

## **Transportation Group**

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### **Roads**

The Chamber will soon be asked to endorse the southern leg of the 43 Connector from Hwy 70 to Hwy 17 near Ben Quinn School. This is a representative road of the outer loop system. The legislature has already voted to “4-lane” 43 through Vanceboro to Greenville. Also, with the development of the judicial center at Clarks, development will follow that. There will probably be additional arteries off of 70 and 17S. The 17 Bypass is being developed from 70 to Rhem community on 17S. Development will take place wherever there is currently a cloverleaf on Hwy 70 between New Bern and Cove City. We would endorse the broad concept of the Super 70 Corridor which would enhance long-term growth of our area, make this a weekend destination for the people from Raleigh, not just to the beach. We do not approve of the current preliminary design for the James City area.

We endorse the following concepts because we believe they will encourage and enhance both business development and convenient access for citizens and visitors alike.

- The concept of a system of outer loops, including the current 43 connector and additional concentric loops with limited access exits.
- The expansion of Highway 17 to a 4 lane highway both North and South
- The concept of Super-70 Corridor

### **Public Transportation**

We wondered if we should think locally or do we need to look regionally? Can New Bern be a natural hub for a regional transportation system? The cost of a local system today is prohibitively expensive for a small city. It would really need to be a regional program to support the cost. In the future, since we don't know the size and shape of the local community, our concept needs to be regional.

- We endorse the concept of New Bern as a Transportation Hub with a regional scope. In addition there should be a local transportation component which will allow residents to move around the community for shopping, commuting to work, accessing health care, and meeting their additional transportation needs. This could include a park-and-ride system. A local system would also serve tourists who come to New Bern via commercial transportation. We envision that this regional system would also include passenger and freight railroad transportation.
- We endorse and support CARTS as an existing valuable transportation resource. Citizens should be made aware of this resource that is already in place.

## Waterways

Access to water here is a major problem. Lack of maintenance on the Intercoastal Waterway will make recreational boating almost impossible. The Corps of Engineers is not funded to support the ICW. Several inlets have been closed during the season in the last few years. This is a problem for the entire state of North Carolina, not just locally. With 109 boat builders in the state, most of them are near the ICW. Tourists want to see the boats – it contributes to the ambiance of the New Bern area. The ICW was originally funded based on commercial traffic. Once there was additional federal funding to support maintenance of the ICW, but that disappeared 8 years ago, contributing to the current deplorable condition. Only Florida's segment of the ICW is in good shape, and that is because the state took over the maintenance. Since this situation impacts all of eastern NC, this is a good time for a coalition of communities to form a Regional Waterway Advocacy Group to seek a solution before it is too late. (Area Waterway Advocacy Council composed of boat companies and user communities, as well as other constituencies such as government, Chambers of Commerce?) It is an issue for more than boat owners and manufacturers. It is an issue for everyone who enjoys life near the water.

There are 2 dimensions to the issue:

- Open access to, from and through the ICW and Atlantic access. We support advocacy for ICW issues through a regional advocacy coalition of interested constituencies
- Local issue: A combination of private and public access to the water, with marinas, ramps and access. We need facilities where day boaters or transients can visit New Bern. We need slip rentals as well as the "Dockominiums" that are popular now. Access should be available for low to moderate income citizens who cannot afford the slip rentals and dockominium fees.

## Air

Our airport is repositioning itself to become a regional airport. The current runway will accommodate regional jets. Part of the 15 year plan is to expand the runway on both ends to accommodate somewhat larger aircraft. 60% of the passengers using the local airport don't have New Bern as a destination or origin. They are from Pamlico, Jones and Carteret counties.

- New Bern should be the location of an important regional airport – Coastal Carolina Regional Airport. It is important to protect the airport from encroachment.
- Continue to be a quality facility for private and corporate aviation
- Include the Airport in the Regional Public Transportation System for surface transportation to and from the airport throughout the region

## Bike & Pedestrian

We endorse, support and encourage expanded bike and walking paths, including pedestrian accessibility, in New Bern and throughout the region. As people relocate to this area and more citizens turn to bicycles as a healthy and economical form of transportation, local jurisdictions need to provide safe access and dedicated pathways. Not only is this a transportation issue, but contributes to the health and wellness of our citizenry.