

To: Dutchess County Transportation Council (DCTC) Voting Members

From: Mark Debald, Transportation Program Administrator

Date: August 3, 2026

Re: Summary of Public Comments for Moving Dutchess Forward (2026)

The DCTC held a 30-day public comment period from July 2 – 31, 2026 for its Draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan, titled [Moving Dutchess Forward](#). We initiated the comment period with a Public Notice that was emailed to the DCTC's public information list and a press release to local news media. We also held a virtual public meeting on July 22, 2026 that was recorded and posted to the Moving Dutchess Forward website. Comments could be submitted by mail, email, or phone. We received 15 comments during the comment period. Below is a summary of the comments and responses:

1. Ms. Esther Jackson (email)

Ms. Jackson, a Fishkill resident, complimented us on our work and felt validated that her experiences were reflected in the Plan. She noted traffic congestion in the Fishkill area and felt bus service was infrequent and inadequate – especially for lower income households, older adults and children, and households without a vehicle. Additionally, she encouraged better bus service for commuters using the Beacon train station (e.g., make the F route more frequent and usable by commuters and people who need Sunday service to access grocery stores), which would attract more working-age people who commute outside of the county. She also inquired about the status of the Beacon-Hopewell Rail Trail, which she believed would alleviate some of the pressure on roads.

DCTC Response – *We are glad our data and research is matching real world experiences. The Route 9 and 9D corridors do experience traffic congestion, along with the areas around the Village of Fishkill and I-84/9D interchange – we've identified the interchange as one of our recommended Illustrative Projects. We understand that some traffic in a village setting like Fishkill is reasonable, but too much can affect livability. We also agree that the Beacon Hopewell Rail Trail would be a tremendous asset to the region, both for recreation and transportation connectivity. The primary challenge that County Public Transit faces with expanding service is available funding and capacity. Sunday service does exist on some routes in the Beacon area like Route G, which also serves the train station. We can ask Public Transit about Sunday service for Route F. Please note that NYSDOT is operating a free [bus shuttle between Beacon and Newburgh](#), which now includes weekend service.*

2. Legislator Chris Drago, District 19, Dutchess County Legislature (email)

Leg. Drago submitted comments concerning the lack of transit options in the northern and northeastern section of the county. Specifically, he requested that the Plan explicitly name north/northeast Dutchess as a zero-fixed-route zone and priority for alternate transit models. He asked that the Plan strengthen its consideration of alternate transit models into a committed action with a timeline (e.g., commit to a study of micro-transit, expanded Dial-a-Ride, and flexible/deviated-route pilots), and build on existing human service agency infrastructure (such as the North East Community Center's transportation program) by identifying sustainable funding and integrating agency providers into County-led transit booking or information systems. He also stated that the Dial-A-Ride [Flex Service] 3-to-30-day reservation window is a barrier to its use, especially for rural residents.

DCTC Response – *We believe the Plan acknowledges the gaps in fixed route service in northern/northeast Dutchess, both in its content and mapping. We did this to present the current transit service landscape and raise awareness about gaps in rural areas. Our recent [Coordinated Plan](#) prioritizes options for rural transit service, as well as improved information about existing services (such as Flex), and better coordination between various transportation and service providers. For the short-term (next 1-2 years), the Coordinated Plan identifies four possible next steps: 1) Develop a Coordinated Transportation Communications and Information Plan; 2) Establish a Mobility Coordination Committee; 3) Consolidate GoGo programs and hire drivers through Public Transit Transportation; and 4) Develop a Driver Training Program and Coordinated Recruitment Effort.*

3. Ms. Kyra Stoddart (email)

Ms. Stoddart requested that the Plan place a stronger emphasis on alternatives to driving, such as prioritizing walkable communities, protected bike infrastructure, better public transit, and development in existing centers. She was especially concerned about the loss of the Beacon Newburgh Ferry and asked that it be restored, with the County taking on a stronger advocacy role for its return.

DCTC Response – *We agree with the idea of creating walkable communities and prioritizing options other than driving. Many of our [Illustrative Project recommendations](#) support those options – e.g., the [Beacon-Hopewell Rail Trail](#), Market St conversion in Poughkeepsie, and redesigning state highways in village/town centers. We've also tried to convey that intent with our many [policy recommendations](#) for the county and local municipalities, especially around concepts like Complete Streets. Much of our work as an MPO has been focused on walkability, and we have a long track record of local pedestrian planning (e.g., the recent Beacon sidewalk inventory and our [pedestrian plans and complete streets studies](#)). However, we have a requirement for our long-range plan to be 'fiscally constrained' with a focus on maintaining the existing transportation system. This is where available funding clashes with our desire to go beyond maintenance. Maintenance needs (especially for roads, bridges, and transit), coupled with projected inflation, are dramatically shaping the Plan's recommendations. But there is nothing in the Plan that would prevent ferry service from restarting if funding and a project sponsor were secured.*

4. Ms. Naomi Hersson-Ringskog (email)

Ms. Hersson-Ringskog requested that the Plan better integrate the Newburgh-Beacon Ferry into its text and recommendations. She identified the ferry as a critical regional asset, capable of reducing congestion on major roads like Route 9D and the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge. She also advocated for using ferry terminals as hubs for transit-oriented development, and the Hudson River as a 'blue highway' for freight

movement. She further noted the ferry's role in promoting access to jobs and healthcare for vulnerable communities and residents without personal vehicles. And she noted the ferry's potential to showcase green technology.

DCTC Response – *We agree that providing additional transportation options is beneficial to the region, and expanding access is a central goal in our Plan. Ferry service could certainly play a role in achieving that goal. However, the Plan must be 'fiscally constrained' and provide resources to maintain the system in a state of good repair. This is where available funding clashes with our desire to go beyond maintenance. System maintenance needs, coupled with projected inflation, are dramatically shaping the Plan's recommendations. However, it's worth noting that the new NYSDOT [bus shuttle between Beacon and Newburgh](#) is providing a cross-river connection, and is a free service that runs seven days a week. We also note that there is nothing in the Plan that would prevent ferry service from restarting if funding and a project sponsor were secured.*

5. Mr. Tom Malone, Town of Poughkeepsie (phone)

Mr. Malone, a visually impaired transit customer who uses Dial-A-Ride and ADA paratransit, commented that County Public Transit is a valuable, important asset to the county. He recommended better maintenance of vehicles – noting that air conditioning is not always working on buses – and maintenance of bus shelters, such as removing snow during winter. He also believes the new scheduling software is not working, and confusing to drivers, saying it includes a 30-minute pick-up window that can be difficult to schedule around. He also questioned why the same trips cost different amounts between Dial-A-Ride and ADA services.

DCTC Response – *We will forward these comments to County Public Transit for consideration. We're especially concerned about the noted maintenance issues, so we'll check on their status.*

6. Ms. Maryann Rosa (email)

Ms. Rosa requested that the County's M bus route operate on Saturdays. Not having Saturday service creates challenges for those who use it to commute to work, access grocery stores, or travel to medical appointments. In addition, schools have Saturday activities.

DCTC Response – *We agree on the importance of transit to the community, especially for residents who don't drive or have access to a vehicle. We will forward this comment to County Public Transit for consideration, though we suspect the school focus of the M route is a factor in scheduling.*

7. Unknown (email)

We received a comment from an unknown individual who requested more bus transportation on Sundays, as well as more runs and later service seven days a week, especially in Hopewell Junction (East Fishkill), Pleasant Valley, and Hyde Park.

DCTC Response – *We agree on the importance of transit to the community, especially for residents who don't drive or have access to a vehicle. We will forward these comments to County Public Transit.*

8. Mr. Peter Podolak, Village of Pawling (email)

Mr. Podolak expressed frustration with dangerous driving behaviors and the lack of traffic enforcement on roads. He also asked that Route 22 be repaved and widened from I-684 to at least Wingdale in Dover.

DCTC Response – *We agree that traffic enforcement has dropped off since the pandemic. Based on publicly available data from [ITSMR](#), there were about 79,000 tickets issued in Dutchess in 2019 and 61,000 tickets issued in 2024. There are numerous reasons for the decline, but one positive is that tickets have increased from the low in 2022 (55,000). We can forward the thoughts about Route 22 to NYSDOT.*

9. Mr. Greg Basile (email)

Mr. Basile encouraged continued investment in complete streets projects and work to make neighborhoods like Crown Heights more walkable and bikeable. He highlighted several locations on Route 9 that would benefit from pedestrian and bicycle improvements such as sections south of Anthony Dr, near IBM Rd, near Spring Rd, and Route 113-Spackenkill Rd interchange. He also identified the Spackenkill Rd/Wilbur Ave intersection as a safety concern, and recommended bike lanes on CR 77-Vassar Rd, CR 104-New Hackensack Rd, and Route 376.

DCTC Response – *We support the idea of creating walkable communities and prioritizing options other than driving. Many of our illustrative project recommendations support those options – e.g., the Beacon-Hopewell Rail Trail, Market St conversion in Poughkeepsie, and redesigning state highways in village/town centers. We’ve also tried to convey that intent with our many policy recommendations for the county and local municipalities, especially around concepts like Complete Streets. Many of the locations mentioned, such as Route 9 and Spackenkill Rd, fall under NYSDOT jurisdiction. We’ll forward these ideas to NYSDOT-Region 8 for their consideration. Note, the federal funding picture is constrained, which makes creating new facilities like separated bike lanes difficult.*

10. Mr. Eric Osborne, Village of Pawling (email)

Mr. Osborne voiced support for more bike lanes and rail trails, expressing concerns about the safety of children walking and biking in places such as East Fishkill (e.g., Route 52). He strongly encouraged the completion of the Beacon-Hopewell Rail Trail, and bike lanes on Route 9D to Cold Spring.

DCTC Response – *We support the idea of walkable communities for children (and everyone for that matter). We’re our [illustrative project recommendations](#) like the [Beacon-Hopewell Rail Trail](#) will gain traction. And we’ve tried to convey the need for walkability in our [policy recommendations](#) for the county and local municipalities.*

11. Mr. Thomas Dercks (email)

Mr. Dercks noted safety concerns about CR 93-Myers Corners Rd in the Town of Wappinger, highlighting a lack of sidewalks, bike paths, and school zone speed limits, despite high traffic volumes and the number of schools. He expressed frustration that recommendations from the 2011 CR 93 Corridor Management Plan have still not been addressed. He also questioned the inclusion of Spook Hill Rd as a safety concern given recent improvements on the road.

DCTC Response – We work with road owners such as NYSDOT and County Public Works to make improvements on the system, and they’re naturally focused on maintaining a state of good repair. Complex projects such as a large sidewalk project are challenging given our funding picture, though it’s still a valid idea. However, smaller improvements are being looked at: the School District is trying to improve the situation at the Myers Corners Elementary intersection. Note, nothing in the Plan would prevent sidewalks on CR 93 if a project sponsor and funding were secured. Also, NYS traffic law dictates when and how school speed zones can be used (see <https://www.dot.ny.gov/about-nysdot/fag/posting-speed-limit-within-a-school-zone>). Because WCSD is a busing district, it can be difficult to justify a school speed zone. Reference Spook Hill Rd, it was identified as a safety priority by the Town, hence its inclusion on the map.

12. Mr. Gully Stanford (email)

Mr. Stanford suggested the inclusion of adult education and workforce training as part of the Plan’s discussions around access to educational services. He noted that low-income adults face significant barriers accessing trade schools and professional programs, specifically citing a lack of transit to BOCES. He proposed some slight changes to Goal 2 to ensure improved transit connectivity for college students and adult learners.

DCTC Response – In the Education section, we are using that term in its broadest sense, so work training would fall under it. We can look at how we might add some language about trade schools, BOCES, and workforce training. We understand the importance of transit to adult learners, jobseekers, etc. We didn’t specify education in the Goal 2 statement, as we thought it was implied. We are trying to find a balance of flexibility and specificity with the Plan. Certainly, nothing in the Plan would prevent improved services from happening if circumstances allowed.

13. Ms. Becky Fifield, Town of Fishkill (email)

Ms. Fifield felt the Plan doesn’t fully address critical safety concerns, especially with high-speed accidents and a hostile environment for pedestrians and cyclists due to ‘bloated roads’ and heavy vehicular traffic. She urged a shift away from motor-vehicle-centric designs toward walkable communities, recommending the implementation of road diets, roundabouts, and narrower lanes to improve safety and accessibility. She expressed disappointment with the lack of emphasis on alternative transit options, such as bus, rail, and bicycle infrastructure, which she viewed as a necessary response to climate change. She also expressed frustration with the short timeframe between the end of the comment period and Plan approval.

DCTC Response – We fully support the idea of creating walkable communities and prioritizing options other than driving. Many of our illustrative project recommendations speak to that – e.g., the Beacon-Hopewell Rail Trail, Market St conversion in Poughkeepsie, and redesigning state highways in village/town centers (addressing your observations about Route 9). We’ve also tried to convey that intent with our many policy recommendations for the county and local municipalities, especially around concepts like Complete Streets. Much of our work as an MPO has been focused on walkability, and we have a long track record of local pedestrian planning (e.g., the recent Beacon sidewalk inventory and our many pedestrian plans). However, we have a federal requirement that our Plan be ‘fiscally constrained’ with a focus on maintaining the existing transportation system. This is where available funding clashes with our desire to go beyond maintenance. Maintenance needs (especially for roads, bridges, and transit), coupled with projected

inflation, are dramatically shaping the Plan's recommendations. But this doesn't mean we can't try, and it's our hope that road owners will integrate complete streets ideas into their future maintenance work. We've done an extensive amount of public engagement on the Plan, starting since last year, and it's helped to inform our approach. We are sending these comments to voting members on Mon., Aug. 3rd, so they have them beforehand.

14. Mr. Bob Collins, Town of Hyde Park (email)

Mr. Collins, a resident of the River Ridge development near Route 9, noted the high concentration of senior residents in the community. He observed that transit options in the area are limited to Route C, which has sparse stops and lacks a dedicated, clearly signed bus stop. He expressed a strong desire for improved access to the train station and Rhinebeck to reduce people's reliance on driving, especially during the winter months. To better serve the area, he requested an accessible bus stop near the development, paired with specialized transport options for older adults.

DCTC Response – *We agree on the importance of transit to the community, especially for residents who don't drive or have access to a vehicle. We'll forward the idea about a stop at River Ridge to County Public Transit. Increasing the frequency of service might be challenging given our funding picture, but we can ask. Also, our new Coordinated Plan speaks to improving access for older adults:*

<https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/Transportation-Council/Coordinated-Plan.htm>. It has some specific recommendations that address some of the issues raised.

15. Ms. Melaine Rottkamp, Destination Dutchess (email)

Ms. Rottkamp, President & CEO of Destination Dutchess, advocated for integrating tourism-focused transit services as a long-term transportation strategy, since this could be a vital tool to reduce congestion and support economic development. She highlighted that visitors contribute over \$2.2 million daily to the local economy, emphasizing the need for reliable shuttle connections between train stations and major historical or cultural landmarks. She proposed coordinating bus and train schedules, along with better marketing to increase transit awareness. Beyond serving tourists, these improvements could support the local workforce (e.g., aligning bus routes with hotel shift times).

DCTC Response – *We agree on the importance of transit to the community, especially for visitors and overall tourism, so strengthening those connections makes complete sense. This includes strengthening bus-train connections, which we support. County Public Transit does operate several routes on Sundays (e.g., A, B, E, G, L), and we're hoping the new fare collection system will make it easier for passengers to use transit. We also support the transit marketing idea. We'll share these ideas with Public Transit.*