



Newsletter for the I-40 HOV/CMS Study

Second of a Three Part Series

April 2002

What's Here

- Congestion Management Strategies Show Potential 1
- 2025 HOV System Justification - Phase 1 Map 1
- 2025, 2015, 2005 Demand for HOV Maps 2
- Project Team Takes the Show About the Road... 3
- Summary of Public Comments Received 3
- Project Display Events Dates 3
- Project Contact Information 4
- I-40 HOV/CMS Study Area Map 4

Congestion Management Strategies Show Potential

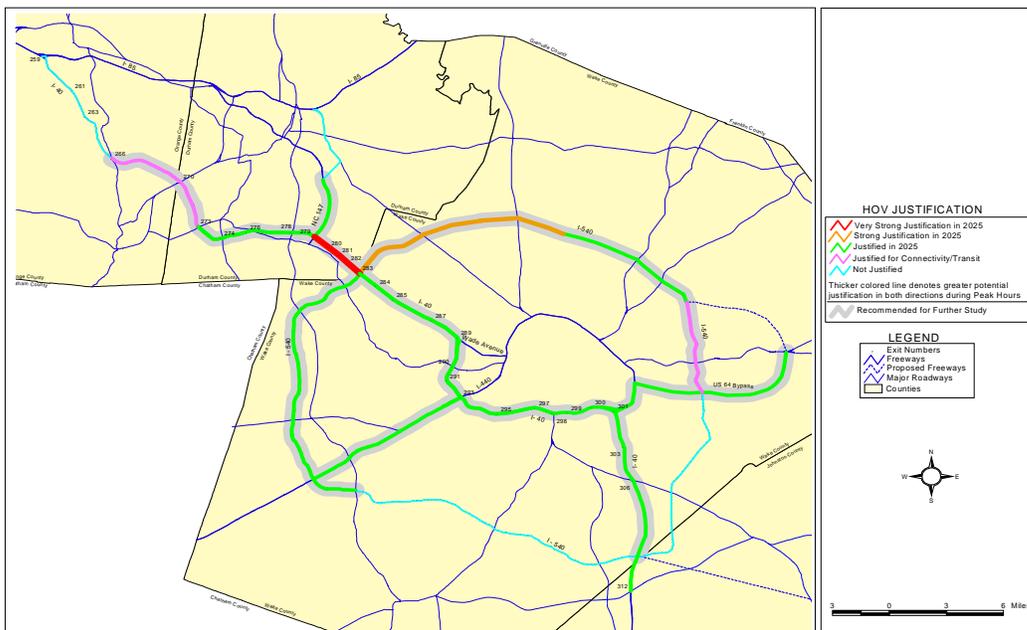
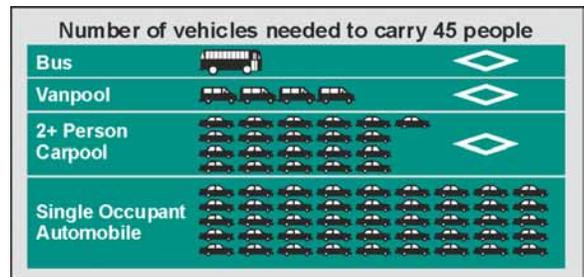
Improving mobility on I-40 by constructing HOV lanes tops Study findings

High occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes top the list of methods that prove most promising for providing I-40 travelers mobility in the coming years.

These findings are part of an ongoing Study to identify and prioritize potential congestion management strategies that would offer travelers options to driving in congestion. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is working with its regional transportation partners to develop an **I-40 Congestion Management Plan**.

The focus of the planning process is the feasibility of an HOV system in the Triangle Region by the year 2025. Preliminary findings indicated that HOV lanes could provide drivers with both significant travel timesavings and daily trip time reliability.

HOV lanes have proven to be an effective tool for managing traffic congestion. An HOV lane is a highway lane reserved for the exclusive use of carpools, vanpools, and buses. These "free-flow" lanes encourage commuters to carpool, vanpool, or take the bus by offering shorter, more consistent travel times. HOV lanes manage traffic congestion by moving more people in fewer vehicles (see chart) and by ensuring travelers a faster, more reliable trip time. These travel advantages offer drivers of single occupant vehicles an incentive to change their mode of travel. HOV lanes are a popular and effective congestion management tool in urban areas throughout the United States and Canada. There are currently more than 2,500 miles of HOV lanes in North America.



2025 HOV System Justification - Phase 1

Phase I of the I-40 Study concluded that an approximately 100-mile HOV network could be justified by the year 2025 based on travel demand projections (see map to left). This network spanned I-40 from I-85 in Orange County to NC 42 in Johnston County, as well as most of I-540 around Raleigh and portions of the Durham Freeway (NC 147) and US 1.

Phase II of the Study is analyzing a variety of congestion management options. The initial results of this analysis indicate that HOV lanes could provide I-40 commuters with travel timesavings and trip reliability as early as 2005. The section of I-40 demonstrating the highest potential demand occurs between the NC 54 interchange in Durham County and the I-40/Wade Avenue split in Wake County.



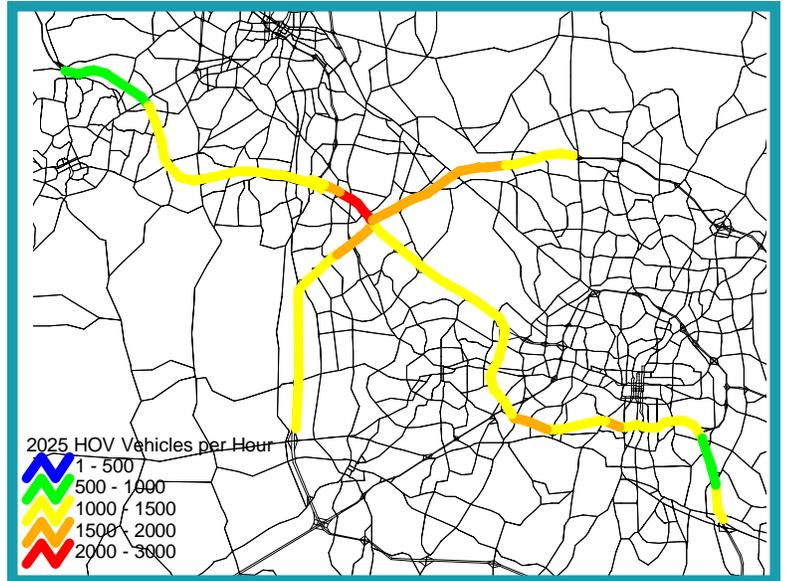
Although Phase I indicated the need for a 100-mile HOV network by 2025, the transportation partners agreed it would be unreasonable to propose a 100-mile HOV network be constructed in less than 25 years. Instead, the 100-mile HOV network will be considered the “blue print” for an ultimate Triangle Region HOV system and a shorter, more reasonable HOV network would be developed for the 2025 demand. Research indicates that HOV facilities need to attract at least 500 vehicles per hour per lane to justify construction. The maps at the right show the forecasted demand for HOV facilities in the years 2025, 2015 and 2005. The color coding indicates the number of forecasted vehicles per hour per lane.

Analysis of the 2025 projected traffic demand indicated that travelers in the Triangle Region could benefit by construction of an HOV system that includes I-40 from NC 86 to US 70 and portions of I-540 from NC 50 to US 64. This “shorter, more reasonable HOV system” would be approximately 60-miles long.

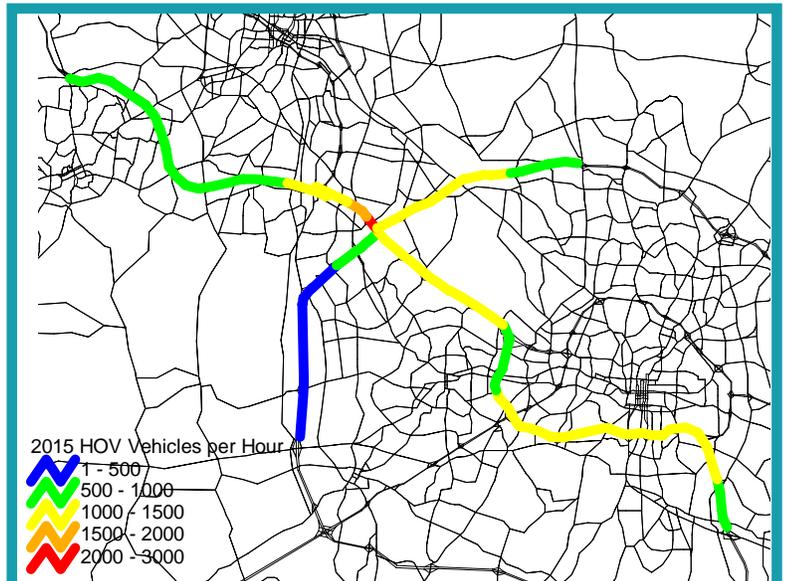
Phase II of the Study also will include an implementation plan for construction of the HOV lanes. This implementation plan will balance the need for HOV lanes with the funding available for building those lanes. The study team analyzed the interim years of 2005 and 2015 using this balanced approach and have identified the priority HOV segments. However, at this time no money is set aside for the design and construction of the 2005 or 2015 networks.

It is important to remember that the success of HOV lanes is dependent on a variety of supporting facilities and programs being in place prior to construction of the lanes. Most important among these supporting facilities is a network of park-and-ride lots and frequent, convenient transit services to serve these lots. Carpool ride match programs and incentives to encourage carpooling and transit use, which are sponsored by companies, ensure that employees who want to use HOV lanes can do so quickly and easily.

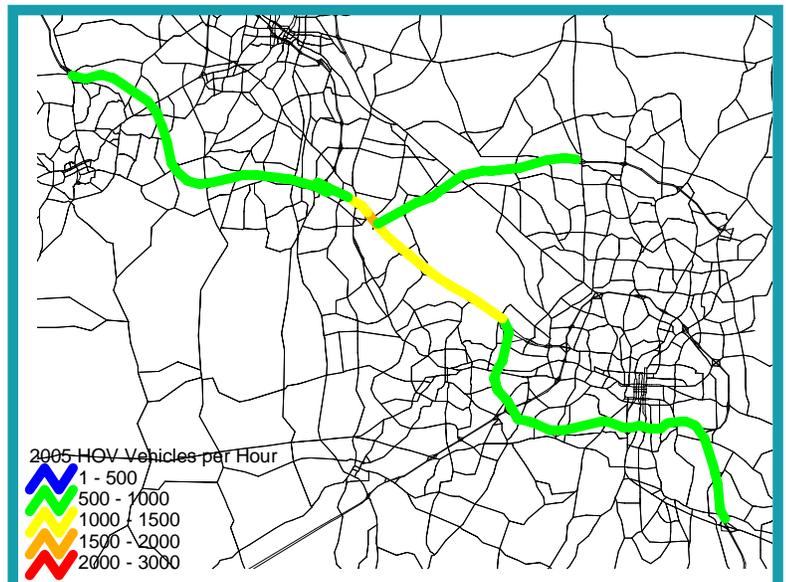
2025 Demand for HOV



2015 Demand for HOV



2005 Demand for HOV





Project Team Takes the Show about the Road – on the Road

Public Participation Update

NCDOT knows that talking with citizens one-on-one is an important part of the I-40 HOV/CMS Study. In order to ensure that your questions and concerns are considered, several types of public involvement activities are being held as a part of the Study.

A series of three open houses was held between December 10 and 12, 2001 to provide Triangle area residents an opportunity to learn more about the I-40 Study and make comments on proposed congestion management strategies. The Raleigh area open house was held in Cary on December 10 at the Herbert C. Young Community Center. The Durham area open house was held in Durham on December 11 at the Herald-Sun Newspaper Civic Room. The RTP area open house was held in RTP on December 12 at the IBM Fitness Center. Attendees were given the opportunity to discuss the project with study team representatives and to make written comments.

Opportunities for Triangle area citizens to comment on the I-40 Study and participate in the study process are also provided via the project website (I40HOV.com) and toll free hotline (866-527-7715). Comments received so far have addressed numerous issues related to HOV lanes and reducing congestion in general. Some of the issues mentioned are listed below.

- Express lanes for through traffic
- HOV lane enforcement
- Improved signs and pavement markings
- Improvements to I-40 interchanges
- Integration of HOV alternatives with the TTA rail corridor project
- Phasing-in of HOV lanes
- Increased investment in HOV and transit
- Reduction of available parking spaces at RTP
- Consideration of HOV experiences from other comparable regions
- Use of technology to better control traffic, regulate flow, and deal with and prevent crashes
- Flexible work scheduling
- Increased public transportation, including rail
- Increased publicity for alternative “local” routes to I-40
- High density, affordable housing within RTP
- More involvement by local governments in addressing congestion
- Lane use regulations for truck traffic
- Allowing single occupancy vehicles (SOVs) to pay a toll to use HOV lanes
- Converting existing lanes to HOV lanes

The study team has made several presentations to Triangle area City/Town Councils and MPO meetings. These include Raleigh City Council; Durham City Council; Cary Town Council; Chapel Hill Town Council; Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO); and Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro MPO. These presentations were made in order to receive feedback from and build consensus among Triangle area elected officials and decision-makers. Presentations are also being given to other interested organizations in the Triangle Region. For example, a presentation was made in January to the SmartCommute@RTP organization.

“Project display events” were also held at several large companies in RTP. A project display event consists of exhibiting project display boards at interested companies’ or organizations’ places of business during lunch time (or other convenient time during the day). The purpose of the project display events is to allow as many residents of and commuters to the Triangle Region as possible to see project information, ask questions, and give feedback. Project display events are available to any interested organizations, businesses, or community groups in the Triangle Region and can be scheduled by calling the toll free project hotline at 1-866-527-7715.

Public participation is a very important part of the I-40 HOV/CMS Study and NCDOT is dedicated to providing you with a variety of ways to get involved and stay informed. You can add your name to the project mailing list by calling toll free (866) 527-7715, logging on to the project website at www.I40HOV.com, or faxing your information to (919) 467-7322.

Project Display Events Dates

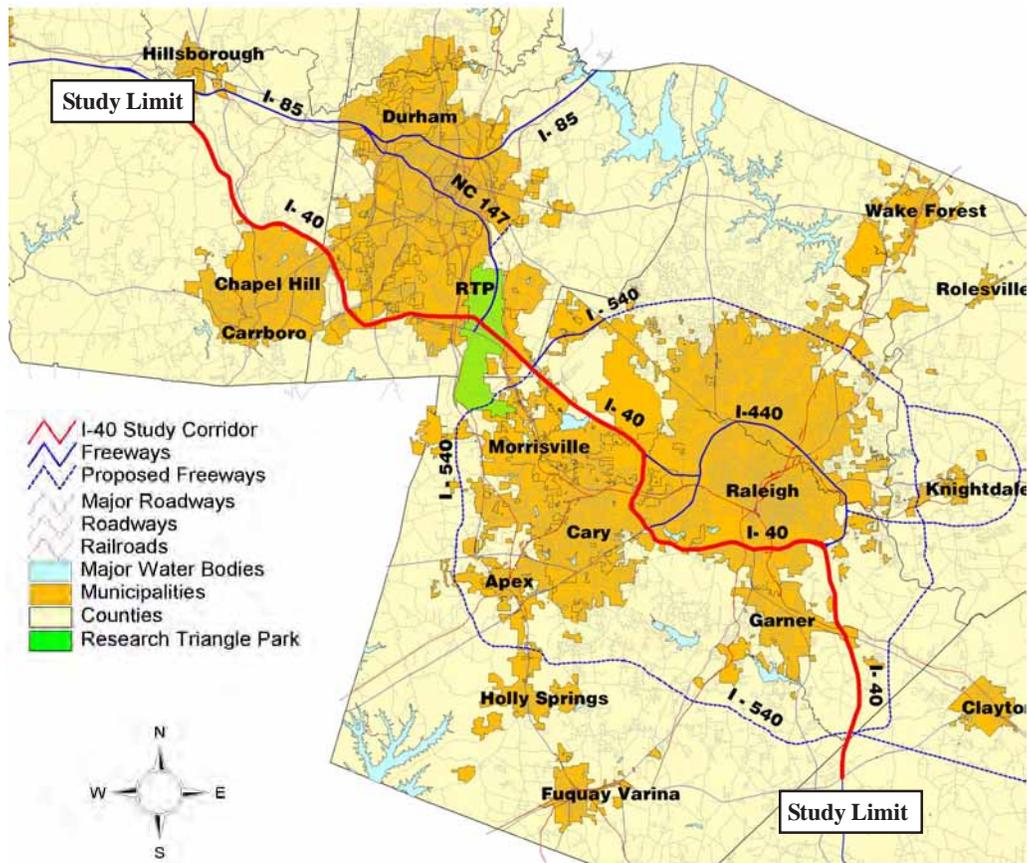
- RTI – February 26, 2002
- Nortel – March 13, 2002
- NIEHS – March 19, 2002
- CISCO – March 21, 2002
- IBM – April 22 and 25, 2002
- EPA – April 23 and 24, 2002

Project Contact Information

Questions and comments are encouraged. Feel free to call the I-40 HOV Study hotline at 1-866-527-7715. You can also review information provided on the study website at www.I40HOV.com.

For additional information, contact us at:

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I-40 HOV/CMS Study Area



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