

**Citizens Advisory Committee**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, 320 Chestnut Street**  
**Wednesday, July 11, 2018**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:**

Laura Padgett, Chair, City of Wilmington  
John Cawthorne, Vice Chair, Town of Kure Beach  
Web Bostic, New Hanover County  
Sallie Rochelle, Pender County (via conference call)  
Jason Windham, City of Wilmington  
Patrick Boykin, Town of Carolina Beach  
Harold King, Town of Wrightsville Beach  
Stuart Smith, Town of Belville  
Brayton Willis, Town of Leland  
Valorie Hatten, Town of Navassa  
Vanessa Lacer, Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority

Neal Andrew, North Carolina Board of Transportation

**Members Absent:**

None

**Others Present:**

Abigail Lorenzo, Senior Transportation Planner, WMPO  
Katie Moore, Associate Transportation Planner, WMPO  
Leta Huntsinger, Project Manager, WSP  
Nazia Sarder, NCDOT - Transportation Planning Branch

**1. Call to Order**

Ms. Padgett called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

**2. Approval of Minutes – June 20, 2018**

Mr. King made a motion to approve the minutes of June 20, 2018, seconded by Mr. Smith, and the motion carried unanimously.

**3. Presentation – Public Transportation in the Cape Fear Region – Vanessa Lacer, Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority**

Ms. Lacer, Mobility Manager, Wave Transit, gave a presentation on Public Transportation in the Cape Fear Region. She distributed maps of the region color-coded with Wave, Brunswick Transit System (BTS) and Pender Adult Services, Inc. (PAS-TRAN) routes and service areas.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Padgett, Ms. Lacer stated that BTS and PAS-TRAN offer no fixed route service, only a curb-to-curb reservation system.

Ms. Lacer gave an overview of service areas of each provider and scope. She stated that Wave Transit has 76 revenue vehicles. In 2017, Wave provided 1,417,954 on-way trips, averaging about 4,000 trips per day within a total service area population of 216,479 in New Hanover County, completely within the WMPO planning boundary.

Ms. Lacer stated that BTS has 17 revenue vehicles that provided 53,357 trips in 2017, averaging 225 trips per day. BTS is the second largest transportation provider with a service area population of 32,618 within the MPO planning area, and 130,897, the total population of Brunswick County within 900 square miles.

Ms. Lacer stated that PAS-TRAN is under the Pender Adult Services umbrella, but is open to the general public. It has 9 revenue vehicles that provided 24,518 trips in 2017, averaging about 115 trips per day. She noted that PAS-TRAN serves 23,653 within the WMPO planning area, and 60,958, the total population of Brunswick County, which encompasses more than 800 square miles.

Ms. Lacer stated that the BTS and PAS-TRAN system is consists of a reservation-based (48 hours in advance) system of smaller shuttles or accessible vans. She noted that managers of the service operates at full capacity. She added that the fares range from \$3 to \$8 and sometimes \$12, depending on distance. She commented that this system works well in a rural environment.

Mr. Smith pointed out that women typically live 10 years beyond losing the ability to drive and men, seven years.

Ms. Lacer stated that many of the trips are for medical reasons. She noted that the cost to the customer is subsidized by federal and state grants. She added that fixed routes cost Wave about \$7 per trip, and the customer, \$2. Accessible vans cost Wave \$19, and the customer pays \$4. She noted that some transit agencies in more populated areas are moving toward a rideshare model (Uber, Lyft, taxis). However, the quality of driving is less regulated than in federally subsidized programs.

Ms. Lacer stated that all programs are shared ride services. She noted that vans ranges accommodate eight to 14 passengers, which diminishes to accommodate the number of wheelchairs. She added that PAS-TRAN travels to New Hanover County, and BTS has limited service to New Hanover County.

Ms. Lacer stated that Wave has an accessible van model as well, providing a free seat to aids as federally required. Also, it has 15 fixed routes operating Monday through Saturday, 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and Sunday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; a free trolley; 10 shuttles for UNCW operating within one-mile of campus (also open to the general public); and a van pool system for employers.

Ms. Lacer distributed Wave route maps. She noted that all buses with numbers beginning with "1" go to the Forden Station, and those beginning with the number "2" go downtown. She added that bus routes 101 and 108 go between these two stations, and that the transfer station connects seven routes and provides the opportunity for a free transfer with regular fare. She noted that a smartphone app is now available with real time bus tracking information.

Ms. Lacer stated that the downtown trolley operates on a 20-minute frequency and can be hailed anywhere; whereas regular fixed route buses run hourly. She noted that all buses have a bike rack in front and some connect with the Cross City Trail. No pets other than service animals are permitted on board.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Cawthorne, Ms. Lacer stated that she is available to give a variety of presentations on request.

Ms. Lorenzo introduced Ms. Katie Moore as the new Associate Transportation Planner.

Ms. Moore expressed appreciation and gave a brief overview of her professional background.

#### **4. Update on Financial Research and Analysis**

Ms. Lorenzo introduced Ms. Leta Huntsinger, Project Manager, WSP, consultant for the Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

Ms. Huntsinger reminded members that the MTP must be fiscally constrained. She stated that the plan requires a financial forecast, which has been in progress for the past six months. She noted that the forecast begins with the collection of historical data for each of the many transportation modes and revenue sources, which will be entered into a financial model that is approximately 95% complete. She added that the data will be checked for reasonableness of assumptions prior to finalization. She gave a broad overview of the compliment of revenue sources for each transportation mode.

Ms. Huntsinger stated that much outreach has been done to collect the historical data. She noted that she is currently in the process of finalizing the data and anticipates that the first round of forecasts will be ready in a couple of weeks to review with staff and revise as needed. She added that once the final forecasts are in hand, they can be used to help prioritize projects. She noted that WSP will also help identify potential innovative forms of revenue.

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

Ms. Padgett expressed concerns that the revenue sources are not exclusive to the modes of transportation and requested a percentage breakdown for each source per mode. Ms. Huntsinger responded that WSP will endeavor to provide the type of information that will inform the process of proposing fiscally constrained project lists.

In response to concerns expressed by Mr. King regarding projecting costs, Ms. Lorenzo stated that WSP will provide planning level cost estimates for the finalized project lists prior to applying selection criteria, scoring and ranking of the projects. She added that some type of inflation rate will be imposed to bring the estimates 15 years into the future.

Ms. Huntsinger reminded the Committee that the plan is a living document that takes the best known information of today, and attempts to anticipate what changes might occur and potential responses to them.

Also in response to Mr. King's concerns, Ms. Padgett pointed out that the plan will not rely on ranges, but on updates every five years.

Ms. Lorenzo stated that alternative funding mechanisms will be considered by this Committee, and the WMPO Board to better anticipate what the jurisdictions will support.

##### **5. Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045 Process: How does the whole plan fit together?**

Ms. Lorenzo gave an overview of next steps for the Committee over the next year. She noted that the modal subcommittees are beginning to meet this month. She reminded members that the subcommittees are comprised of subject matter experts for each respective mode, representatives of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and agencies pertaining to each mode. She added that the subcommittees will identify goals and objectives over the next few months. These will be presented in September to the CAC for review and discussion, and recommendation to the WMPO Board, who will ultimately consider them for approval.

Ms. Lorenzo stated that for the next few meetings following the approval of the goals and objectives, the modal subcommittees will work on crafting final project lists. She noted that staff is currently working on preliminary project lists, reaching out to member jurisdictions for project submittals, collecting public input, and pulling projects from plans adopted by the WMPO. She added that the modal subcommittees will probably need to refine a significant number of initial projects for bike/pedestrian, roadway and public transportation.

Ms. Lorenzo stated that the goals and objectives will then be used to develop scoring criteria to rank the projects, which will also be brought forward to the CAC for discussion and to the Board for approval. Scoring and ranking will follow and include a phase for test scoring. After ranking, the fiscal constraints will be applied to the project lists. She reiterated that the Board will ultimately approve the projects.

A question/answer and discussion period was held. Mr. Cawthorne requested that the schematic illustrating roles be distributed and included in presentation materials for milestone updates.

## **6. Public Outreach Update**

Ms. Lorenzo gave an update on public outreach. She stated that as of last Friday, 1,510 surveys have been completed to date, more than 950 since May. She reported that the demographics of respondents (white, middle age, and upper middle class) have remained similar to last month. Answers have also remained similar, and include:

1. The importance of transportation alternatives;
2. The majority of respondents currently driving a car to work/school;
3. Most preferring alternate transportation modes such as carpooling the future;
4. Safety remaining the top priority;
5. Funding focusing on more cost effective transportation;
6. Transportation dollars being invested in bike/pedestrian safety measures; and
7. Development impact fees outpacing other revenue sources.

Ms. Lorenzo stated that the number of hits to the public input map has increased by 858 to 1,400. She noted that the 440 comments have been received and 3,000 votes on comments. The majority of comments and votes are focused on bike/pedestrian, followed by roadway. She added that online usage spiked due to e-mail blasts to the city's list, and gave an overview of the top comment for each mode.

Ms. Lorenzo stated that the City's Public Information Officer highly recommends online ads at WECT.com, which are scheduled to begin next Wednesday, as well as paid ads on social media sites to reach a more diverse demographic. She noted that staff has developed some memes for Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, which reach a younger more diverse community. She added that Mr. Kozlosky wrote a letter for publication in six regional newspapers, and a display ad will run in them as well. Also, flyers and have been distributed to the VA, Social Services, the Employment Security Commission and other government service centers.

Ms. Lorenzo stated that staff is attempting to work with the Wilmington Housing Authority. She noted that a final e-mail blast to the City's list of more than 12,000 is planned. Staff is also researching a contest in the StarNews; although a web contest may be more effective.

Ms. Lorenzo reminded members that two and a half weeks remain for public outreach. She expressed confidence with results to date – 4,991 total responses.

Mr. King and Mr. Smith expressed concerns regarding the preponderance of bicycle/pedestrian responses. Ms. Lorenzo responded that the survey and input map are only one mode of input.

Ms. Padgett pointed out that strong response by particular interest groups occurs in other groups as well. She commented that it is also a viable reflection of the community.

Ms. Huntsinger agreed that such a response is true of other communities as well. She assured the Committee that the modal categories of funding remain specific to each mode. (So a

preponderance of bike/pedestrian projects will not impact funding of roadway projects, for example.) She assured the Committee that the response rate has been commendable as well as the nontraditional forms of engagement used to reach underserved populations.

**7. Modal Subcommittees Update**

Ms. Lorenzo reiterated that the modal subcommittees are beginning to meet monthly. She noted that the Bike/Pedestrian subcommittee met yesterday, Roadway will meet tomorrow, Public Transportation on Tuesday, Freight/Rail next Thursday, and Aviation and Ferry the following Tuesday and Thursday, respectively. She added that the subcommittees will keep to a similar schedule, with members receiving an e-mail notice of each meeting, and followed by agenda packets a week in advance.

**8. Additional Items**

Ms. Padgett stated that she will give periodic updates on the Rail Realignment project every three or four months. She offered to send them to members of the CAC via e-mail on request. She noted that she will give an update at the next meeting of the CAC on August 8<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Cawthorne requested that a timeline for the CAC be sent to him and be included in the milestone briefings to the member jurisdictions.

Ms. Padgett expressed appreciation to members for 100% attendance today. She noted that Ms. Rochelle was present via conference call.

**9. Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Abby Lorenzo  
Senior Transportation Planner  
Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

**THE ABOVE MINUTES ARE NOT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS.  
THE ENTIRE PROCEEDINGS ARE RECORDED ON A COMPACT DISC AS PART OF THIS RECORD.**