

MEMORANDUM

To: Ted Voorhees, Town Manager
From: Bergen Watterson, Mobility & Greenways Manager
Date: February 5, 2026
Subject: Estes Drive Extension Bike-Pedestrian Improvement Project – Updated Staff Recommendation

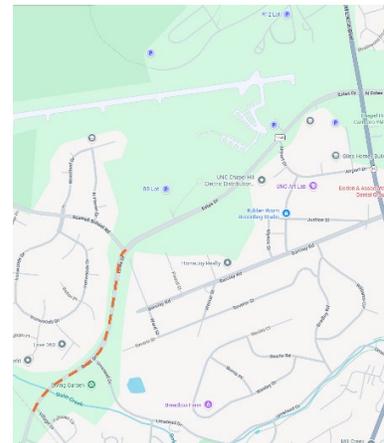
The purpose of this memo is to provide the staff and consultant updated recommendation for the Estes Drive Extension Bike-Pedestrian Improvement Project (TIP # EB-5886B) preferred alternative. It describes the updated recommendation, reviews the prior recommendation, describes the changes, and explains the reason for altering the recommendation.

Updated Recommendation

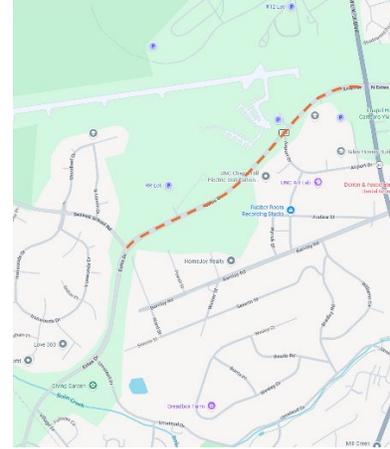
Due to rising project costs and associated statewide funding challenges, NCDOT is having to limit the federal funding allocated to the Estes Drive Extension Bike-Pedestrian Improvement Project. Town staff and project consultant, NV5 Engineers and Consultants (NV5), reevaluated the [recommended preferred alternative](#), originally shared with the Town Manger and Council in September of 2025. The goal was to find a roadway design that still met the public’s interest but had a significantly lower cost estimate. The resulting cross-section is similar to the previous recommendation, but value engineered to cost less.

The updated recommendation is:

- A 16’ wide multiuse path behind the curb on the east side between the Carrboro border and Seawell School Road.



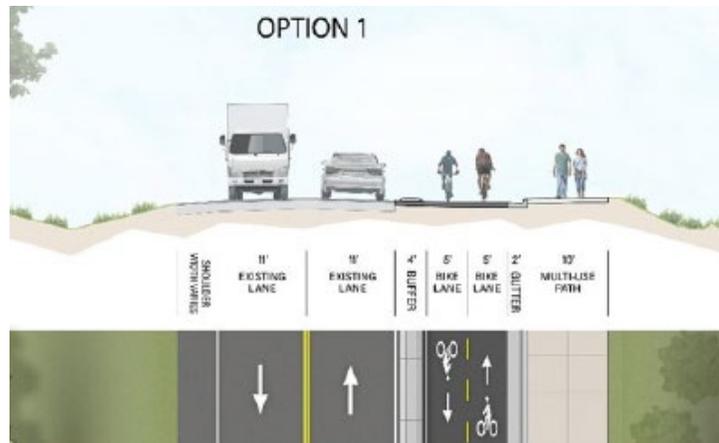
- Single-direction bike lanes on both sides separated from vehicle traffic by a concrete median and a 6’ sidewalk on the east side between Seawell School Road and Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

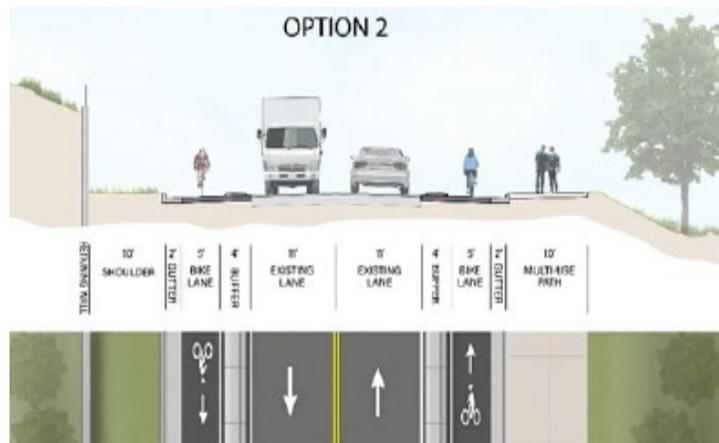


Prior Recommendation and Changes

In September 2025 staff provided a recommendation for the preferred alternative for the [Estes Drive Extension Bike-Pedestrian Improvement Project](#). This recommendation was based on a detailed analysis of design feasibility, environmental and property impacts, cost considerations, public input, and alignment with the Town’s mobility goals. The preferred alternative was a hybrid option of two designs presented to the public during our robust [public engagement process](#).

- **Hybrid Option** –Included Option 1 from the Carrboro border to Seawell School Road, and Option 2 from Seawell School Road to Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.





Additional information on the original alternatives presented can be found on the [Engage HQ](#) site's 'Documents' section.

While the updated recommendation is similar to the previous recommendation, there are several changes worth noting:

- Remove cycle track and sidewalk between the Carrboro border and Seawell School Road and replace with a combined (10' multiuse path and 6' sidewalk) behind the curb with a grass strip
- The single direction bike lanes between Seawell School Road and MLK now have a 2' concrete median separating from vehicle traffic instead of 4'
- The westbound bike lane does not have curb and gutter
- There is now a 6' sidewalk on the east side between Seawell School Road and MLK instead of a 10' multiuse path

All of these changes were made to reduce the cost of the overall project, and some will also reduce long-term maintenance.

Why the Changes Were Made

In October 2025, just after providing the recommended preferred alternative to Council, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) notified Town staff that the amount of federal funding they would provide for the project would be limited to \$5 - \$6 million, which was less than half of what staff were expecting for the project. To make up some of that funding gap, staff believe additional funds can be secured through the upcoming [TWTPO Call for Projects](#), bringing the total project funding to \$10 - \$11, including required local match. The updated recommendation outlined above is estimated to fall within that price range. Due to the same funding shortfalls that cut funding to this project, staff have also been notified that the project has been delayed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), with construction now funded in fiscal year 2031 (originally 2026). Staff will continue to advocate for the project to be moved up again.

Next Steps

After this notification to Town Council, staff and NV5 will seek NCDOT concurrence and begin the next phase of design and environmental studies and ultimately move on to construction plans.