



Asheville on Bikes
RIDE YOUR CITY

Dec 13, 2018

Michael Sule
Executive Director, Asheville on Bikes
1 Haywood Rd
Asheville, NC 28801

Steve Cannon, P.E.
Project Development Engineer
55 Orange St.
Asheville, NC 28801

Dear Steve Cannon:

On behalf of Asheville on Bikes (AoB), a 501(c)3 advocacy organization, I submit the following public comment to you regarding NCDOT's proposed widening of Sweeten Creek Rd, [project U-2801A](#).

AoB, whose mission is to cultivate the culture of urban and commuter riding through advocacy and celebration, would like to see the following changes to the project that as it was presented during the public meeting on 11/13/2018:

- Please use the narrowest possible right of way for the planned level of service on this road. Each extra square foot of land taken harms a landowner on the corridor and lowers the future tax base of our city. We urge you to scrutinize the design through this lens: It should have the smallest footprint possible and preserve usable, taxable land.
- For the proposed multi-use path and sidewalk, we are concerned about the lack of connectivity across the roadway and the possible safety hazards that exist at intersections where the multi-use path and pedestrian traffic will be forced to cross many lanes of traffic. The ability, or lack thereof, for pedestrian and multi-use path traffic to safely cross the roadway is a key concern of our members because of the width of the new roadway, the center median design, and the likely speed of the traffic on the proposed road.

- Because the designs presented on 11/13 do not include specific intersection treatments, we cannot comment on your current plans to safely move sidewalk and multi-use path users across the travel lanes at key intersections like Rock Hill Rd, Mills Gap Rd, Royal Pines, and others. Please examine the multi-use path and intersection designs that are included in the [NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#), as a source of additional designs that fit within, and are not precluded by, the AASHTO Green Book.
- For the proposed multi-use path and sidewalk, the current design contains long stretches with no designated place to cross the roadway at a signalized intersection. One example is the section south of the Blue Ridge Parkway on approach to the Givens Estates; another is the section south of Mills Gap Rd. Please follow applicable design standards for the correct distance that a multi-use path should run, adjacent to a roadway, between each cross-roadway signalized connection opportunity. We favor increased safe crossing points, so that multi-use path and sidewalk users will not cut across the roadway in unsafe ways, whether that is at a non-signalized intersection or directly across the roadway in an area with no intersection.
- For the proposed multi-use path, please find a way to connect it to the Blue Ridge Parkway near the underpass, so that bicycle riders can access the Blue Ridge Parkway from the multi-use path and vice versa. Without a planned connection to the multi-use path, bicycle users will be tempted to create unsafe rogue connections between the Blue Ridge Parkway and the proposed multi-use path along Sweeten Creek road.
- We want the multi-use path and sidewalk to continue beneath the Blue Ridge Parkway bridge, adjacent to and protected from the roadway with a physical barrier. Please update your public documents with a copy of the cross-section that shows the multi-use path and sidewalk continuing underneath the Blue Ridge Parkway bridge using such a design. If your design were to specify an interruption in the proposed multi-use path or sidewalk at the Blue Ridge Parkway, or if the path were to be located close to the roadway but not be protected by a physical barrier in that area, we would object strongly to that portion of the design.

Asheville on Bikes stands ready to assist you in this process with additional feedback on the various multi-modal, multi-use path, and bicycle-related connections included in this project. You can reach out to me directly at any time or make a design submission via our website: <https://ashevilleonbikes.com/for-planners/request-plan-review>

Respectfully,

Mike Sule,
Executive Director
Asheville on Bikes