

TTH 11:00-12:15PM
Location: New East 301
Office hours: by appointment

Instructor: Dr. Allie Thomas
email: alainna@email.unc.edu

PLAN 823 TRANSPORTATION PLANNING WORKSHOP

Clients: American Underground and Downtown Durham, Inc.

Deliverables: Diverse strategies to encourage less driving, to reduce demand for parking, and to support more sustainable transportation overall.

Background

Durham is booming and many new companies, particularly tech-related companies, are setting up offices in Downtown Durham. Currently, downtown Durham has over 17,000 workers. Parking is emerging as a major barrier to increased growth. The current wait list is 200 people for monthly parking. Businesses are hoarding spaces to ensure access for future employees. New parking structures will not provide relief for two years. At the same time, the Chapel Hill Street Parking Structure will be torn down.

Below is a summary of concerns from the businesses:

- (1) New businesses want to set up offices but the lack of parking is making Downtown Durham less attractive and they may seek new locations.
- (2) Established downtown businesses have voiced concern that clients cannot find parking and they are losing business.
- (3) Growing and established businesses see the lack of parking as infringing on their ability to attract talent.
- (4) In terms of reducing demand for parking, a company's understanding of alternatives to driving may be weak. Ex: Some want to get employees to take public transit, rideshare, etc. but are unsure of what steps to take or how to promote other modes (e.g. biking, walking, carpooling). Businesses that have promoted public transit through ride passes, etc. have found the process unclear and challenging. In addition, a carshare program that was to be established has fallen through.

This course will provide analysis and recommendations to support our clients' concerns about getting businesses/employees to reduce car dependence. Downtown Durham and American Underground are seeking ways to encourage less auto dependence to reduce parking demand. They want to make Durham a model for access and mobility.

Currently, the City of Durham has put out an RFP for a new study on parking; Nelson Nygaard will start work on this in September 2017. A previous study was done in 2013 (see link below).

Questions this project may need to consider:

- (1) How is parking used in downtown Durham? How does it differ by employment type?
- (2) What factors encourage auto dependence? (Business type/
- (3) What information/resources are businesses familiar with and how did they learn this? What types of information do they want/need?
- (4) What role could/should technology play (or should) and how can it be leveraged to address some of these issues? (social media, apps, ITS, etc.)

- (5) What are the physical and political barriers/challenges to more sustainable modes? (ED, review of current parking policies, site observations/urban design, meet with Dept of Transportation, Parking Manager, parking enforcement, pricing)
- (6) What are the best practices that address car dependence from a business perspective? From a peer city?
- (7) What amenities are missing in downtown Durham? [anchor businesses, activities, etc.—e.g. daycare?]

Key learning objectives:

1. Developing a work plan and meeting your clients' needs in a realistic manner.
2. Developing a task list to support larger deliverables
3. Working independently and within a group
4. Professional report writing – integrating multiple parts into one comprehensive report.
5. Professional presentation skills
6. Utilizing known and new research methods in new ways
7. Exposure to how transportation access and economic development are linked.

Key products:

1. Review of transportation demand policies from comparable cities, businesses
2. Parking analysis (pricing? Waiting to get more info on NN study)
3. Scope of work/Project organizational structure/key deadlines
4. Business transportation Survey
5. Strategies/Toolkit for business, city of Durham taking into consideration the connection between access and economic development and sustainability/ "Best practices" for businesses to support more sustainable transportation.
6. Carshare model for Durham?
7. Final Report
8. Final Presentation

Resources:

City of Durham Comprehensive Plan

<https://durhamnc.gov/346/Comprehensive-Plan>

Zoning policies (Unified Development Ordinance)

<http://durhamnc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/15445>

Downtown Durham Retail Market Analysis

http://downtowndurham.com/cms/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/city_center_retail_report.pdf

City of Durham Parking Study (2013)

http://www.durhamnc.gov/agendas_new/2013/cma20131104/9485_REPORT_DOWNTOWN_PARKING_STUDY_339436_543848.pdf

Downtown Durham Master Plan

https://www.dropbox.com/s/a9hzdv1y8a0glar/Downtown%20Durham%20Master%20plan%202017_01_15.pdf?dl=0

Downtown Durham Annual Report

https://www.dropbox.com/s/2jhyraci65vd204/DDI_2016AnnualReport_Final_WEB.pdf?dl=0

Triangle Transit employer programs

ESRI/Accessibility by walking –Downtown Durham, Inc. can provide us with this data for analysis.

Employee transportation survey (we will get a draft from Molly and we can revise and then Downtown Durham can help us distribute; this may be a small sample study.)

Parking in the news

Downtown Durham Parking Issues

<http://www.wral.com/durham-parking-meters-continue-to-irk-downtown-visitors/16649627/>

One-hour street parking limit in downtown Durham frustrates

<http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/community/durham-news/article136579333.html>

Durham removes some downtown parking meters, extends others

<http://www.heraldsun.com/news/local/counties/durham-county/article150038912.html>

Tasks (These need to be refined further):

1. Review current parking policies (Comprehensive Plan, Unified Development Ordinances, etc.) and flag possible issues/challenges.
2. Study downtown users with a focus on new businesses, tech workers.
3. Review parking policies/transportation demand management policies in other cities.
4. Identify different types of activities that may cause significant fluxuations in demand and recommend policies for addressing these specific issues (festivals, concerts, etc) [gap in the parking study]

Workshop organization—You will need to come up with deadlines as a class.

Week	Date	Course contents
1	8/22, 8/24	Overview of Course, course objectives. How to approach the project [expectations, project leads, teams, etc.)
2	8/29, 8/31	Tuesday: Select teams/project lead(s)/Organize the work and the structure Thursday: Meet w/clients

3	9/5, 9/7	Refining the scope of work/ establishing a timeline for tasks; Summaries of the current parking policies, possible best practice/case studies
4	9/12	
5	9/19	
6	9/26	
7	10/3	
8	10/10	AT in Denver for ACSP
9	10/17	
10	10/24	
11	10/31	
12	11/7	
13	11/14	
	11/21	No class 11/23/Thanksgiving
14	11/28	Report due/ Final Presentation
15	12/5	Last class/Party

Teams—

ED/Transit team

Tasks: ED/Transit intersection

- Identifying people to complete daily journals about transit use and use of downtown amenities/businesses
- ED team could make observations at existing business: stratifying by type. Then both could conduct interviews with individuals at businesses that have greater representation/diversity of customer base.
- Develop an interview guide/instrument that could capture the ED/transit interests
- Workforce interviews: understand the challenges they face around parking and competing demands on time/resources. Link this to questions about non-work activities in downtown... what prevents them from staying longer
- In the interview guide, we should try to capture any reinforcing effects of anchor businesses (so do people come to downtown because there is an anchoring firm? Or a cluster of complementary businesses? And what would trigger them to stop coming to downtown—use this to identify the vulnerable elements of the downtown retail cluster)

Honor Code

<https://studentconduct.unc.edu/faculty/honor-syllabus>