.5—4	7,000—10,000	40

Parking

It should be noted that these uses compliment each other and make shared parking a viable option. An estimated 200 on-site spaces could likely accommodate parking needs for transit uses, night meetings, ball field activities or arts events, and seasonal transit peaks. Once the uses on the site are completely built out, additional parking may be needed to meet increased demand.

Rail Corridor Improvements

At-Grade Crossing Closures

NCR and NCDOT Rail Division are encouraging the elimination of at-grade crossings. NCDOT proposes conducting a comprehensive Traffic Separation Study (TSS) within the Town planning limits and development and implementation of a plan to consolidate, improve and grade separate crossings along the SEHSR corridor as part of any station development initiative. The TSS process has been recognized as a best practice by the Federal Railroad Administration and includes a thorough public involvement process.

An area of emphasis for near term safety improvements and crossing consolidation through the TSS process shall be in West Hillsborough at the Hill Street and Bellevue Street crossings, considering the humped conditions of the Hill Street crossing. NCDOT and the Town will enter into a study agreement in the coming months to initiate the TSS.

The at-grade crossing on U.S. 70-A East that provides access to the manufactured home park on the Partin parcel is proposed for closure under NCDOT Private Crossing Safety Initiative, and another method of access will be provided to the Partin parcel. NCDOT is coordinating this closure, and alternate access proposals, with the Town.

Curve Work

NCDOT Rail Division has proposed a realignment of the rail corridor just east of the Hillsborough tract. The realignment would smooth out the curve and allow the rail corridor to accommodate higher speeds. The new alignment would most likely involve acquisition of a portion of the Partin parcel, and may affect the final road network layout on the Hillsborough tract. This curve work is expected to be complete by September 2015.

Future Commuter Rail Service

The current railroad corridor has a main track shared by freight and intercity passenger services, and in some parts of the corridor, a second shared track and an industry track. The NCR Shared Corridor Commuter Rail Capacity Study report published in October 2008 discusses the possibility for commuter rail service in the existing rail corridor. The report projects that by 2030, rail corridor usage will increase to five tracks, with two tracks being used for commuter rail service. Norfolk Southern (NS) has a long term trackage rights agreement with NCR to operate freight trains in the rail corridor. The following principles must be met for any passenger service proposal:

- NCR and NS must maintain the ability to serve existing and future freight customers 24/7 without delay.
- Safety is paramount - some grade crossings will need additional protection, elimination or grade separation.
- Single dispatcher for all passenger and freight trains.
- All passenger equipment must meet Federal Railroad Administration crashworthiness standards.

Commuter Rail Service

Commuter rail service is intended to provide transportation for commuters between suburbs and city centers, with service provided primarily in the morning and afternoon rush hours. Passenger stations are generally between two and ten miles apart. Commuter service is compatible with freight train operations and can operate on the same tracks.



Light Rail Service

Light rail service generally provides frequent service to stations spaced 1/4 to 2 miles apart. They are usually powered by overhead electric systems and, as they are not compatible with freight, intercity, or commuter rail passenger services, they must operate on separate tracks. For this reason, light rail service was not in the scope of discussion of the Rail Station Task Force.

Access

Both the Hillsborough tract and the greater Collins properties are interior parcels, bounded on all sides by commercial or residential properties. As they are undeveloped, the only interior access that currently exists is Orange Grove Street, a gravel road that dead-ends at the ball fields on the Hillsborough tract.

Possible Connections

Both properties could provide a good connection between N.C. 86/US-70A East and S. Churton Street. Currently, N.C. 86 can be accessed via U.S. 70-A East, I-85, or much farther south by Waterstone Drive. There is a possibility for several key connections across these properties. To the north, adjacent to the Hillsborough tract, the proposed Orange Grove Street Extension would connect U.S. 70-A East to S. Churton Street. To the south, an interior road network could connect with Valley Forge Road to the east and S. Churton Street to the west.

A pedestrian connection to downtown via Exchange Club Lane is key to the success of the development of the Hillsborough tract. Much of the value in selecting this tract for the rail station lies in its proximity to downtown and the ability to walk between the two areas in ten or fifteen minutes.

Issues to Consider

Connecting Orange Grove Street to U.S. 70-A East will require crossing the rail corridor, most likely by tunneling under the railroad. Improvements in this area will include closing the at-grade crossing from U.S. 70-A East to the Partin parcel and access will need to be provided for these residents. Orange Grove Street is town-maintained, and U.S. 70-A East is maintained by NCDOT.

Connecting between Valley Forge Road, which is town-maintained, and S. Churton Street will also require a grade-separated crossing across the rail corridor. In addition, it will require obtaining right-of-way through the Daniel Boone Village retail center, whose streets are all currently private.

Pedestrian access is another important consideration. Currently there are no sidewalks or bike lanes along U.S. 70-A East, S. Churton Street, or Orange Grove Street. Pedestrian accessibility to downtown is key to making the station and its surrounding land uses a transit-oriented development, and will improve general pedestrian connectivity to areas south of the Eno River.

Station and Site Management

The responsibility for management and maintenance of the station and platform will fall to the Town of Hillsborough. Amtrak will install a Quik-Trak kiosk to handle ticketing, but will not provide staffing for the station.

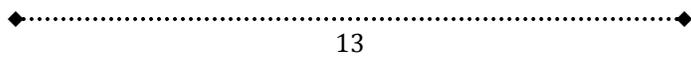
Including a police substation or other municipal use in the station building would provide a consistent official presence. Such a presence can help commuters feel more confident about leaving their vehicles parked for extended periods of time, and feel more safe about using the train in general.



Sustainable Design

Advocating for sustainable design practices in the development of both the Rail Station site and the Collins tract is important to developing these properties in a responsible manner. Sustainable design can be utilized as a means to control overall site/tract development, reduce building operational and maintenance costs, limit parking, and decrease demands on the Town's existing traffic, water, and sewer infrastructure. Sustainable design will also continue the Town of Hillsborough's stewardship for protecting the environment and most importantly, minimize the site's impact on the adjacent neighborhoods during each development phase.





HILLSBOROUGH STATION

PHASE III MASTER PLAN



APRIL 2010



HILLSBOROUGH - ORANGE COUNTY RAIL STATION TASK FORCE

DESIGNED AND DRAWN BY THOMAS J. CAMPANELLA
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL - DEPARTMENT OF CITY AND REGIONAL PLANNING

Chapter 4: Proposed Plan and Recommendations

The proposed Rail Station Small Area plan is shown on page 14. The land uses included in the final build-out are a mix of civic, commercial, and residential. The western portion of the site has primarily civic uses, with a rail station building that would also house a police substation and municipal meeting space, a fire station, arts and cultural center, and parking garage. The eastern portion includes space for retail, offices, and townhouse condominiums.

Rail Station Small Area Plan

Rail Station Building

The rail portion includes the station platform and a 20,000 square foot rail station building with space for a police substation and a community hall. A turn around area for bus service and approximately twenty parking spaces for taxi pick-up and short-term parking are located right outside the station.

Civic Uses

Other civic-oriented land uses include a new 8,000 square foot Orange Rural Fire Station and a 16,500 square foot Civic Arts Center. A multi-level parking garage is also on the Phase III build-out plan to provide between 400 and 450 long-term parking spaces for commuters as well as to meet the expected high volume of event parking from the Civic Arts Center events.

Park Areas

Boo Collins Park is a linear park on the western portion of the site that will provide green space, and also provides for a pleasing vista of the rail station building from the vantage point of the traffic circle. It is located in a low-lying boggy area of the site that could be difficult to develop.

Commercial/Residential Uses

The commercial and residential buildings on the eastern portion of the site face the street to provide a welcoming pedestrian-friendly feel. The two commercial buildings total approximately 72,000 square feet, and could include uses such as office space and ground-floor retail, including shops, cafes, and possibly even a small grocery store. A hotel was also suggested during the public input period. Parking for these uses is behind the buildings. These commercial uses are not intended to include distribution centers that would require a large amount of truck traffic. The residential portion of the site includes two blocks of between 60 and 100 townhouse condominiums, and could include several live/work units.

Transportation Network & Pedestrian Connections

The road network forms a grid pattern with a traffic circle located at the main intersection. This traffic circle allows traffic to flow freely, thus reducing congestion. It is expected that this connection will be used by motorists traveling from US 70-A East to S. Churton Street, and vice versa, thereby reducing the volume of traffic going through the S. Churton Street/US 70-A East intersection just north of the bridge over the railway.

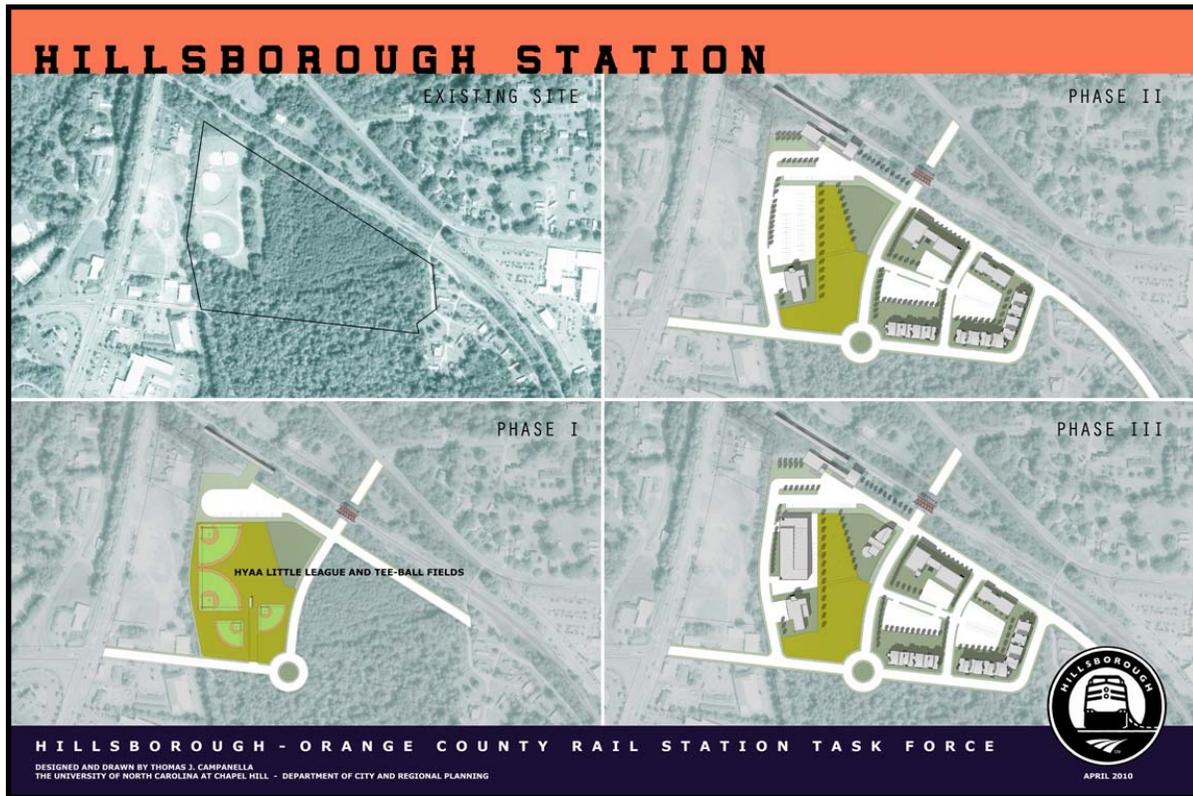
The at-grade crossing to the Partin manufactured home park is closed and access for those residents is instead provided by a grade-separated crossing that tunnels under the railroad. A sidewalk will also be installed under this bridge to provide a pedestrian connection to US 70-A East and the Tuscarora neighborhood. Sidewalks will be constructed throughout the site. In addition, a pedestrian connection will connect from the rail station, parallel the rail road tracks, crossing under Churton Street, and over to Exchange Club Lane.

Phasing

The phasing of the land uses is an important consideration, as it will take time for the site to transition from solely a recreational space to a fully developed transit hub with residential and work spaces. Much of the proposed land uses for the site, such as the Orange Rural Fire Station and the Civic Arts Center will not happen until the groups responsible for those uses find the financing to fund their project. The commercial and residential portion of the site will likely be developed by a private developer.

The conceptual plan is intended to provide a guide for future development on this parcel that will likely happen over a long period of time. It is provisional in nature, meaning it is a schematic that is intended to be descriptive, not prescriptive, representing the direction in which the Task Force would like to see the parcel develop, while not delving into the fine-level details. The specific details of the development of each portion of the site will be dealt with during the permitting process, and there will be opportunity for public comment on the details at that time.

The Town's priority is to acquire a station stop that will provide Amtrak passenger service. At the very least, this requires a platform with a canopy, a 500 square foot building, and Quik-Trak kiosks. In the beginning, the building will be a temporary modular building supplied by NCDOT Rail, which will be replaced with a permanent station building as transit use increases and funding becomes available.



Phase I

1—5 Years

Phase I is intended to provide an operating station stop for Amtrak passengers while maintaining the current use of the site and providing safe and adequate road access.

If funding opportunities do not come through in a timely manner, this phase could be implemented without the grade-separated crossing to US 70-A East. This provides an option for the Town to move forward with a rail station and access roads if finances are tight, and then construct the remaining road infrastructure when funding is available.



- The road connecting S. Churton Street to US 70-A East is constructed, including a grade-separated crossing under the railroad corridor.
- The existing at-grade crossing is closed and replaced with an access road to the Partin tract.
- A pedestrian connection to downtown Hillsborough is provided.
- The two HYAA baseball fields are left in their current position, and the two tee ball fields are moved south adjacent to the roads.
- A station platform and a 500 square foot structure is constructed, supplemented by parking and a turn-around area that can be used by public transit. The parking area will be used by both by transit users and HYAA ball field users.

By Phase II, the HYAA ball fields have been relocated to another site and increased growth in town and on the site has resulted in the expansion of the station building to a full train station, and the commercial and residential portions have been developed.

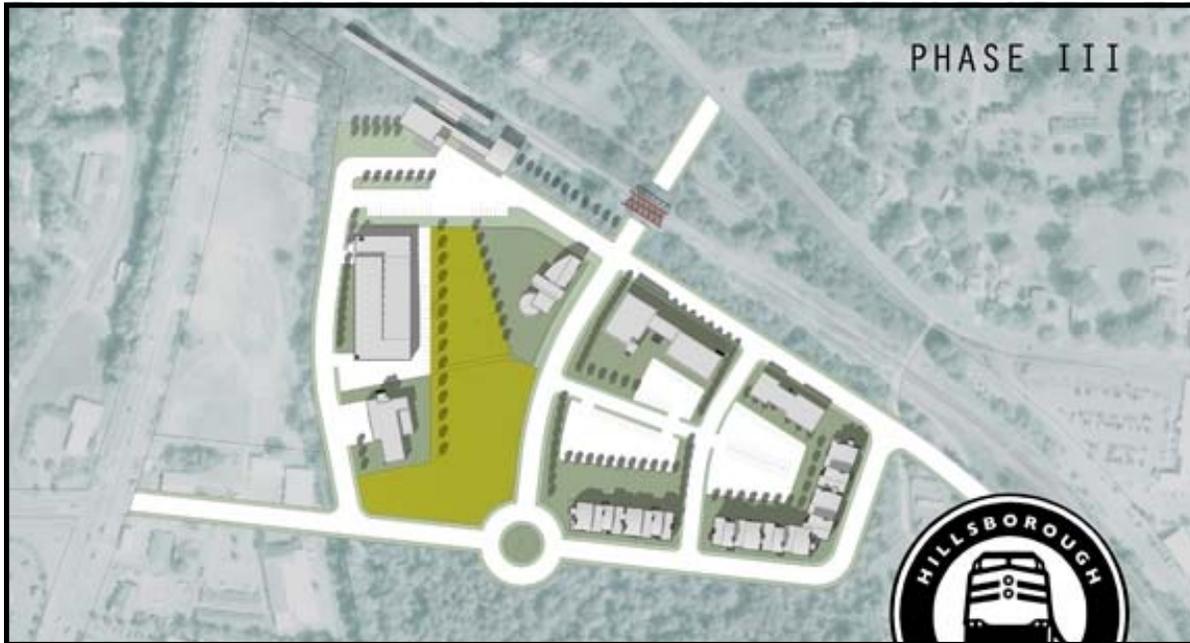


- The full road network is constructed, providing connectivity throughout the site.
- The station building is built to its full size, providing space not only for Amtrak passengers but also for a police substation and municipal meeting space.
- Boo Collins Park is constructed.
- The Orange Rural Fire Station is constructed.
- Short-term parking is provided near the station building. A long-term surface parking lot with approximately 215 spaces is provided to the south of the station.
- The commercial buildings are fully constructed, with both retail and Class A office space. Parking is provided both on-street and in surface lots behind the buildings.
- The townhouse condominiums are constructed. Approximately 125 parking spaces for residents are provided behind them.

Phase III

10—20 Years

Phase III is the full build-out scenario where the station has become a major regional commuting hub and the site is a vibrant community center.



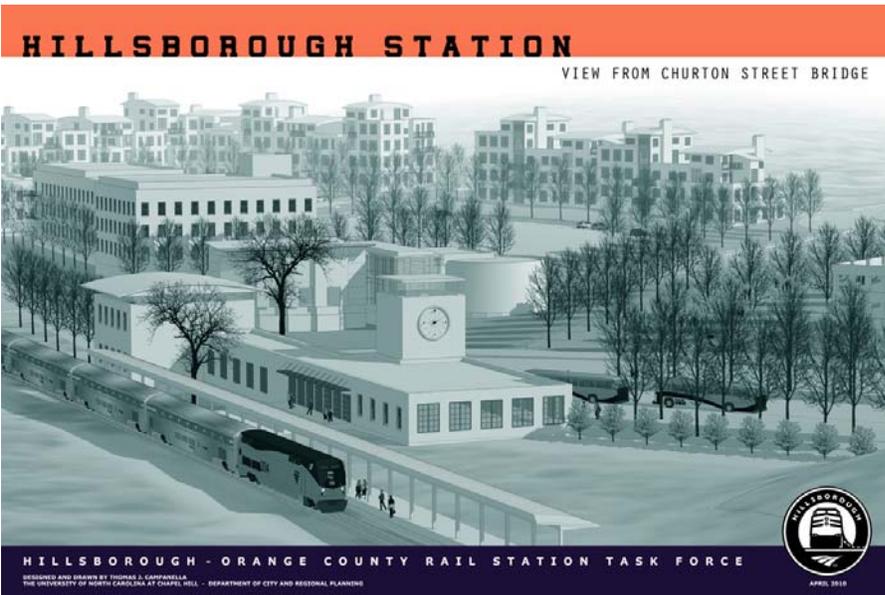
- A Civic Arts Center is constructed
- The surface parking lot has been replaced with a parking garage to accommodate increased commuter parking and event parking.

Vision

It is the Task Force’s vision that upon final build-out, the site will have visitors from all over the county, either by personal vehicle, by bus or by train. The station will be able to be accessed from Hillsborough, Chapel Hill, and Carrboro by bus, and can be used to travel to other cities within the state or to Washington, D.C., New York, or even Florida. Shops and cafes draw people to spend time on the sidewalks, or relaxing in Boo Collins Park. The Civic Arts Center holds classes and daytime events for the public, and also has gallery space and a performance hall for plays, lectures, concerts, or other special events in the evenings. Civic space in the station building allows community meetings to be held in a facility that has adequate and functional space as well as an adequate parking supply for the public. A police substation provides round-the-clock activity and security on site and gives the police greater access to neighborhoods and commercial areas south of the Eno River. The pedestrian connection to downtown allows citizens and visitors to easily travel between sites without having to drive. With residential units and office space, this site complements the strongly retail-oriented historic downtown. Thus, the site becomes more than simply a train station, but also a vibrant center with a mix of uses that will draw visitors into Hillsborough and provide potential new residents with a place to live and work.

Conceptual Perspective Renderings

In order to give a sense of what the scale and layout of this conceptual plan would feel like when fully built-out, a series of renderings were created. It should be noted that they do not represent the final design or architecture of the buildings. Public input will be solicited when the building design is brought forward in a site plan submittal.



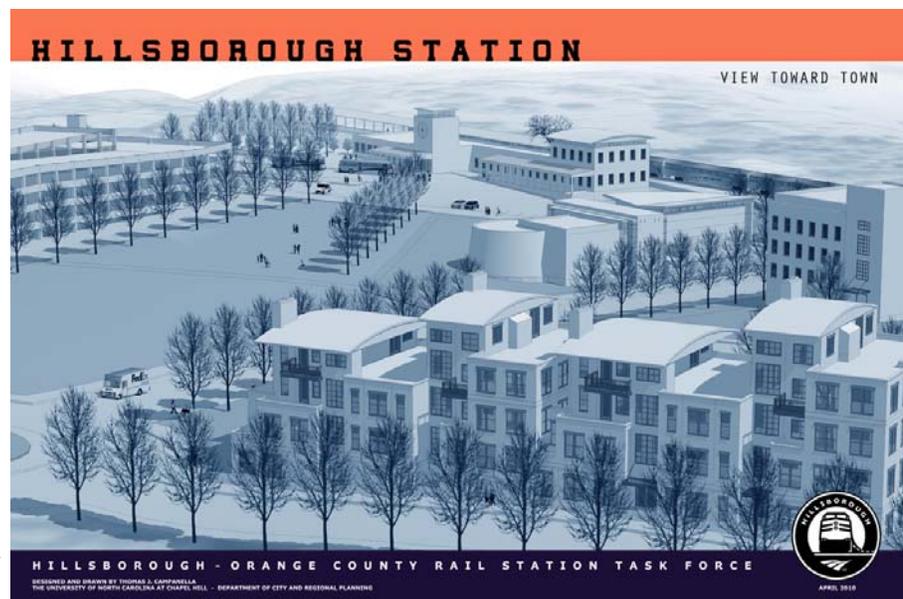
Rendering 1

This perspective is approximately the view from Churton Street looking south-east onto the site. It is angled slightly higher than the level of a pedestrian or motorist, and the land uses on surrounding parcels would somewhat obstruct this view.

The train station is in the foreground, providing access to Amtrak on one side and to the bus route (s) on the other. Immediately behind the station is Boo Collins Park and the Civic Arts Center. To the left beyond that are the office buildings, and the townhouse condominiums are in the far background. A corner of the parking deck is visible to the right.

Rendering 2

This perspective is the view from the south-east corner of the site looking north-west towards Churton Street and downtown. The townhouse condominiums are in the foreground. The office buildings and Civic Arts Center are in the middle and the station and parking deck are in the background. This perspective also gives a sense of the nice vista that will be created by Boo Collins Park, which provides a direct view of the station building from the traffic circle.



Collins Tract Conceptual Land Use Plan

The Hillsborough tract is adjacent to a large tract of undeveloped land, the Collins Tract, that has high development potential and would likely become even more valuable once the station is developed. The Rail Station Task Force was charged with the task of developing a set of land uses for this property that would be complementary to the station site, and also developing a transportation network that would support those uses.

Land Uses

The land uses on the site should be a mix of retail, commercial, and residential uses that will complement the commercial uses along S. Churton Street to the west, and the proposed high-density mixed-uses on the Hillsborough tract to the north. Multi-story buildings with a vertical mix of uses are encouraged, as is a pedestrian-friendly streetscape. A range of residential types is suggested, including condominium apartments, townhouses, and multi-family and single-family residences. Residential densities may be up to 12 units per acre, and it is recommended that some housing be allocated as affordable housing as well.

Park and Preservation Areas

There are several portions of the property that have steep slopes and streams. As these areas would be difficult to develop, they could be incorporated into a linear park that stretches north-south through part of the property. Trails within this park would provide space for recreation, and also could provide a connection from the commercial and residential areas within the property to Valley Forge Road to the south.

A dedicated pedestrian and bicycle connection along Valley Forge Road across the rail corridor could connect into the proposed Cates Creek greenway, which is planned to stretch from Waterstone, Durham Technical Community College Campus, and the proposed UNC Hospital to the south, and Occonechee Speedway, Ayr Mount, and the Classical American Homes trails to the north.

It is recommended that a cultural and historical survey of the property be completed to determine potential areas of interest.

A 100-foot wide vegetated buffer is currently required by the Zoning Ordinance along I-85. A 50-foot vegetated buffer along the rail corridor is recommended.

Transportation Network

It is recommended that a spinal road network run north-south from the Hillsborough tract, and tee into a connection that runs east-west from Valley Forge Road through the Daniel Boone shopping center to S. Churton Street to the west. Another east-west connection is recommended from within the site to Mayo Street via James J. Freeland Memorial Drive.

It is important to maintain pedestrian and bicycle connectivity throughout the site, as well as provide a connection across Valley Forge Road to the proposed Cates Creek greenway on the other side of the rail corridor.

Discussion Items

Of the public input comments submitted, several items were particularly prevalent. The Task Force discussed these items in relation to the final site layout of the Rail Station Small Area Plan. Their perspectives on these key items relating to the Hillsborough tract are elaborated upon below. The Task Force’s discussion of the Collins property is included separately as the last discussion item.

Density

Density was a concern among several of the submitted comment cards. They expressed concerns that the proposed residential and commercial portions of the site were shown at too high a density and were not in line with the character of the town.

The proposed residential units shown are at a density of 20 units per acre. As a comparison, the Historic District is zoned for approximately two units per acre, Cornwallis Hills is three units per acre, and Beckett’s Ridge is four units per acre. The Task Force determined that a higher density is necessary around the train station as this site is intended to become a destination for more than simply commuters. Development around other transit areas in the state generally have a minimum density of 20 units per acre, and are often at 35 units per acre.

Offices and residences would give the area a vibrancy throughout the day beyond the train schedule. The Task Force noted that development on this site should not attempt to mimic the historic nature of downtown, but using contemporary design principles, should be complementary to downtown. Townhouses and condominiums on this site would provide a type of housing that is lacking in Hillsborough. Additional office space would allow more people to work in Hillsborough rather than have to commute to another location. Another concern mentioned in the comment cards was a need for affordable units. A higher density reduces the cost per unit and makes the provision of affordable housing units more feasible. High density also is a source for travel; mixed-use developments need a level of density that brings a sufficient number of patrons and residents to the area for it to be successful. The Task Force expects to see a lower density mix of housing types on the Collins Property, including single-family housing.

HYAA Ball Fields

The HYAA ball fields are the only current land use on the property; and several comment cards questioned the need to move the ball fields. The Task Force considered the location of the fields very carefully. They are currently located on the most level portion of the Hillsborough tract. There was discussion of moving them to the eastern portion of the site, but the sheer cost of having to do site preparation and grading makes that proposal unfeasible. In addition, the land that the ball fields are on is very valuable for development.

The Task Force’s recommendation to move the two tee-ball fields south to make room for the rail station platform in Phase I allows the ball fields to stay for a longer period of time without incurring high site preparation costs. When it is time for that portion of the site to be developed, the Hillsborough Town Board has made it clear that, as part of their lease agreement, they will help HYAA find a new location for the ball fields.

Mixed Uses

Comment cards suggested that there be a greater mix of uses in the commercial buildings than simply office space and retail. Other suggested uses were restaurants, a small grocery store and a hotel. The Task Force agreed that these were all good potential uses. They stressed that they are

open to many types of commercial and retail uses, and don't intend to limit the possibilities with the Small Area Plan.

Parking

Some respondents were concerned that there was too much parking on the conceptual small area plan. The parking numbers used in this plan were sourced either from the current requirements in the Zoning Ordinance, or from looking at the parking provided for similar uses in other jurisdictions. As this is intended to be a high-density transit-oriented development, it will have greatly reduced parking space requirements from those in other parts of town, and there will be more flexibility about allowing parking to be shared among uses. The parking shown on this plan is designed to be built in stages as the need arises.

The Task Force did take into account comment card suggestions such as looking into off-site parking, underground parking decks, or other ways of providing parking in an unobtrusive way. The Task Force recommends that these alternatives be considered as the site is developed.

Traffic Impacts

Concerns were raised about increased traffic due to the development of this site. The Task Force agreed that traffic may increase because of people traveling to the site to catch the train or to shop, but also pointed out that the Orange Grove Road connector will alleviate some of the traffic that currently goes through the S. Churton St/US 70-A East intersection. This connector was one of the improvements cited as an alternative to the highly controversial Elizabeth Brady Road Bypass proposal that was ultimately abandoned by the Town and NCDOT in early 2010. A traffic circle would allow traffic to travel through the site smoothly while having the capacity to handle large volumes of traffic. The traffic circle in the plan was designed to be the same size as the one at the intersection of Erwin Road and NC Highway 751 in Durham, which sees approximately 13,000 trips per day.

The Task Force recommends that Orange Grove Road intersect US 70-A East across from Tuscarora Drive. This is partly due to the geography of the site; this location allows a grade-separated crossing under the rail corridor. It also will be a safer and more visible intersection than the current intersection in the middle of the curve of US 70-A East. The Task Force doesn't believe that it will significantly impact the level of traffic on Tuscarora Drive, as that street does not provide a shortcut to any popular destinations. A traffic impact study will be completed before road infrastructure is constructed, and traffic signals and other improvements will be installed where necessary.

Tuscarora Neighborhood Impacts

The Tuscarora neighborhood, located to the north of US 70-A East along the Eno River, is the first neighborhood that could be impacted by development on this site. The residents of the Tuscarora neighborhood have raised concerns that it will cause increased traffic, light, noise, and could ultimately make the neighborhood more prone to urban development.

The Task Force understands the neighborhood's concerns, and suggests that they pursue a Neighborhood Conservation District designation. Neighborhood Conservation Districts are not currently authorized under the Town's Zoning Ordinance, but are planned to be offered in the new Unified Development Ordinance, which is currently in the process of being written as of the date of this report. Often used in other jurisdictions, they can help guarantee the preservation of the unique qualities of an individual neighborhood. These districts are applied as an overlay zone and use design standards tailored to that particular area to ensure that future development is compati-

ble with the feel and aesthetic of the existing neighborhood.

Collins Property

Comment cards raised concerns about the proposed land uses being only residential uses. Many of the respondents wanted to see higher-density and more types of uses beyond residential. The need for affordable housing was also a concern. Several commented that they liked the forest buffer along I-85, and suggested more open space and recreational areas, as well as bicycle and pedestrian connections.

The Task Force agreed with many of these comments, and made more specific recommendations about the types of uses and the density of uses on the Collins property. They expanded the uses to a greater range of residential housing, and included commercial, retail, and office uses as well.

In addition, they specified a desire to see open space and park areas and stressed the importance of having pedestrian and bicycle-friendly routes throughout the site.

Additional Recommendations

The following are policy or implementation recommendations from the Task Force that will be necessary in conjunction with the development of the Hillsborough Tract.

Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance

- A zoning district for transit-oriented development.
- Parking standards, including provisions for shared parking for transit-oriented development.
- A Neighborhood Conservation overlay zoning district.

Action Items for the Town Board

- Direct staff to conduct a traffic impact study on the neighborhoods surrounding the Hillsborough tract.
- Direct staff to enter into discussions with the Tuscarora neighborhood residents about creating a Neighborhood Conservation District for their neighborhood.
- Work with the Hillsborough Youth Athletic Association to find a new location for the ball fields.
- Amend the Connectivity Plan to include the pedestrian connection from the rail station to downtown.
- Amend the Wayfinding Signage Plan to include the addition of directional signs at the intersection of US 70-A East and Orange Grove Street.
- Direct the Tourism Board and/or Visitor’s Center to identify visitor services that could be installed at the site, such as an information kiosk.
- Direct staff to work with NCDOT Rail on a Traffic Separation Study within the Hillsborough rail corridor.

Future Considerations

- Look into possibilities for off-site parking and park-and-ride agreements to reduce the amount of parking built on site.
- Request a historic resource inventory and an archaeological study of the Collins property before development occurs.
- Explore the possibility of installing a 100-foot wildlife corridor along the eastern edge of the property.
- Explore a pedestrian connection to the proposed Cates Creek Greenway.
- As with any other development in town, analyses such as a traffic impact analysis, environmental impact statement, and water capacity model will be requested when a detailed site plan is submitted.

Funding Opportunities

The NCDOT Rail Division’s Station Improvement program works closely with local jurisdictions to help them design and construct train stations.

Funding for the rail station and site improvements will likely come primarily from federal and state grants. Under the Station Improvement Program, local jurisdictions typically contribute 10% of the funding necessary, and NCDOT contributes the other 90%. Other suggested land uses, such as the Orange Rural Fire Station and the Civic Arts Center will be funded and operated by their respective organizations. It is anticipated that the development of the commercial and residential portions of the site will be constructed by a private developer. Beyond selling the land and approving and permitting the proposed development, the Town would not be involved in developing that portion of the site. The revenue from the land sale would help fund the development of the rail station and other public site improvements. Another potential funding opportunity would be to lease space in the rail station building to a third-party organization, as has been done in several other jurisdictions.

Funding Requests:

October 2009 - NCDOT Rail submitted an application for the 2010 American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) stimulus funding cycle for the Hillsborough Station in the amount of \$5.2 million dollars.

January 2010 - \$545 million in ARRA stimulus money was allocated to projects around the state; the Hillsborough station was not one of the recipients.

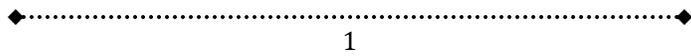
February 2010 - The Town submitted an application to Congressman David Price’s office for Congressional Appropriations funding for \$445,000 for design work. The allocation of appropriations money has yet to be announced.

If additional ARRA grant money is made available, which is expected to be released in the summer or fall of 2010, NCDOT Rail will resubmit an application for the remaining costs of the Hillsborough station.

Estimated Costs of the Station Construction

Project	Cost + Contingency
Professional Services	\$606,751.50
Design	\$364,051.90
Construction Management	\$121,350.30
Surveys, Testing, Investigation	\$80,900.20
Engineering Inspection	\$40,450.10
Sitework	\$1,012,500.00
Clearing, Site Preparation	\$675,000.00
Site Utilities, Utility Relocation	\$135,000.00
Temporary Construction Facilities	\$202,500.00
Stations	\$3,044,140.00
Station Buildings	\$1,718,640.00
Platforms	\$800,000.00
Accessways	\$310,000.00
Fare Collection Systems	\$30,000.00
Station Security	\$65,000.00
Communications & Signaling	\$600,000.00
Wayside signaling equipment	\$600,000.00
Total Capital Costs:	\$5,263,391.50

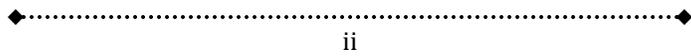
Source: NCDOT Rail Division



Appendix A - Questions Asked at the Public Input Session

Following are the questions asked at the March 31, 2010 public input session.

1. How will the Hillsborough station link up to and work with other stations?
2. If Phase II of the plan is not built out in 10 to 15 years, how will it affect passenger rail service?
3. Has the Town considered putting the rail station up as a bond issue?
4. What is the cost of just the rail station platform?
5. Will freight trains use the same line as the passenger trains?
6. What will Phase I of the project cost?
7. Will the station be a commuter-oriented or a passenger rail-oriented station? If it is a commuter station, where are the other commuter stops?
8. What funding is Orange County putting toward the project?
9. If a multi-level parking deck is to be built in the Final Phase of the project, how far out in years is it?
10. Has the Town solicited other professionals to provide alternative land use plans or conceptual plans for the area?
11. Has anyone completed a study to determine how traffic impacts will affect the nearby Tuscarora neighborhood and the character of the area?
12. Why not build the residential units first and fund the station from those proceeds?
13. Would the proposed intersection at US 70-A East and Tuscarora Avenue be signalized?
14. Is the proposed plan viable without the rail crossing connecting out to US 70-A East, closing the at-grade rail crossing to the east of the site, and providing access to the Partin property (Partin's manufactured home park) located to the east of the site?
15. Has the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill been approached about funding?
16. Will the plan impact rail crossings in West Hillsborough?
17. When will there be a meeting on funding?
18. Is private funding for the station a possibility?
19. When will the plan be submitted to the Town Board of Commissioners for adoption?
20. Who will own the land proposed for office and residential uses?
21. Developers have been present at previous Task Force meetings. Have there been any discussions with these developers regarding the plan?
22. Who would own and be responsible for the proposed arts and cultural center?



Appendix B - Submitted Comments from Public Comment Cards

Following are the comments received from the comment cards that were made available at the public information meeting held on March 31st, 2010 and were available online from April 1—16, 2010. The comments are sorted by question posed. The last section includes comments that were not specific to the questions posed. The individual comment cards are available for viewing from the Planning Department.

Comments received on the proposed transportation network on the Hillsborough tract:

- Support the rail station — but NOT the building's style. It doesn't fit the historic character of our downtown.
- I love the idea of developing a public transportation plan surrounding the train station.
- Excellent thinking behind creating a multi modal network for our area.
- I like the location and the ease of access to Chapel Hill and other areas in the county. I worry that it's a long walk into town and wouldn't spark as much tourism as it could, but it's probably the best option.
- I welcome the Railway Station and encourage support of future light rail. We think that our community will benefit greatly from this project. Thanks to all who have worked to make this transportation opportunity viable! I understand the factors making a need for an exit from Orange Grove Rd to US 70 at Tuscarora, and if there can be a traffic light there, I have no problem at all with this plan. My real concern is that the residential side of US 70 may become commercial and look like southern Churton Street. What can be done to prevent that from happening?
- My wife and I have recently purchased a home in Hillsborough. She works at UNC Hospitals and is lucky enough to have a free bus to take her to work. I work in Greensboro, and I currently commute five days a week. I strongly support adding a train stop in Hillsborough because it would allow me to have an alternative mode of transportation to and from work. I also would like to that would use the train to get to Greensboro, Burlington, Durham, or to Raleigh if the times were convenient. Think REVENUE!
- The link to US 70 across from Tuscarora makes sense to me-- both for physical and safety/visibility reasons.
- Any kind of rail connection would be great! The architecture is not to my taste, but the general idea of mixed retail, cultural, and office space is excellent. Walkable to Durham would allow me to commute to teach at Duke--I imagine we would get a lot of Duke medical/academic/staff people moving to town as well.
- The number of passengers estimated is only 2600 annually. This seems very small considering the cost of this project and whether the individuals that reside in Hillsborough actually work or travel where the train makes stops. Have additional surveys and research been done to determine this? I for one would not take the train due to the number of stops and amount of time it actually takes to get anywhere.
- I like this plan! I had heard, in the past, that the extension of Orange Grove Road to connect with Hwy 70A/86 might eliminate the need for the existing intersection of 70A/86 with Churton St. I do not see how that can be achieved with this plan, but that is ok.
- I am very excited about how well this was done, but I have a suggestion which is for the road that parallels the railroad track to Valley Forge: there should be a green space between the road and the railroad, which would include broadleaf evergreens to subdue noise; on the residential /commercial side of that road there should be a green way including a bicycle path. Perhaps it is there and I did not see it, but at the station there should be a bus park/boarding area with a large turn radius separate from where cars, bikes, and pedestrians go.
- Excellent! Keep the thinking going and plans for connections to and from Hillsborough regionally and to/from greater distances on the drawing board.
- I like the plan. Please explicitly include the location for a taxi rank (line). It is to be expected that a number of taxis will be waiting at the train station for each incoming train. The taxi space should not be the bus parking area. Buses must come and go. The taxis may have to sit there for a while if the train is late. There should be a convenient location for them to line up and wait. I foresee that the train station will be a source of business to our taxi business. We want to encourage that by providing generous facilities for them.
- This is a grand, proposed addition to Hillsborough and the surrounding areas in Orange County and beyond. The concept considers several entities and issues that will be of benefit to current and future generations.
- I think it is a great way to get more visitors to Hillsborough and to help our tourism and our businesses.
- It would be wonderful to have a train station in Hillsborough.
- It has been demonstrated repeatedly in Europe that clustering around transportation hubs will foster development at the lowest cost to the environment

Comments received on the proposed land uses on the Hillsborough tract:

- NO on the high rise apt/condo buildings. Create cluster housing appealing to different income levels -- single family dwellings to attract people committed to our town.
- It seems well-balanced. Love it that there will be sidewalks and bike lanes connecting it to the center of town.
- Strongly encourage the inclusion of a cultural center in the plan.
- Excellent. Like its walkability from town.
- Like the cultural center!
- Rail is great, seems like plenty of parking and easily accessible from Route 70 and Churton Street. MUST provide some way to walk into town! Not sure I like the large-scale condos in the ppt presentation, as they seem out of scale to the design and to Hillsborough in general.
- We like the plan, but want to be sure the residential area does not look as if it belongs in Tucson.
- I like the idea of having an Arts Center for Hillsborough. This would help support our many local artists, writers, actors, and musicians, as well as help support our town's restaurants, galleries, and other tourist / shopping venues. There should be easy pedestrian access to downtown, if possible. I also like the idea of having a police station, cinema, and some park space there so it will be a multi-purpose destination, as well as having some residential property there so there can be activity days, nights, weekends, etc. Of course, sufficient parking is important and maybe it can be located in a section where it blends in with the natural landscape. It might be nice to have a Visitor Center annex and cafe with free wireless access.
- I'm pleased the Town is looking not only at the rail station, but also planning for the the adjacent and nearby land uses. I like the proposed mix of public and private land uses clustered together.
- Mixed use best--the mix in the plan is fine.
- Hillsborough has tried very hard to maintain a "Historic" and quaint feel. I don't think adding more parking lots is really a benefit to the town of Hillsborough. The plan seems to have a substantial amount of parking.
- Land use proposals are good. Fire station needs to get out of downtown, and police substation is a good thing to have here too. I think it's a bit optimistic to expect to sell 5 story high condominiums in a suburban setting so near to the noise of a railroad, Glad to see a large portion of the existing forest left as a buffer to I-85. To where will the existing ballfields be moved ? There is a need to have those facilities somewhere in the Hillsborough area.
- It is just marked retail, but a good idea would be a grocery store that would include items people could buy for their train trip instead of having to make something at home, and also things people could pick up for supper on their way home from the train. In addition, there needs to be a kiosk or information booth which could be staffed by RSVP volunteers the way the info booth at the airport is. It should be obvious and covered and able to be staffed in all weather. It could also sell newspapers.
- I suspect the drawings of All the housing units, were just a depiction of what might be possible. That depiction seems a bit overwhelming in size and number of units and not compatible with a Historic Hillsborough image. Don't we have a limited water supply and a cap on housing/commercial units we can develop? I suggest be careful here - there is a bigger picture that needs to be considered when it comes to housing development and where the "remaining" units will be.
- Can't the ballfield be kept somewhere on the plan? Adding a ballfield into the plan would add vitality. Also - imagine a commuter coming home at 6:00 pm and needing to pick up a loaf of bread or gallon of milk or the dry cleaning before catching the bus or driving home. A small retail facility on site or very close by is vital to making commuting a reality. Will the station have wireless? A coffeeshop and laptop amenities (wireless and tablespace and power) are essential if the business person will even think about commuting on the train. Make the train station experience a pleasant place to be in the busy life of a traveler. Also, think ahead to the tourists who stop in Hillsborough to walk the Mountains to the Sea Trail or to bike. There may need to be a small visitors center or bike rental place. There should be enough retail space to accommodate this kind of future need.
- I support and encourage all of the proposed uses.
- I fully support the mixed use development proposed. Especially the development of a community arts and cultural center, something this community is in great need of.
- Looks very good. I like the idea of having an arts center.



Comments received on the overall site plan on the Hillsborough tract:

- NOT green: we need more trees & green space. What happened to the baseball fields?
- Great deal of work here to put this conceptual plan together. I think too many folks at public hearing may have thought this design was the final design but I think it is great conceptually. Thank you, Hillsborough, for putting emphasis on this important site.
- It seems to answer to all the amenities not present at this time.
- A great combination of uses. Need lunch places though for those offices.
- very good -- I hope this gets funded! It seems like it would encourage Triangle Transit to offer more 420 buses from Hillsborough to Chapel Hill, and that's a good thing for me personally. :-)
- Wouldn't it better to try to match the architecture to the town? Something more traditionally rural? The present design looks very 1930's totalitarian railway. Why not more 19th century--which is how "historic" H'bro brands itself?
- The plan does not give enough consideration to the effects of train noise on building function. Functions like the Community Hall, the Police Substation, and the Arts & Cultural center should be located as far as possible away from the disruption of passing trains. This is not a low-noise light rail line; it is a very noisy heavy train track with heavy usage by freight trains as well as passenger. The parking lot/garage should be located as near to the train station as is possible because it will not be affected by train noise. Consideration should be given to the effects of train noise on the commercial buildings too. Might want to consider installing a heavy "noise wall" along the side of the track to confine the spread of the noise across the open landscape. Elimination of the grade crossings (1) to the existing trailer development on the east side and (2) to Piedmont Minerals would eliminate the need for trains to blow their horns when passing through this area, reducing the noise for this development area as well as for the entire eastern side of Hillsborough.
- Awesome job, guys. congratulations.
- What more could the Town Board ask for? Great job! one caveat - please see next comment re: number of housing units...
- I think it looks good.
- Good access, fine use of the site, this seems to be a significant draft that will serve us well.
- I think having a cultural center and park will greatly enhance the transportation network.
- It's important to cluster the town's population growth around transportation hubs. This is our chance to do it right. Town sprawl is to be avoided. Some of the obvious advantages will be: 1- Less infrastructure required per person (roads , water and sewer lines, electricity lines, cars). 2- Living quarters over stores and businesses in 3-story (max height) buildings. 3- Easier connectivity with your neighbors. 4- Ease of commuting to work (walk or bicycle) to station. 5- Provide low income housing to attract young and old to the site convenient to the services they need. Keep big trucks out. Businesses requiring such delivery should be elsewhere. Make it nice for strollers to shop and eat on the wide, tree shaded sidewalk
- This will be such a good boost for Hillsborough! Even if the train station is never built, the complex would be such an enrichment for our area.

Concerns with the site plan on the Hillsborough tract:

- 1) Not in keeping w/ historic character. 2) We don't need high density housing -- will alter forever the small town ambience that we treasure.
- I am concerned that the station will be impossibly burdened if it becomes the focus of commuter traffic from all Orange County.
- That it borders such an ugly strip on South Churton.
- Worried about congestion on two two-lane roads, Churton Street & Route 70. Will either or both need to be widened to accommodate additional traffic? Is that even possible on either road?
- Design that is not fake colonial is a very good idea, but I think the drawings at the public information meeting gave the wrong impression. Also the four and five storied buildings reminded me of the depressing apartment complexes in Gaithersburg, MD. Surely we can have density without appearing so institutional. If I understand correctly, and I hope I am right because this is what I've been telling our neighbors, the plan we saw was not intended to portray the final architectural plans.

- In addition, the train stop would allow students at UNC to have an alternative mode of transportation when they want to reach Washington, New York, or Charlotte. That is why it is incredibly important that the train station is linked to the 420 bus route and Orange County transit. Anyway, that is just my two cents. I hope this project will get off the ground sooner rather than later! In fact, I think a temporary station should be built until the permanent structure is ready.
- 1. Train noise effects, mentioned in Site Plan comment above. 2. Important to build adequate storm water retention to avoid flooding of existing creek draining this area to the Eno River. 4. Practicality of selling 5 story condominiums in this location. 5. How do you fund the relatively large amount of public infrastructure associated with this plan: train station, streets, traffic circle, walkways, new railroad trestle, fire station, police station, culture and arts center, Community Hall, parking lot (and eventually a parking garage), storm water retention facility, relocated ball fields.....??? This is a lot to bite off and digest for a town the size of Hillsborough.
- I cannot tell, but does it connect to the Durham Tech area via walking/biking on a trail?
- I think the new fire station would better serve the northern and southern corridors if it was located on the land which where the Orange Co Rescue Squad is/was located, i.e. right on the main drag, not hedged/potentially blocked in to this site..
- building structures are too mod and do not match the historical nature of Hillsborough. an Arts Center - I guess you have plenty of our tax money too spend on non revenue producing areas. Wow - 7 passengers a day would use this when an average of 50 per day would use the ball fields.
- What happened to the baseball fields? It would seem to me that more than 2600 people per year use the fields (as compared to projected train riders) which also provide a benefit to kids. As long as the fields are retained, everything looks fine.
- We are the landowners just north of the Hillsborough proposed area. First, we are concerned that is is not appropriate for the Rail Station Task Force to be making long term planning proposals for land that is not associated with the rail station project itself. This includes proposing roadways crossing our lands fronting US 70 A at a place other than the easement that was agreed and granted to the Town by us at the time the Town acquired the land from us.
- Tuscarora impact, more bike/ped connectivity upfront as primary transport, small affordable living space. ***Also, limited acreage, I know, but is there a way to de-emphasize the sea of parking in the middle of the townhouses and apts to the east? Always a shame to have a circle of residential facing each other around asphalt, dangerous cars. Some co-housing developments manage to put parking on OUTSIDE so the residents face pedestrian ways, community gardens, safer playground areas, park area with lots of trees and benches to the center. Makes for much more friendly, communal living with natural policing by residents.
- Perhaps widening the road and bridge on Churton Street, just north of 86 intersection, and going at least up to Weaver Street Market intersection so traffic doesn't back up any more than it already does. At a minimum, build and long right turn lane on rte 86, for vehicles waiting to turn right onto Churton to head into town, and maybe a right lane on Churton up to the bridge so people have a chance to merge into traffic.

Comments received on the Collins property conceptual plan:

- The link to Valley Forge Road makes sense to me. I suppose the road would cross under or over the existing rail line? That makes sense to me.
- Anything that connects us to Durham and the airport would be fabulous.
- Is sufficient elevation to make a future bridge over the railroad to connect with Valley Forge road on the east side of the track? Connections to the east and west (through Daniel Boone) are a good idea.
- If you connect over the tracks to Valley Forge, you need a traffic light at Valley Forge and 86 or some other way to alleviate the problem I was told about by a businessman on Valley Forge, which is having a hard time making a left turn out of there.
- I don't see that in the on-line version, but I'm not worried. I know the Town Board was very careful in considering a previous proposal for that area and will do the same with any other potential developer (s)
- NEEDED.

- Same as above: It would be wonderful to have a train station in Hillsborough.
- Wonderful land use.
- Like the idea of single family units w/ a forest track. Condos are good.
- Would like to see more high density in the housing sections.
- affordable housing
- Look great!
- I like the proposed mix of residential and commercial uses. I also like the large forest preserve, although there should be additional green space (for parks and recreation) within the proposed residential areas.
- There seem to be a large number of families that have their children in the baseball organization currently located in this location. The impact of taking away that facility would be felt it seems in the community. If the plan has to be "shovel-ready" to get funding, where will the fields be relocated and when?
- I like the overall proposal for the development of the remainder of the Collins property. The residential areas should be planned so as to retain as much of the existing forest cover as possible, not require that the site be clear-cut. Great idea to retain the block of forest as a buffer with I-85, but how preserve it ? Enhance this as a park?
- I am glad you have an interstate buffer green area.
- The site plan looks great. I would like to see a bike path (for family use) incorporated into the plan.
- putting the parking garage right on Churton st is a mistake. placing the most industrial building in front of a development that you intend to sell hi-end business and residential property in is poor city planning and an eye sore for the rest of the community. also please take into consideration that (and I may be wrong) the parking garage just down the street has never or rarely been full. so if there is no other option perhaps a plan that would allow a small garage that could be added to at a later date.
- Wanted, needed and quite possibly necessary.
- Good luck selling the retail space.
- We are all land owners of the so-called "Collins Property" as shown on your plan (Steven L. and Elizabeth W. Goode, Frank L. and Margaret L. Williams, Kathryn B. Williams). First, we are concerned that it is not appropriate for the Rail Station Task Force to be making long term planning proposals for land that is not associated with the rail station project itself. This includes proposing large forest buffers on the Greater Collins Property where it abuts Interstate 85. This proposed use excessively burdens adjacent land for the benefit of the Town and to the detriment of the surrounding land owners. Second, all the uses surrounding the Greater Collins Property are commercial and industrial, including the rail station. The Collins Tract abuts Interstate 85 and is bisected by a power transmission line easement. Under these circumstances, the proposed exclusive residential uses for the Collins Tract appear to us to be inappropriate. We believe the highest and best use of the land to commercial and industrial uses like the surrounding uses. A mixed use as you have proposed for the Town's lands where the rail station is located may be appropriate.
- Same as above: I fully support the mixed use development proposed. Especially the development of a community arts and cultural center, something this community is in great need of.
- Please include delineated, though conceptual, bike/ped connections from start, as part of or in concert with NCDOT's new "Complete Streets" initiative. Need connection to Cates Creek corridor, perhaps in Forest Reserve at south end. Understanding emergency vehicle restrictions, please make streets curvy, narrow (therefore traffic calming) following natural land contours and recognizing/protecting any possible old road beds, critical/attractive natural areas.
- Congratulations to the Town for: a) seeing the potential of this property and its importance to the Town as a sort of lynchpin and OC connector, b) being proactive and planning now for Collins instead of being reactive as we have had to be in the past, c) planning the Collins tract to support our unique rail transit opportunity instead of exclusively car-oriented developments as put forth by American Assets Corp exercise in the past, etc. Forest Preserve and protecting some remarkable older hardwoods in a larger swath instead of fragmented pieces or individuals is essential. A complete natural, cultural and historical report of this property should guide the parcel development and protect unique qualities.
- You have not studied the impact of increased traffic on Tuscarora; have you studied the impact on property values on Tuscarora and surrounding streets? Does anyone on the Task Force live on or near Tuscarora or the proposed site?

- Would like to see more commercial interwoven with housing.
- The Collins property includes (I believe) the largest, most intact, hardwood forest remaining in Hillsborough. It's a truly remarkable property and we (actually, the landowners) only get one chance to develop it in a way that takes advantage of it's valuable assets. Before detailed planning of the future development layout, the owner/developer/town should inventory the property for significant natural and cultural resources so that future development can highlight those assets rather than destroying them unknowingly.
- The traffic going through Hillsborough currently backs up every day during rush hour. How can the roads in downtown Hillsborough handle additional traffic coming out of that area and going through downtown? There is no room to "expand" the roads through the town.
- There is a large power transmission line traversing the property E-W. I don't recall seeing that on the layout, and its presence should be factored into the development plan. There is also a historic roadway running along the western boundary of the Collins property, and consideration should be given to preserving this historic feature.
- Do we have enough water for this development?
- My only concern is the parking deck on Churton Street. While I am sure many option were considered when drawing up these plans, it would be nice to have another optional location for the parking deck.
- We note that your own preliminary Task Force Report dated February 9, 2009, states at Page 11, that a decisive factor in selecting the Collins Property as the recommended site for the Rail Station is that "the site is not immediately adjacent to residential neighborhoods, thus minimizing potential conflicts related to noise and traffic." Suggesting exclusively residential uses for the Greater Collins Property appears to contradict this finding and would thus be harmful to the Rail Station site. We believe a mixed use planning for the Greater Collins Tract provides the flexibility needed for future transit oriented development. Owners: Steven L. and Elizabeth W. Goode, Frank L. and Margaret L. Williams, Kathryn B. Williams

Any other comments regarding the Rail Station Small Area Plan:

- I thank you effusively for giving so much time and thought to this forward-looking project.
- Cultural Center = yes!!!
- I applaud your efforts to incorporate a phased approach. The sooner we can have a basic functional platform the sooner we can have the trains actually stop in Hillsborough again. I also appreciate getting this on the town board agenda for this spring. The sooner we adopt a plan, the sooner we can begin seeking funds for this undertaking.
- I did not pay proper attention to your categories! Basically we are very pleased with the plan and hope construction moves quickly!
- You did a very good job providing an excellent plan that was easily viewed on my computer! I think the pedestrian connection under Churton St. to Exchange Park Lane is very important and worth fighting for. I don't think the railroad will like it though. You may have to route a pedestrian connection through or past the used car lot to Churton St. instead.
- Even if a rail station isn't built in Hillsborough, this area plan would be a great asset for Hillsborough residents, merchants, and visitors.
- I've heard it said that Hillsborough is a small town that honors its past while also looking forward to its future. This plan demonstrates that Hillsborough is actively planning its future rather than letting it happen piece meal. I'm excited by this plan. I can't wait to take the train to see a Bulls baseball game or DPAC performance in Durham. Also, for a daytrip to Raleigh. Then on to Wash. DC, or Orlando, or
- Thanks very much.
- At first I wondered about cinema, but given the Full Frame Festival in Durham, it ties in with the art center area for some similar film festival in Hillsborough. They would work well together as a destination attraction.
- I appreciate all the effort that has gone into the concept plans thus far. This is an exciting opportunity for Hillsborough. I am looking forward to the progression of this project.
- Thank you for all your hard work. Getting consensus on anything is difficult. You have come a long way and the Community can only thank you for all the volunteer time you have given!!! Bravo!!!!!!

- The Town and County will have to work hard to get other sidewalk projects started and finished in order to make Hillsborough a walkable community and really connect the station to the town.
- My greatest concern is that there seems to be much enthusiasm that may be unheard due to a skepticism that stems from past projects, distrust and a perceived (or real) lack of funding.
- Please keep in mind walkability. Would be nice to not have to drive from downtown.
- I missed the presentation. I viewed the powerpoint online but could not get a sense of what the connecting transportation options would be. Also, would the train make stops in RTP? I can see this as a great commuter option for folks living in Orange Co. but working in Durham, Wake, or Alamance Co.
- thank you, again
- I'd prefer that the RR station design replicate the original town station as close as possible. In fact, we should avoid the "Big Box" appearance in all the construction. Keep it friendly to pedestrians. Make it WALKABLE. Thanks for the chance to comment.
- Please consider looking into the Ford Foundation grant (Supporting Diverse Art Spaces Initiative) to support the development of arts spaces and affordable housing for artists. Perhaps we could either build new living spaces near the [proposed] arts center or renovate some of the older mill houses in town whenever they become available. It has been shown all over the country that after artists start moving in (because of affordable housing costs), real estate prices start going up as people start to invest in renovating older buildings, thus giving the local community an economic boost.
- I'm wondering if it might be possible to locate a small hotel at the new train station property. My family is coming into town, and, again, they're staying in Durham. It would be wonderful to have a boutique-scale place for them to stay within walking distance to downtown Hillsborough.

Other Comments Not Categorized:

- My first objection is to the process of deciding on the lay-out of the roads and buildings. Given the fact that at least two neighborhoods (the trailer park and the residents of Tuscarora, Saponi, and Winnawa Walk where I live) are impacted greatly by the positioning of the access road, it might have been a good idea to at least invite those residents to sit down and talk with you and the committee about your ideas. I was surprised that a project with such major impact didn't warrant informal town meetings to solicit thoughts from the residents. Increasing traffic, light, and noise and converting the neighborhood to a more urban area might be appealing to many people. But many of us chose to live here because we wanted the informal, quiet, old-fashioned neighborhood climate. To 'sell' this idea to us means providing assurance that traffic flow and safety will not be compromised. And a study showing minimal environmental impact on our neighborhood would also have raised support for your design. Despite the fact that there was objection to creating road access across from Tuscarora, I could see no evidence that serious consideration was given to the other options. My second objection is to the expansion of the project from railway station to 'urban center'. When I signed that original petition I assumed we were advocating for building a railway station/depot. Period. Suddenly I am confronted with drawings of multiple buildings, including multiple 5 story housing units and office space! While I can accept the fire and police stations as additions to the railroad site (I actually believe that having the police there will enhance safety), I am not in favor of turning this corner of Hillsborough into anything like an 'urban' center. We intentionally did not choose to live in Raleigh, Cary, Chapel Hill, or Durham (even though I work in the Tobacco Warehouse district and my husband works at NCSU) because we wanted a different kind of community - one with a unique and defined historic character, a vibrant arts and restaurant community coupled with a rare small town ambiance, allowing people to really know each other. Hillsborough, thus far, has avoided the urban blight and over-development that has tainted Chapel Hill and is a jewel with the potential to continue to blossom into a town like Stowe, Vt, Carmel, CA, or Stein and Rhine in Switzerland or any of the other unique and protected towns that are tourist destinations.
- For a commuter rail system to work, it must be faster, easier, and better than using a car. It also must be cost competitive with automobile use. There are several problems with the current plan in achieving this. Anyone wanting to use rail will have to navigate traffic in Hillsborough. Will the city's streets be able to handle the traffic heading to and from the station? There are improvements scheduled for S Churton St along with Orange Grove Rd. But is that really sufficient? The parking deck is also problematic, especially from a time perspective. No one wants to get off a train with a hundred other people



and then take 20 minutes to get out of a parking deck. No one wants to leave home 20 minutes earlier than what one is accustomed to just to be sure that he can get through traffic and find a parking space in time to catch the train. Has thought been given to park and ride lots outside of town? Will there be express buses directly to the station? There also has to be some co-ordination at the ends of the line. For example, if one wants to attend an event at UNC, there must be an efficient system in place to get one from the Chapel Hill station to the event and vice versa. I am also concerned about the projected usage of the system and for how it will be paid. Are there estimates about the # of people who would use the system? How can you project costs, know how big the station should be or how much parking is necessary? Has there been any consideration in getting revenue from renting commercial space in and around the station (vendors in the station, advertising, taxi cab stands). Today's world is all about speed, high speed internet, fast food, etc. We worship speed; bobsleders, lugers, speed skaters all come to mind. For the commuter, speed almost trumps everything. If this rail system cannot deliver that advantage over the automobile, it will eventually fail. A lot more thought needs to go into a site that is convenient for people to reach in a timely fashion. A lot more thought has to be put into an efficient infrastructure to move people to their ultimate commuting destination. And a lot more thought has to go into how all this will be funded. A lot more thought has to be given as to how it can meet the demands of a hurried commuter and ultimately convince that person to give up the car.

- Connecting rail/regional transportation and residential/commercial density is critically important at this site, and this conceptual and phased plan does a great job. When built out, this site should be upheld as a regional, state-of-art example of a small town transit-oriented development with "Complete Streets" and clear emphasis on walk/bike connectivity within transport network, live/work options, and a range of sizes in apt/town houses to include very small, affordable apts for individuals/small families (needed in Orange County) who could opt out of expense of car ownership with transit connections. As the only rail station in the foreseeable future for OC, we have reason/responsibility to look at how this fits into a larger, regional picture. I like the circle, bus/shuttle drop off, and road connections, but worry about possible impacts to residential Tuscarora with the connection to Tusc Drive, though reasonable b/c avoiding at-grade crossing. Can we somehow minimize car traffic into Tuscarora but provide bike and walk bridge access? Need walk/bike connectivity to downtown along 70 (work with Eurosport whose employees want to walk to lunch downtown too), along rail tracks to west and Exchange Park lane, and to commercial area in Daniel Boone, etc. Bike lockers should be added at Rail Station for commuting bikers who want to leave their bikes at the station, short or long term, like cars (great examples in the Netherlands). We want to be obvious about encouraging/giving incentives to non-vehicular traffic at this site. I clearly support well designed, compact density at transit nodes and this is argueably the most important, future transit site in the County. Makes sense to phase out ball park use overtime, site is too valuable to keep as ballfields in long term. (I support parks and ballfields, too!) Arts and cultural center sounds very exciting, we need it!

References

Churton Street Corridor Strategic Plan:

<http://ci.hillsborough.nc.us/content/churton-street-strategic-plan>

Community Connectivity Plan:

<http://ci.hillsborough.nc.us/sites/default/files/userfiles/FinalConnectivityPlan.pdf>

http://ci.hillsborough.nc.us/sites/default/files/userfiles/FinalConn_Maps.pdf

Rail Station Task Force Location Selection Report:

[http://ci.hillsborough.nc.us/sites/default/files/RSTF_PrelimReport%20\(FINAL\).pdf](http://ci.hillsborough.nc.us/sites/default/files/RSTF_PrelimReport%20(FINAL).pdf)

Triangle Transit Route 420:

http://www.triangletransit.org/uploads/bus_pdfs/bus-420-11032008.pdf

Wayfinding Signage Plan:

<http://ci.hillsborough.nc.us/content/wayfinding-signage-plan>