NC MOVES 2050
CONNECTING YOUR COMMUNITY, YOUR VOICE AND YOUR FUTURE

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PHASE II
JANUARY 2019 - JUNE 2019

Public engagement is a key component of NC Moves 2050. It is important to understand the different needs of each region and community throughout the state to properly plan for transportation in the future. Multiple outreach and engagement methods were incorporated to engage diverse populations including those in rural areas, young adults and minority communities. Input collected in Phase II is used to inform ongoing technical research and the development of plan recommendations.

OVERVIEW OF ENGAGEMENT

Phase II engagement efforts built off the feedback from Phase I. A vision focusing on **better connections** and **improved options** for transportation was developed from feedback from the first survey and stakeholder meetings.

The NC Moves 2050 vision considers research done on different topics of potential change and uncertainty effecting North Carolina's future. These topics provided the background for Phase II engagement, allowing the project team to gather input through a series of activities. The feedback collected on the potential changes and uncertainties for N.C. transportation future, called Drivers and Opportunities, led to the development of four potential Alternative Futures. The second half of Phase II focused on sharing these futures with the public and asking for their feedback.

Possible scene of future transportation
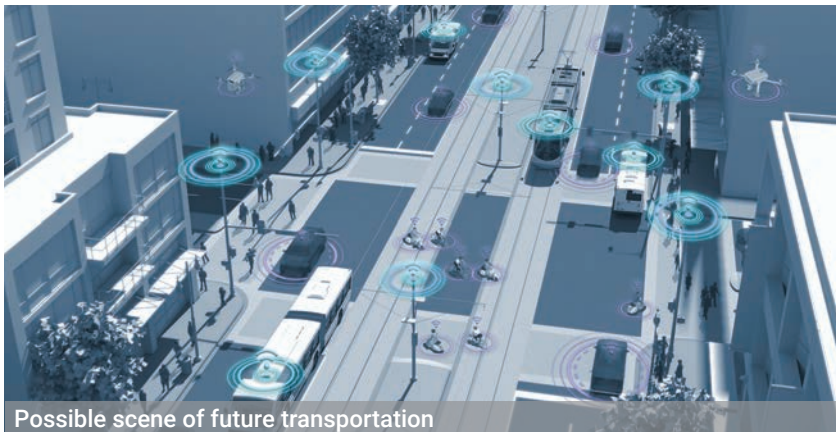
MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Targeted social media posts allowed NC Moves 2050 content to reach audiences often not engaged in transportation planning.

34 Tweets
143,600+ Impressions

26 Posts
24,300+ Impressions

36 Posts
117,600+ Reached

3 Posts
353,900+ Reached

Over **10,100** participants took the Alternative Futures Survey

2,880 mobile surveys

4,205 online surveys

3,015 paper surveys

DMV

Over **1.1 million** people were exposed to the NC Moves 2050 video advertisements while waiting at NC DMV drivers license offices.

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Drivers and Opportunities

The Drivers and Opportunities phase of the NC Moves 2050 Plan looked at possible changes and uncertainties, referred to as trends, that could affect North Carolina's future.

Understanding the potential impacts of these trends helps inform what the future may look like, which helps develop more resilient strategies and recommendations.

Each region has unique needs and challenges; therefore, the project team developed several tools to reach a broad audience. These tools were aimed at engaging the public and stakeholders to gain insight on which trends were important to them and their individual communities.

The activities included **Train the Trainer** presentations, an interactive **Public Comment Map**

and **Table Topics** conversation kits. Each of these activities aimed at reaching specific populations across North Carolina to ensure that the feedback collected was representative of all voices across the state.

DEMOGRAPHICS | EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & SECURITY | TRAVEL & TOURISM | CLIMATE CHANGE & RESILIENCY

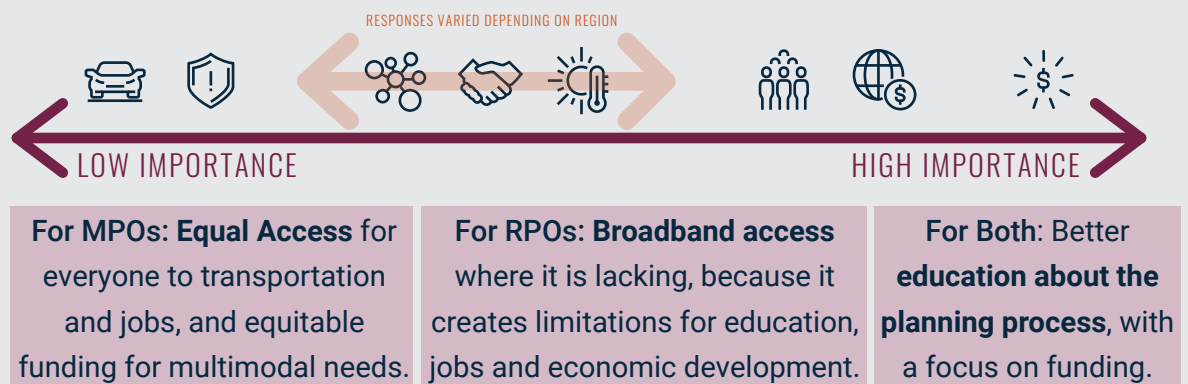ECONOMY | TECHNOLOGY | FUNDING | PARTNERSHIPS

Train the Trainer

Train the Trainer sessions, facilitated by the NCDOT Transportation Planning Division were provided to engage the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs) and to encourage their participation in the plan development process. Train the Trainer kits are a "meeting-in-a-box" concept with instructions, engagement activities, reporting forms, PowerPoint slides, briefing materials and NC Moves 2050 Plan content. These materials were used by MPOs and RPOs to engage their boards and members by further sharing information and collecting insight about future uncertainties from a regional perspective.

WHAT WE HEARD:

The eight Drivers and Opportunities topics were ranked by highest to lowest importance according to the MPOs and RPOs.

Other concerns include:

RESPONSES VARIED DEPENDING ON REGION

LOW IMPORTANCE → HIGH IMPORTANCE

For MPOs: **Equal Access** for everyone to transportation and jobs, and equitable funding for multimodal needs.

For RPOs: **Broadband access** where it is lacking, because it creates limitations for education, jobs and economic development.

For Both: Better **education about the planning process**, with a focus on funding.

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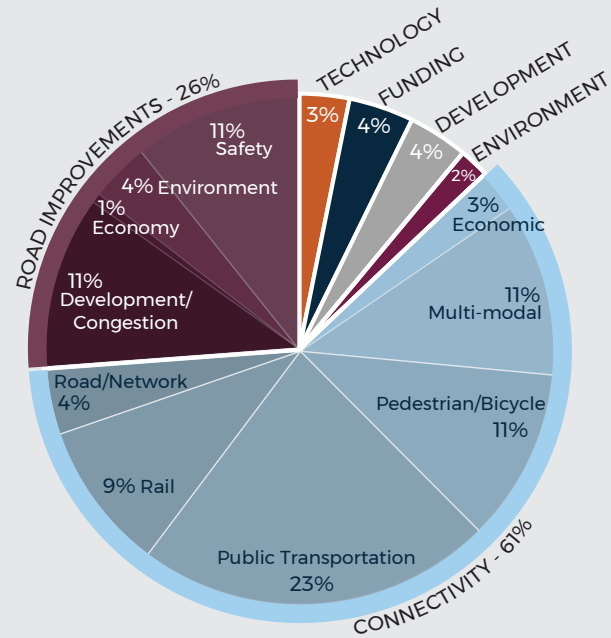CONNECTING YOUR COMMUNITY, YOUR VOICE AND YOUR FUTURE.

Public Comment Map

A comment map was created to gather input throughout the state and address needs at a regional level. The online map gave residents a chance to place comments on specific counties. During the seven-month period, 1089 comments were received with at least one comment from each of the 100 counties in the state. Participants were prompted with two questions:

- What do you think are the biggest challenges facing our state in the future?

- What should be the focus of transportation in your region for the future?

Of the comments received, 771 were related to specific transportation projects needing immediate attention, while 318 focused on the "bigger picture" of future transportation needs in North Carolina. Those 318 comments were placed into one of six categories, shown in the pie chart.
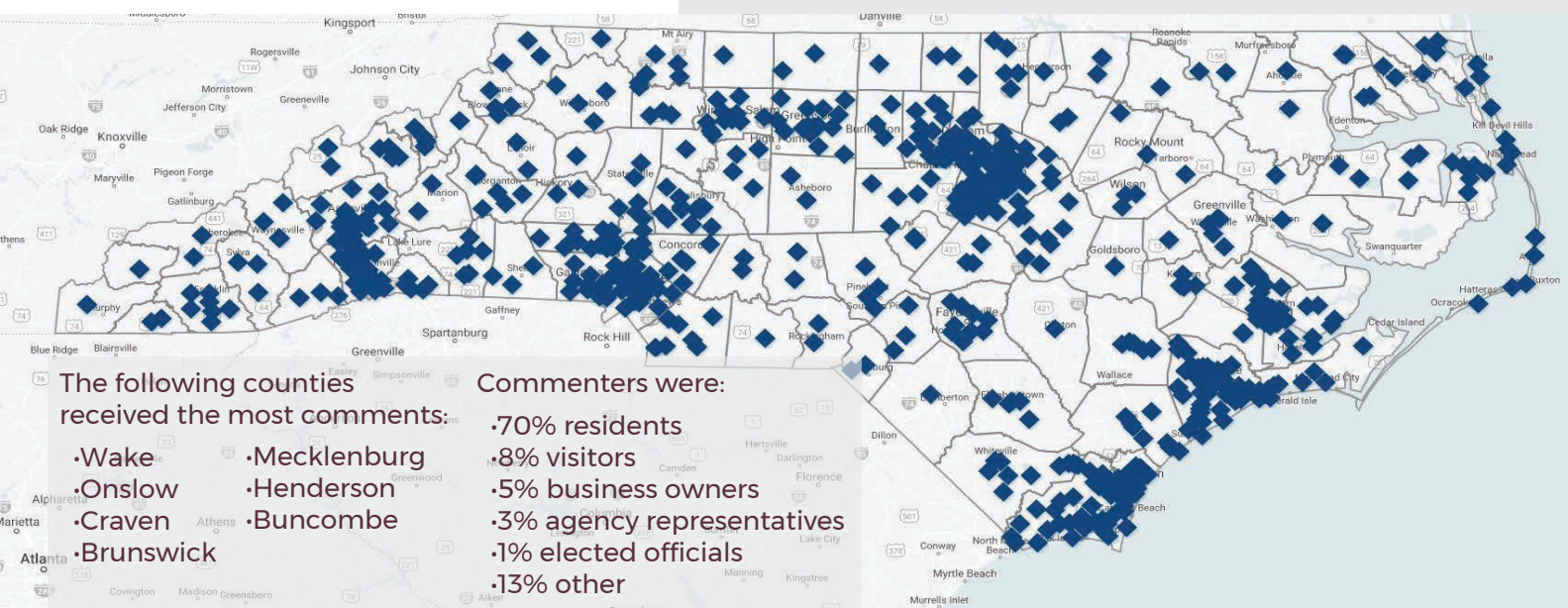

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS - 26%
- 11% Safety
- 4% Environment
- 1% Economy
- 11% Development/Congestion
- Road/Network 4%

TECHNOLOGY 3%

FUNDING 4%

DEVELOPMENT 4%

ENVIRONMENT 2%

- 3% Economic
- 11% Multi-modal
- Pedestrian/Bicycle 11%
- Public Transportation 23%
- 9% Rail

CONNECTIVITY - 61%

"We must develop policies, programs and goals to shift people out of [single occupancy vehicles] and onto alternative modes." - Mecklenburg County

"An overarching goal for NC should be to ensure the economic viability of the vast number of small towns and rural areas that have shaped the State's history." - Surry County

WHAT WE HEARD

Most of the "bigger picture" comments stated the importance of improving **connectivity** from rural to urban areas, residential to commercial areas, and between the different regions of the state. How to best provide that connectivity varied between respondents, including better roads and routes, rail, public transportation, pedestrian/bicycle routes, multi-modal systems and economic connections to other states.

A fourth of the "bigger picture" comments related to **road improvements** to improve safety, protect the environment, support the economy and respond to congestion caused by development. Other responses also noted the need for strategic **funding**, smart **technology** and solutions to **environmental impacts** and rapid **development**.

The following counties received the most comments:
- Wake
- Onslow
- Craven
- Brunswick
- Mecklenburg
- Henderson
- Buncombe

Commenters were:
- 70% residents
- 8% visitors
- 5% business owners
- 3% agency representatives
- 1% elected officials
- 13% other

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Targeted Outreach

TABLING EVENTS

Face-to-face engagement is still an important communication tool for sharing and receiving information with the public. In an effort to connect with residents from all over the state, the project team attended 25 events and festivals. At these events the team promoted the project and distributed surveys. A total of 2,064 surveys were collected at the events and locations listed below.

• NC Central University
• Avent Ferry DMV
• Greensboro DMV
• Hendersonville DMV
• American Indian Affairs
• Divine 9 Legislative Day
• NC Black Summit
• Azalea Festival
• Got to be NC Festival
• Hmong Easter Festival
• Hyde County Health Fair
• Ritmo Latino Festival
• NCSU Electric Car Show
• Wilmington Latino Festival
• NC A&T Senior Civil Engineering Class
• Haliwa - Saponi Indian Tribe Annual Pow-wow
• Greensboro Electric Vehicle (EV) Odyssey
• Lexington Multicultural Festival
• NC A & T Transportation Summit
• Elizabeth City State University
• NC Procurement Conference
• NC Veteran Service Officers Conference
• NCDOT Transportation Fair
• NC Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (NCAMPO) Conference
• 2019 NCDOT Research & Innovation Summit

Azalea Festival in Wilmington

Azalea Festival in Wilmington

STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

Stakeholders represent individuals and organizations (beyond the public) involved in or affected by the transportation planning process. Their support, as well as the public's, is vital to ensure the project meets its goals. Emails were sent to provide project information and survey links, and to solicit support for the project. A total of 7,829 individuals were emailed.

PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT SURVEYS

To engage rural, low income households and minority communities, and households with limited English proficiency, targeted outreach was conducted with the public school system through the distribution of surveys. A total of 15 school districts participated. Families within these school districts received the survey via email or a paper copy was sent home with the student.

INTERCEPT SURVEYS

To reach rural, minority and low income communities in 14 counties, the project team developed kiosks that could be placed in county social service agencies

Raleigh Union Station

across the state (31 total), Welcome Centers and at Amtrak stations in Charlotte, Raleigh, Durham, Cary and Greensboro. Each kiosk included project information, paper surveys and a ballot box for returning surveys to reach those who do not have regular access to the internet.

Table Topics

Gathering authentic feedback from residents on how they live and move is critical to the mission of this project. The project team designed Table Topics to give residents the opportunity to provide meaningful feedback at their convenience. The project team was able to capture the needs of the community through casual conversations led by residents. This setting allows participants to comfortably discuss transportation priorities and concerns. Hosts received a materials kit by mail with instructions, topics and questions, a comment form and giveaways.

A Table Topic kit box and materials

110 Participants

Topic 1 - Move

To seek input on the different ways people will travel from place to place in the next 20-30 years, these questions asked participants to consider present travel compared to future travel needs.

What We Heard: Residents of North Carolina are ready to see where new technologies will lead. Several comments mention self-driving vehicles including cars, buses and planes. Participants also noted the need for communities to incorporate walkability and public transportation options.

Topic 2 - Shape

In an effort to get participants to think about futures, these questions asked about the big picture of where we live, work and visit.

What We Heard: Access for all was a common theme in this topic. High school and college students and disabled residents expressed wanting access to public transportation that takes them where they need to go. Developing rural areas without impacting the natural beauty of North Carolina was also mentioned.

Topic 3 - Prepare

Topic 3 had residents think about funding and how to pay for future investments. Questions asked for thoughts on how to fund the various improvements.

What We Heard: Most participants saw toll roads and taxes as a solution to funding. Some comments mention taxing larger companies a "transportation tax" for road usage. Partnerships between larger and smaller cities were suggested, as well as advertisements on public transportation.

Topic 4 - Protect

After recent weather events impacted North Carolina, these questions gathered feedback on how preparations and recovery were handled and ways the state can better prepare in the future.

What We Heard: Participants felt that North Carolina could improve on weather preparedness. Following weather events, residents were unable to resume their travel due to inaccessible roads and public transportation. Eco-friendly solutions for quicker cleanup in rural areas after events and needing road repairs across the state were also mentioned.

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Alternative Futures

Using feedback from the Drivers and Opportunities, four alternative future scenarios were developed. These scenarios help us imagine North Carolina's transportation future. The futures are titled Innovative, Globally Connected, Renewed and Unstable. Each scenario helps show what could happen in the future, not predict what will happen.

To gain a better understanding of how these futures may play out, the second half of the Phase II engagement focused on sharing these futures and gathering input about which elements seem most likely or desired. This engagement was through stakeholder workshops, an online survey and comprehensive targeted outreach that included attending events in communities across North Carolina.
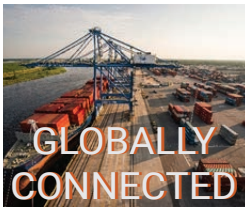
GLOBALLY CONNECTED — A future where economic growth in manufacturing, technology, automation and services position NC as a leading market for a skilled workforce, connected to the world by international gateways and an efficient freight system.

INNOVATIVE — A future where technology in transportation drives new development patterns and economic growth. This results in a low-carbon, shared, lower cost and more accessible multimodal system.

RENEWED — A future where small towns and rural communities grow and are more connected to each other and urban centers by various forms of transportation.

UNSTABLE — A future where funding instability, political and social events, environmental threats and energy uncertainty stalls tourism and stagnates the economy. This creates a system where travel costs are high and mobility is more unreliable.

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Stakeholder meetings allowed the NC Moves 2050 team to bring together a variety of representatives from each region of the state to discuss the future of transportation. During the second round of regional workshops held in Hickory, Kinston and Raleigh, 62 attendees represented state advocacy groups, state agencies and organizations, federal agencies, planning organizations and local government and other various interest groups.

Western workshop at Lenior Community College, Kinston N.C.

SURVEY

The alternative futures survey gave the public an opportunity to learn about each future and answer questions through the convenience of an online application. In addition to the online survey, NC Moves 2050 project team members attended over 25 events to distribute paper surveys. The questions centered around future needs and the potential benefits or concerns of each future. More than 10,100 participants took the survey between April and June. NCDOT and its partners will use the results from this survey to develop strategies for the future.

SURVEY RESULTS

Participants ranked their five most important outcomes to North Carolina's future in 2050 from a choice of eight options.

TOTAL TIMES RANKED

High Speed Internet	6,066
Knowledge-Based Workforce	5,865
Weather Preparedness	5,735
Core Industry Access	5,576
Rural Development	5,447
Goods Delivery	4,498
Connecting Seniors	4,372
1,510 Self-Driving Cars	

Additional suggestions included more bike/pedestrian connectivity, increased public transportation options, improved infrastructure and new sustainable practices.

Participants then stated how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about each of the futures regarding their potential benefits or concerns.

AVERAGE RANK ON 1-5 SCALE FOR BENEFITS STATEMENTS

New & growing companies will require more ways to move their products — **4.1** (DISAGREE — AGREE)

Technology will provide more travel options — **4.0** (DISAGREE — AGREE)

Local jobs will grow local economies and reduce travel costs — **4.2** (DISAGREE — AGREE)

Building on the coast will decrease and wetlands will return to a more natural state — **3.1** (DISAGREE — AGREE)

AVERAGE RANK ON 1-5 SCALE FOR CONCERN STATEMENTS

Traffic will increase within urban areas and on truck routes — **4.1** (DISAGREE — AGREE)

Access to technology will not be even across North Carolina — **3.9** (DISAGREE — AGREE)

It will be harder to travel because of more traffic — **3.9** (DISAGREE — AGREE)

Transportation costs will be more expensive — **3.8** (DISAGREE — AGREE)

STAKEHOLDER MEETING FEEDBACK

Stakeholders were asked for input on types of strategies which NCDOT could begin preparing now to navigate future conditions. Below are the key takeaways from the discussions on each future.

GLOBALLY CONNECTED

- Technology will lead to shorter, more frequent point-to-point trips and change local traffic patterns.
- Ongoing investments and increasing costs are needed to to ensure safety and reliability of freight.
- Future creates higher carbon demand and does not assume Greenhouse Gas / climate adaptation policy.

INNOVATIVE

- Rate/level of technology change, adoption, and application will occur unevenly across the state.
- New, unknown technologies may leapfrog & alter trends.
- Access to the "connected" system not equitable, affordable or are available for all.
- There are long term uncertainties over of land use & transportation impacts.
- Overall system is more efficient, reliable and able to optimize existing capacity.

RENEWED

- Significant policy shift and investments to realize this future.
- More population and workers in rural areas will work from home.
- Increased level of affordable, accessible transportation support services and connections.

UNSTABLE

- More people and workers migrate away from at-risk areas, focusing resources on system maintenance vs. expansion.
- Current transportation prioritization and funding process would (over time) consider resilience, risk, and uncertainty.
- Slower and more limited technology deployments, resulting in more at-risk and vulnerable assets.

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