



N.C. Turnpike Authority, DOT Want To Build Toll Road

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By NBC17

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RTP, N.C.—The Triangle Parkway has been planned since 1958, and now 50 years later The North Carolina Turnpike Authority and the Department of Transportation are set to start construction.

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The 3.4 mile stretch of six-lane highway will connect Interstate 40 and the Durham Freeway to N.C. 540 in Morrisville.

It will be the first modern Toll Road built in the state of North Carolina, and that has stirred up some controversy.

During a Tuesday evening public hearing on the project, citizens got their first chance to voice their concerns.

David McDowell, founder of "No Tolls on 540.ORG" was one resident that stepped up to the microphone.

"This section should be built without tolls. Those folks [living on the completed 540] had it without tolls, we should have it without tolls as well," McDowell said.

The DOT says the expansion will improve mobility, accessibility and better connect commuters to Research Triangle Park. But some say things are fine the way they are and would rather not see more traffic in the area.

"I wouldn't, if they do build it, and cut down my driving time, I wouldn't use it. I still wouldn't just out of principle. I wouldn't pay to use it; it's costing more than they're going to make out of it I'm sure, and not to mention more of our environment," said Elizabeth Miller, an RTP-Durham commuter.

Miller manages one of two apartment communities on T.W. Alexander Drive. She said wider roads may cause more than just health hazards.

"A lot of our residents here, a lot of them don't even own cars. A lot of them walk to work. They walk up to the different businesses around here. The IEHS the EPA and all of that," said Miller.

Public safety may be an added concern, but apartment resident and RTP commuter Rakesh Kumar says growth is a good thing.

"Eventually it's going to help people commute to the RTP, roads are always better," Kumar said.

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