

Dear Mayor and Town Council,

June 17, 2003

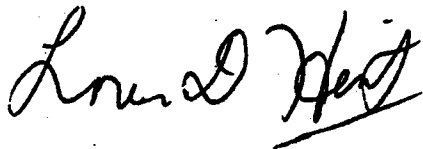
The Transportation Board would like the Town Council to act on our previous Feb. 18 petition to modify the current bicycle facilities policy. Given the busy June schedule we would hope the petition could be addressed in the first meeting in September. The proposed change would give more flexibility to Staff and Council in decisions to develop Bike Lanes and Wide Outside Lanes. The current policy created Wide Outside Lanes as the preferred policy and placed so many restrictions on Bike Lanes, that in effect, it almost prohibited Bike Lanes. Since this new policy was implemented, a number of individuals have expressed their opposition to this policy and the need for more, not fewer bike lanes in Chapel Hill. The proposed policy change would allow both wide outside lanes and bike lanes, but in general would make bike lanes the preferred option. The proposed change would not violate any existing rules governing cyclists rights to the road. The reasons bike lanes are preferred are described in the various presentations and packets Council has received.

The proposed change has been shared with other Advisory Boards. The CDC and Planning and Greenways Boards have all gone on record as supporting the change. The Bikes and Ped Board requested an informational forum before making any decision. On the specific issue of Cameron Avenue the Bikes and Ped Board did vote to reinstall striped bike lanes on Cameron Avenue. They also voted to reduce parking on the Cameron Ave. bike route. On May 20 the bike facilities informational forum was held with the Bikes and Peds and Transportation Boards. One member from both Bikes and Ped and Transportation Board presented research. Staff also arranged for an outside expert, Bill Hunter, to speak. The informational forum was not designed as a public forum but at the end of the forum some members of the audience did speak. It seems clear from the research that both bike lanes and wide outside lanes have advantages and disadvantages. In terms of overall safety, neither is superior nor inferior and many of the differences are site specific. It does appear that bike lanes are preferred by potential and current cyclists over wide outside lanes and that they do have a greater potential for increasing ridership.

We understand that before Council votes on any changes to the Bike Facilities Policy, they may desire to have a public hearing. The Transportation Board believes that it is important that the policy be considered as soon as possible so the changes can be incorporated in appropriate development and CIP projects.

Sincerely,

Loren Hintz 933-8987
Transportation Board Chair



Language of petition adopted by Transportation Board 18 February 2003

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A POLICY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF BICYCLE FACILITIES WITHIN THE TOWN

WHEREAS, it is the goal of the Town of Chapel Hill to accommodate the needs of existing bicyclists; and

WHEREAS, it is the goal of the Town of Chapel Hill to encourage greater use of bicycles as an alternative mode of transportation; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that the provision of bicycle lanes and paths will encourage greater use of bicycles by casual and new bicyclists; and

WHEREAS, the Chapel Hill 2000 Comprehensive Plan includes the objective to "develop and maintain a system of safe and efficient bikeways (on-street bike lanes and off-street paths within greenways) designed to contribute to Town-wide mobility, connecting neighborhoods with activity centers, schools, parks, and other neighborhoods"; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan recommends the Town "adopt revised roadway standards incorporating on-street bike lanes, including a commitment to install bike lanes in roadway resurfacing projects where feasible;"

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Town of Chapel Hill, that the Town Council adopts the following policy:

- **Bicycle lanes should be provided on arterial and collector streets within Chapel Hill**
- **Wide outside lanes may be used in place of bicycle lanes where deemed appropriate by Town officials**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council directs the Manager to incorporate this policy in all design guidelines used by the Town to construct or improve roadways.

This the _____ day of _____, 2003.