

Heart of the Triad: A Collaborative Plan for Economic Vitality and Quality of Life – Draft Plan Comments

On April 22, 2010 a public forum was held at the Piedmont Triad Farmer's Market. The purpose of the forum was to give the public an opportunity to view and comment on the plan. 52 persons attended the forum. Attendees were asked to locate their property on a map of the area. 35 dots were placed on the map. Most were located in the W. Market, I-40, Sandy Ridge Road area but there was coverage throughout the area. The general reactions and comments were positive. Most attendees expressed appreciation for the opportunity to review and comment on the plan. Several expressed appreciation for having a process and plan for area to give them a sense of the future. Several comments were received at the forum and after the forum from individuals who viewed the plan online. Below is a summary of those comments.

***Summary of comments received verbally by planning directors at the public input meeting**

Heard comments against the North-South road (disturbance/impact on historic farmsteads and houses; questioning the need vs. other less intrusive options), and a comment against the Airport Connector as shown on the map. Heard a comment from someone on Sandy Ridge near Market St. glad to know that area is designated commercial so he could sell his house and relocate.

***Received at the public input meeting**

1. Protect the identity of Colfax – focus on farmland preservation.
2. Update Long-Range Transportation Plans to reflect the change from the original high-density development to the improved HOT Plan's focus on conservation and protection of environmental and natural resources.

***Received via Email after the public input meeting**

HOT steering committee and planners,
thank you all for your investment in time and effort to put together an optimistic plan for growth and development for our area that includes input from its existing residents.

i would like to share the following comments and suggestions and thank you in advance for considering to incorporate them into the plan.

1) i am disappointed in the small amount of land that has been designated for public parks. i only see the existing Triad Park and no other parks planned. our country's business climate has pitted community against community to use tax incentives wars to fight over corporation headquarter locations. i know the power to change that does not lie in this plan but what this plan COULD do is to set reasonable and desirable guidelines for companies that want to do business here. other communities demand that their developers set aside a certain portion of land for parks and we should have "green" demands as well.

2) i applaud the plan recommendations for the stimulation of agriculture and agritourism. i wish that there were similar designations for education. the committee was

shortsighted in not including the public school systems in the planning portion of HOT. similar to my suggestion in point #1, i would like to see the HOT plan suggest guidelines for new businesses and developers so that they are held accountable for planning to educate the children of the residents that work for them and purchase their goods and services. we are already bursting at the seams in our schools and pre-planning for growth should be proactive in this regard and not reactive. we should make developers put aside land and/or funds for the creation of new schools. there should be also be planned accountability for businesses to do their part in supporting and mentoring kids and families at risk using programs like Head Start and mentoring and investment in after school centers and homework help centers and tutoring. we should also hold our businesses accountable for helping to attract and retain talented teachers.

3) at the other end of the demographic spectrum, i see no substantial planning for the inevitable growth of the senior citizen population and the health and living services that will drastically change with this increase. there will be a huge demand for senior community centers and alternative transportation services.

4) my final concern - which many of us have voiced repeatedly since day one - is the creation of high density hubs in the "middle of nowhere" as opposed to re-invigorating existing town centers. the high density areas planned - even the ones around the train stations along 421/market street take advantage of only one existing "town" characteristic - the rail lines. there are little to no "main street" features, stores or businesses there already - so why would we plan to create them from scratch? let's be honest, those areas are really going to attract big warehousing and manufacturing companies (the only thing they have to offer at this point is acreage!) not quaint walkable live/work areas. the existing main streets/downtowns in greensboro, high point, kernersville and winston should be the focus and the hubs connected by rail and our attention should not be diverted from reinvigorating our existing towns! we have made great strides in bringing back some vital areas of our cities and that's where most of us would like to see our tax dollars continued to be invested, not in the creation of some new "heart cities". our heart should stay green! THAT's what will attract businesses here!

***Received via Email in response to the above Email**

Very well stated. I agree on all points