

WILMINGTON URBAN AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION



MISSION STATEMENT

Create and execute continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive regional long-range planning efforts that proactively drive transportation decisions to improve safety, connectivity, economic development and quality of life in the Wilmington region.



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WMPO BOARD MEMBERS

The Board is the federally recognized entity responsible for carrying out the urban transportation planning process for the Wilmington Urban Area.



David Piepmeyer, Chair



Pat Batleman, Vice Chair



Landon Zimmer



Mike Allen



Neil Anderson



Woody White



John Ellen



Rob Zapple



Hank Miller



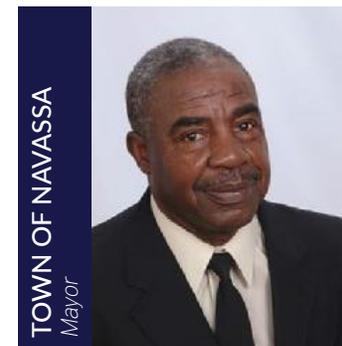
Charlie Rivenbark



LeAnn Pierce



Frank Williams



Eulis Willis

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As I reflected on this past year, it became very clear that the organization faced a number of challenges and also had many achievements. It also became very clear how well positioned the organization is to advance transportation initiatives in our state and region. As the Executive Director of the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and on behalf of our Board, I am pleased to present this 2020 Annual Report.

Challenges

The North Carolina Department of Transportation's cash management issues coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in difficulty planning and implementing important infrastructure improvements in our state and region. With people driving less due to the "stay at home" orders as a result of COVID-19, this has and will have lingering effects on transportation funding at state and federal levels. Many projects have been suspended or delayed as a result of these financial challenges, however Congress, the North Carolina General Assembly and North Carolina Department of Transportation are all working on solutions to help address these financial challenges.

Achievements

Although the year has had its challenges, it has also provided for a number of successful accomplishments. The Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization worked diligently on the development of Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045 which will serve as the MPO's next long-range transportation plan. The MPO partnered with the Arts Council of New Hanover County to begin development of the Wilmington Trail Master Plan, The MPO Board supported the modal project submittals for Prioritization 6.0. In addition, our members have completed the implementation of several of the MPO's Direct Attributable funded projects. This has been achieved through the construction of transportation infrastructure improvements that include the transit portion of the Wilmington Multi-modal Transportation Center (Padgett Station), intersection improvements at 5th/Dawson and 5th/Wooster, and Shipyard Boulevard bus pull-out.

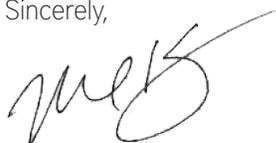
Looking Ahead

Looking ahead, the next year will include many challenges as we try to address the North Carolina Department of Transportation's cash management issues and the anticipated effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also anticipate a number of achievements that will include the official adoption of Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045, completion of the Wilmington Rail Trail Master Plan, completion of the 2020 Congestion Management Process, development of the MPO's next Strategic Plan, and continued implementation of the MPO's Direct Attributable funding.

An endeavor of notable excitement for me in the next fiscal year is the City of Wilmington/Wilmington Urban Area MPO's effort to complete the building design for the Wilmington Multi-modal Transportation Center Phase 1B. This project will rehabilitate and re-use the historic building located at 525 North 4th Street. Once the design and renovations are complete, this building will provide the future offices for the MPO.

Although we anticipate several challenges over the next year, the future is bright. I and the other MPO staff look forward to working with the MPO Board and various committees, our local members, our citizens, and other key stakeholders to ensure 2021 is another successful year.

Sincerely,



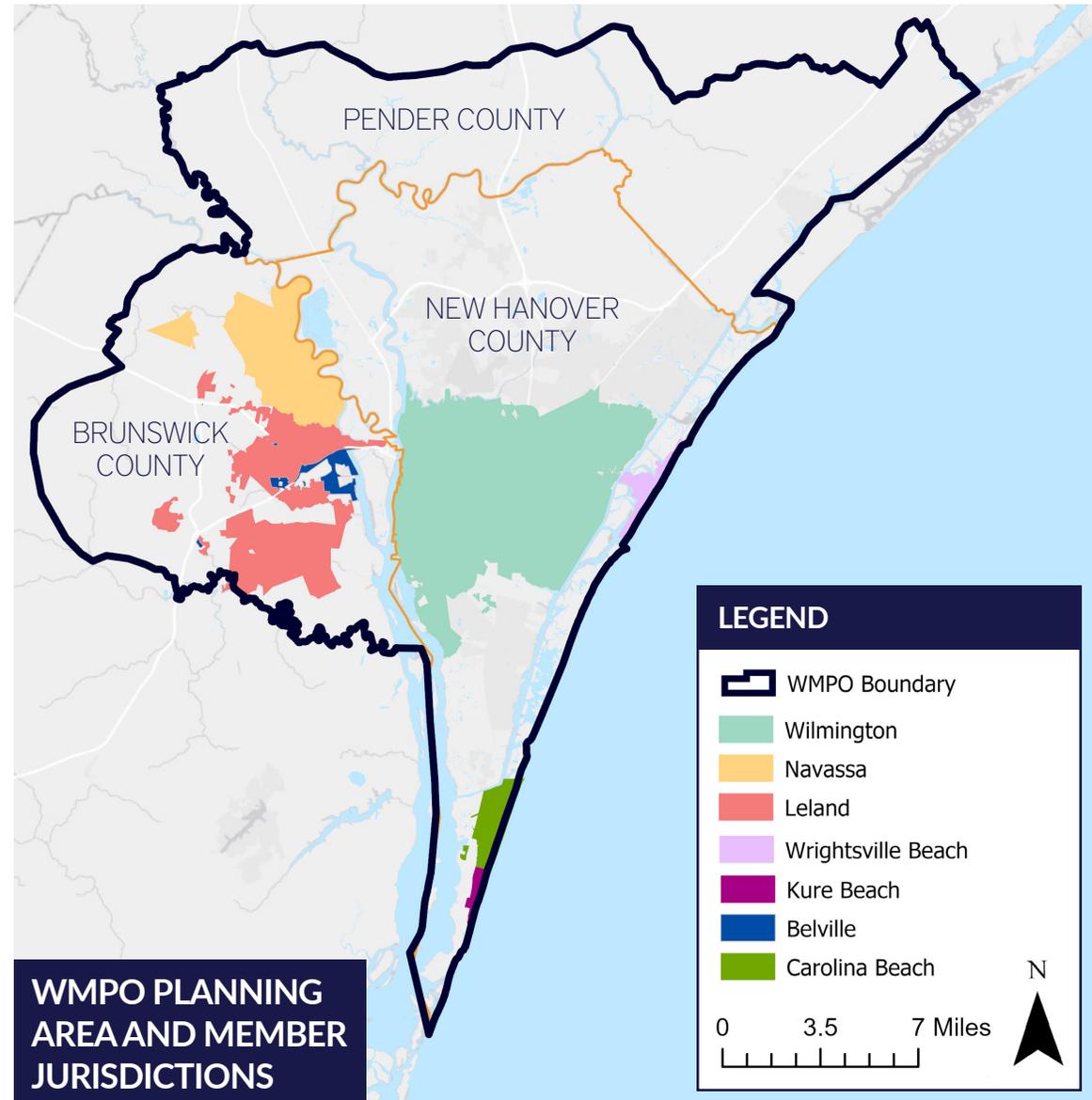
Mike Kozlosky, Executive Director

ABOUT THE WMPO

The Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) was created in 1978 when the region's population exceeded 50,000. Federally-mandated in all urban areas of 50,000 or more, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are responsible for conducting regional transportation planning which serves as the basis for the expenditure of federal transportation funds. The WMPO is the MPO recognized by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for the Wilmington Urban Area and includes representatives from the following jurisdictions and organizations:

- City of Wilmington
- Town of Carolina Beach
- Town of Kure Beach
- Town of Wrightsville Beach
- New Hanover County
- Town of Belville
- Town of Leland
- Town of Navassa
- Brunswick County
- Pender County
- Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority
- North Carolina Board of Transportation

The WMPO planning boundary, shown in the map to the right, contains approximately 494 square miles and encompasses all of New Hanover County and portions of Brunswick and Pender counties. The current population of the area is estimated at 280,000.



2017-2021 STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN

The WMPO's Strategic Business Plan provides direction for the organization for the period of 2017 to 2021. Adopted in February 2017, the plan identifies the WMPO Board's top six target areas, which include:

CAPE FEAR CROSSING



CURRENT STATUS:

A Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Cape Fear Crossing was completed and public hearings were held in 2019. Preliminary Engineering (PE) was suspended and the project put on hold by NCDOT due to lack of funding; however, the project remains a major regional priority. It is included (unfunded) in the 2020-2029 STIP and is partially fiscally constrained in the WMPO's Draft 2045 MTP. Tolling was approved as an alternative funding source for the project. The WMPO Board also supports the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge Replacement, for which a feasibility study was completed in May 2020. This project is fiscally constrained in the draft 2045 MTP.

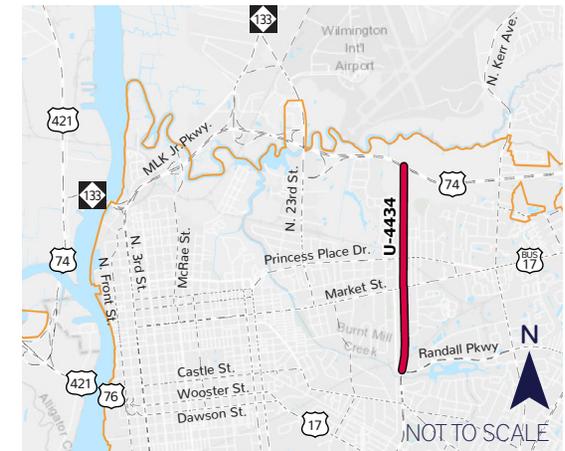
HAMPSTEAD BYPASS



CURRENT STATUS:

The Hampstead Bypass (R-3300) is committed for funding in the 2020-2029 STIP but has been delayed due to NCDOT's cash flow issues. Although the project was one of only two in the region allowed to continue with PE, it had reached Right-of-Way (ROW) Acquisition, which was suspended.

INDEPENDENCE BLVD EXTENSION



CURRENT STATUS:

The Independence Blvd Extension (U-4434) is committed for funding in the 2020-2029 STIP but has been delayed due to NCDOT's cash flow issues. PE for the project has been suspended until NCDOT is above the cash floor and there is available funding.

2017-2021 STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN

RAIL REALIGNMENT



CURRENT STATUS:

The Wilmington Rail Realignment and Right-of-Way Use Alternatives Feasibility Study was completed in 2017. In 2019, the project was announced as the recipient of up to \$2 million in grant funds under the Federal Railroad Administration's CRISI grant program. The grant requires a state or local match of \$500,000, which is being contributed by NCDOT. The City of Wilmington has begun work pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in the first half of 2020. The WMPO Board passed a resolution in June 2020 supporting the project for the benefits of environmental sustainability, improved commuting times, public safety, quality of life, enhanced freight movement, and economic development. Additionally, over the past year, the WMPO has supported the inclusion of a rail component in the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge Replacement.

WALLACE TO CASTLE HAYNE



CURRENT STATUS:

Re-establishment of the rail line from Wallace to Castle Hayne remains a regional priority. The WMPO will submit the project to NCDOT for prioritization (P6.0) in July 2020. Because of the high cost of the project, it is not fiscally constrained within the WMPO's Draft 2045 MTP; however, the draft plan identifies the project, its importance to the region, and the need for alternative funding sources in order to implement the project.

INCREASE ILM DIRECT ROUTES



CURRENT STATUS:

ILM announced in January 2020 that American Airlines would be offering nonstop service to Boston Logan International Airport (BOS) from May to August. The addition of the seasonal service to Boston has increased the airport's number of nonstop destinations to nine. Expanding this number is a top priority for ILM and the airport has conducted origin-destination studies of travelers' flight patterns in order to identify and prioritize additional nonstop destinations.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING SERVICES

The primary role of the WMPO is to conduct transportation planning in a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive manner, also known as the 3-C process. As such, the WMPO is key to ensuring federal requirements are met for the expenditure of federal dollars. Most importantly, the WMPO develops and maintains the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the long-range, fiscally constrained planning document that establishes regional transportation priorities. Additionally, the WMPO is responsible for providing the following services:

LONG RANGE PLANNING

The WMPO coordinates with member jurisdictions and partners to develop long-range transportation plans in addition to the federally mandated MTP. Over the past year, staff has continued work on the development of the 2045 MTP. Additionally, staff has begun data collection and analysis for the Congestion Management Process (CMP) 2020 Biennial Report, and kicked off the development of the Wilmington Rail Trail Master Plan.

TRAVEL DEMAND MODEL

Transportation plans often utilize a travel demand model to better understand the impacts of future transportation facilities. The Wilmington Regional Model, which was updated by NCDOT in December 2018, has been used in the development of the 2045 MTP. Base Year (2015) data and 2045 projections were used to map current and projected levels of service and traffic volumes on the region's roadways for the following scenarios: Base Year (2015); 2045, if no projects were implemented (No Build); 2045, if all projects but the Cape Fear Crossing were implemented; and 2045, if all projects were implemented (including the Crossing).

NCDOT PRIORITIZATION 6.0 PROCESS

The Strategic Transportation Investment Process provides for data driven project selection. NCDOT provides for MPOs, Rural Planning Organizations, and Division Engineers to submit projects for potential funding and programming into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)/metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) every two years. During FY 2019-2020, the WMPO coordinated with planning partners to prioritize and select projects for submittal for Prioritization 6.0. The WMPO is eligible to submit up to 19 projects per mode from its adopted MTP, Cape Fear Transportation 2040. Selected projects were input into NCDOT's SPOT Online system for scoring based on the Strategic Transportation Investments Law. Initial quantitative scores are expected by summer 2021. These scores will be utilized by NCDOT to select projects for inclusion in the 2023-2032 STIP/TIP.

DATA MANAGEMENT, MAPPING, AND GRAPHICS

The Long-Range Planning services manage the WMPO's geographic information systems (GIS) and design software. These programs are used for the production of maps, interactive mapping applications, posters, brochures, documents, etc., all of which are critical components during the development of plans, reports, and other outreach initiatives. This service is also needed for data analysis and to ensure robust communication with the public. Additionally, the WMPO website contains a repository for various GIS data layers, along with several web applications that display this data in an interactive way. All data layers displayed and/or available for download are updated with newly collected data on a monthly basis to ensure accuracy. The WMPO utilized an intern to manually collect existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure absent from current datasets during the winter of 2019/2020.

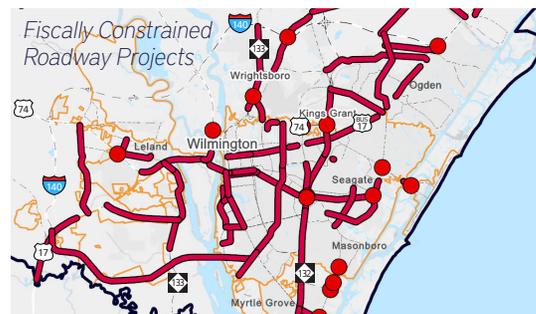
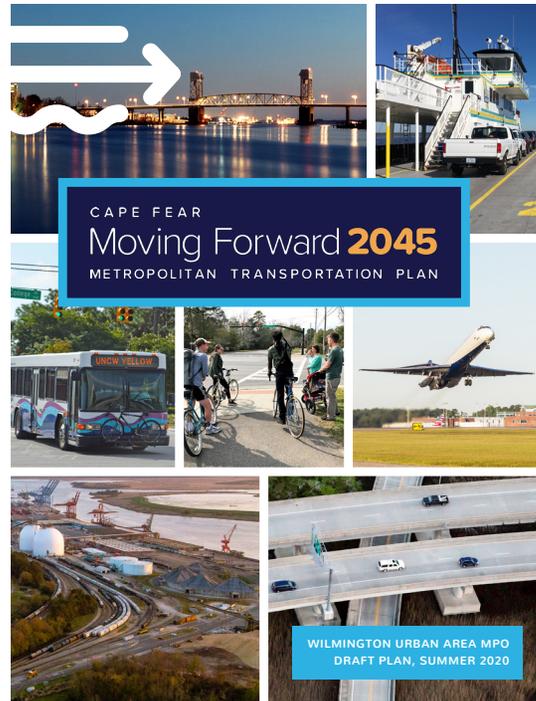


LONG RANGE PLANS IN PROGRESS

The creation of long-range planning documents involves extensive public outreach and collaboration with planning partners and subject matter experts. Existing conditions are analyzed and future technological advances are considered during the development of final recommendations. The following are long-range plans currently in progress:

2045 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The WMPO is required by federal law to update the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) every 5 years. This plan will serve as a guide to the region's transportation priorities and actions, and will be used for project selection for NCDOT's Prioritization Process and development of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The WMPO has continued work on the plan over the past year to include the development of fiscally constrained project lists based on the ranks and costs of the modal projects, as well as an exploration of potential future alternative funding sources like vehicle registration fees, bonds, and tolling. The draft plan was released for public review and comment in late February 2020. During the public comment period, which ran through mid-May, the public was encouraged to review the plan and submit written comments via mail or email. The WMPO also held two regional open houses in March and an additional three virtual open houses were scheduled for July 2020. Some of the many comments received resulted in staff recommended changes to the draft plan, while others stemmed from content-related additions and formatting/grammatical edits. The final draft of the plan is anticipated to be adopted by the WMPO Board in November 2020.



On the Fiscally-Constrained Bicycle and Pedestrian Project List, it appears that several projects (BP-581 (Carolina Beach Road & College Road), BP-646 (College Road and Oleander Drive), BP-584 (College Road & Monkey Junction Shopping Center Entrance), BP-577 (Bayshore Drive & Market Street), BP-627 (Piner Road & Myrtle Grove Road)) are already included in the design or recommended cross sections for roadway projects anticipated for funding prior to the anticipated funding year of the bike/ped projects. If there is not a need for this redundancy, approximately \$113,800 (not considering inflation) could be freed-up, which could allow projects such as BP-147a (Central Blvd/ Morningside Drive Bike Lanes), the Front Street Sharrows (BP-471 and 370), etc. to be funded.

The top priority projects are programmed for funding between 2020-2025. With NCDOT facing financial issues, how will that affect these projects?

There are planned bicycle improvements on Lendire. What will this project look like?



LONG RANGE PLANS IN PROGRESS

CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS 2020 BIENNIAL REPORT

In 2012, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) designated the Wilmington Urban Area as a Transportation Management Area (TMA). As a TMA, the WMPO is required to prepare and adopt a Congestion Management Process (CMP) to evaluate and manage congestion in a regionally-agreed upon manner. The WMPO developed its CMP in 2014 and publishes a Biennial Data Report on a two-year basis to demonstrate how its regional network is performing according to the established performance measures. During FY 2019-2020, the WMPO has worked with its planning partners, NCDOT, and consultant, Kittleson and Associates, to evaluate and update the process. This evaluation included a review of the regional corridor network, the established performance measures and metrics, and new available data. With the upcoming adoption of the draft 2045 MTP, the goals of the WMPO's CMP have been updated to align with the goals of the draft plan. The performance measures established by the goals of the process, although remaining similar, have also been updated to utilize new or more accurate data types. The most innovative of these new sources is the National Performance Management Research Data Set (NPMRDS), a speed and data set collected through probe data from fleet vehicles, connected cars, and mobile apps. Kittleson and Associates developed an exclusive analysis tool capable of reporting average travel times and delays along a corridor over an established period of time. This allows for monitoring over a greater time period than the previous corridor snapshots collected by floating car studies for the 2016 and 2018 Biennial Reports. Examination of regional and corridor performance measure results will help to identify travel patterns and the locations and causes of recurring and non-recurring congestion. Additionally, the 30 monitored corridors will now be evaluated based on two parts: travel time reliability and multimodal suitability. Congestion mitigation strategies will be recommended based on these corridor scores through collaboration with the WMPO's member jurisdictions. The final draft of the 2020 Biennial Report is anticipated to be adopted in November 2020.

**THE
CONGESTION
MANAGEMENT
PROCESS**
Source: FHWA



WILMINGTON RAIL TRAIL MASTER PLAN

In January, the WMPO and the Friends of the Wilmington Rail Trail kicked off the development of a multimodal master plan for the downtown rail corridor between 3rd Street and McRae Street. The effort is being funded by the WMPO's federal Direct Attributable Program and a donation from the Arts Council of Wilmington and New Hanover County. The plan is intended to address the feasibility for use of the corridor for bicycles, pedestrians, mass transportation, and future passenger rail service. The final plan will offer potential cross sections and points of access, as well as recommendations for the integration of public art into the corridor. Completion of the plan is expected in Fall 2020.



FY 2019-2020 WMPO HIGHLIGHTS



- 1 Number of Fatalities
- 2 Rate of Fatalities per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
- 3 Number of Serious Injuries
- 4 Rate of Serious Injuries per 100 million VMT
- 5 Number of Non-motorized (bicycle and pedestrian) Fatalities and Serious Injuries

ADOPTION OF THE 2020-2029 STIP/TIP

The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) identifies funding for and outlines the scheduling of transportation projects in the state over a ten-year period. The WMPO adopts the STIP as its metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The current North Carolina STIP, which covers the years 2020-2029, was adopted by the NC Board of Transportation in September 2019. Following a 30-day public comment period and a public hearing, the WMPO Board adopted the 2020-2029 STIP/TIP on October 30, 2019.

The 2020-2029 STIP/TIP includes the following within the WMPO planning boundary:

- (11) Aviation projects for a total programmed cost of \$39,240,000
- (7) Bicycle & Pedestrian projects (funded by the WMPO's Direct Attributable Program and local matches)
- \$5,700,000 programmed for new mooring facilities and a new river class ferry vessel for Southport-Fort Fisher
- Improvements to the CSX SE Rail Line (Wilmington Beltline) totaling \$41,400,000
- \$33,312,000 programmed for Public Transportation (Capital projects and Operations & Maintenance)
- (24) Roadway projects for a total programmed cost of \$967,884,000*

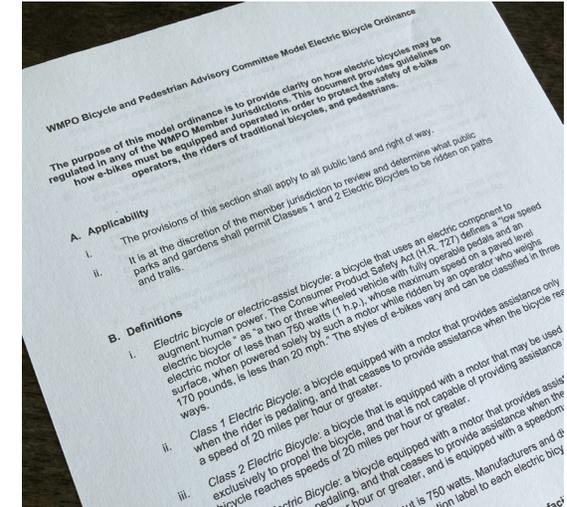
*Capital projects only - does not include bridge repairs, resurfacing, etc.

ADOPTION OF NCDOT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

NCDOT establishes and reports targets for five safety performance measures each year by August 31 for the Highway Safety Improvement Program annual report. Each MPO in the state can then agree to plan and program projects that contribute to the State's targets or establish its own, either of which must occur within 180 days of the State reporting its safety targets.

In November 2019, the WMPO Board passed a resolution supporting the endorsement of the targets for safety performance measures established by NCDOT.

FY 2019-2020 WMPO HIGHLIGHTS



2020 WMPO LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

The 2020 Legislative Agenda, which was approved by the WMPO Board in May 2020, identifies the priorities of the organization at the policy level for the year. These priorities, which are shared with our delegation in the North Carolina General Assembly and U.S. Congress, include:

- Corridor Preservation | Corridor protection, funding, and advanced ROW acquisition for large transportation projects | Protection for the WMPO for the filing of Transportation Corridor maps for the Hampstead Bypass
- Transportation Financing | Prioritization and funding for local transportation and infrastructure projects as well as the exploration of new funding sources for these projects
- Opposition to Transfer of State Road Maintenance | Opposition to the transfer of responsibility for the state's road system to local governments and the weakening of municipal Powell Bill street maintenance funding
- Limitation on City Requirements for Street Improvements Related to Schools | Solutions needed to reduce the funding burden on municipalities and maintain level of service on roadways around schools
- Moped Legislation | Restriction of mopeds on public roads with speed limits of 45 mph or greater | Education and clarity on existing regulations for mopeds, golf carts, and other low-speed vehicles
- Electric Scooter Legislation | Support of electric scooters as alternative transportation if used in a safe and accessible manner | Local government control through adopted codes and ordinances

WMPO MODEL ELECTRIC BICYCLE ORDINANCE

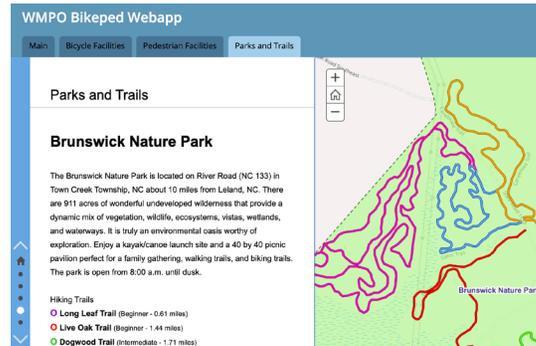
The WMPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) created an Electric Bicycle Model Ordinance to provide clarity on how electric bicycles (e-bikes) may be regulated. The ordinance, which was approved by the WMPO Board in June 2020, provides guidelines on how e-bikes must be equipped and operated in order to protect the safety of e-bike operators, traditional bicycle riders, and pedestrians. WMPO member jurisdictions may choose to adopt the Electric Bicycle Ordinance as is or use it as a basis for creating their own ordinances.

FY 2019-2020 WMPO HIGHLIGHTS



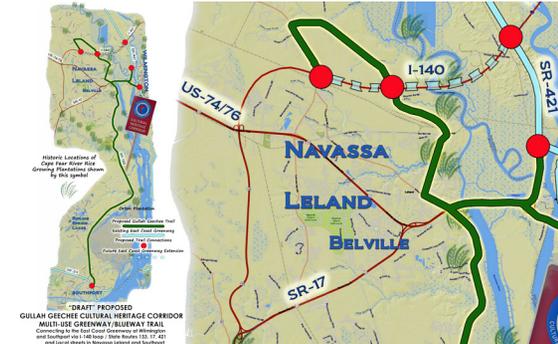
BIKE/PED DATABASE UPDATE

The WMPO maintains a database of potential bicycle and pedestrian projects for the region, submitted by staff and planning partners as well as members of the public. The fiscally constrained bicycle and pedestrian projects included in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) are selected from this database of about 900 projects. During the Summer of 2020, WMPO staff, along with volunteers from the WMPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), evaluated each project in the database to determine if it had been completed, was under construction, or was still needed. Those that were completed or under construction were removed to ensure the database is current and to allow new projects to be added.



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN WEB APP

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Web App is an online mapping application that allows users to explore all the different bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the WMPO planning area. The Web App, which went live in November 2019, contains data layers for all existing sidewalks, crosswalks, bike paths, trails, and more. To view different maps, Web App users can navigate between three tabs: Bicycle Facilities; Pedestrian Facilities; and Parks and Trails. Each map includes associated descriptions and points of interest. Hazards, such as missing pavement and construction zones, are also noted on the maps.



RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE GULLAH GEECHEE CULTURAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR MULTI-USE GREENWAY/BLUEWAY TRAIL

In June 2020, the WMPO Board passed a resolution supporting the proposed concept of a greenway/blueway trail in the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor. The corridor is a National Heritage Area established by the U.S. Congress to recognize the unique culture of the Gullah Geechee people. The proposed greenway/blueway will highlight environmental and historic assets in the region and contribute to environmental restoration and economic growth while providing improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure which will tie into the greater regional network.

FY 2019-2020 WMPO HIGHLIGHTS



WATCH FOR ME NC

In an effort to decrease the number of bicycle and pedestrian fatalities and injuries, Go Coast has partnered with the Wilmington Police Department to become a 2020 Watch for Me NC Community. This NCDOT program works through a comprehensive, targeted approach of public education, community engagement, and high visibly law enforcement. Key partners include the Wilmington Fire Department, New Hanover Regional Medical Center, and Wilmington Traffic Engineering.

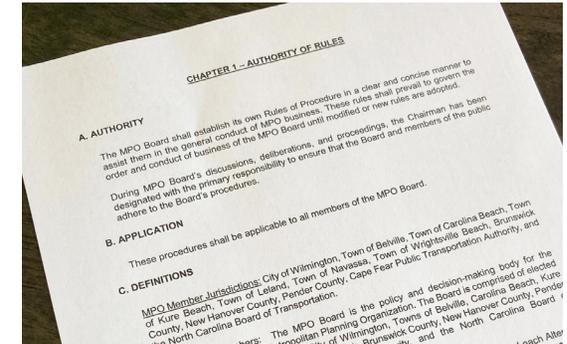
The Go Coast Committee approved the Go Coast Bicycle Helmet Program in February 2020. The program will provide 100 bike helmets to WMPO area residents through in-person Watch for Me NC events.*

*when COVID-19 restrictions are lifted and events are permitted to resume



WMPO CERTIFICATION REVIEW BY FHWA & FTA

Federal regulations require the FHWA and the FTA to jointly review, evaluate, and certify the transportation planning process conducted by each Transportation Management Area (TMA) every four years. The WMPO's certification review was held on April 30, 2020. The review was held virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. At this time, the FHWA and FTA reviewed the organizational structure of the WMPO, the ongoing development of the WMPO's MTP, the WMPO's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and CMP, etc. Questions were asked of staff and discussions were held regarding public transportation, environmental mitigation, public engagement, and environmental justice. Additionally, a 30-day public comment period was held prior to the certification review. The final report included three commendations, one recommendation, and no corrective actions.



ADOPTION OF WMPO RULES OF PROCEDURE

The WMPO Board adopted Rules of Procedure in September 2019. The Rules of Procedure address the following:

- Authority of Rules
- MPO Board Organization and Duties
- Conduct of the MPO Board
- MPO Board Meetings and Schedules
- Meeting Guidelines and Procedures

Prior to adoption of the Rules of Procedure, which is now a standalone document, the rules of procedure were covered in the organization's bylaws.

FY 2019-2020 WMPO HIGHLIGHTS



COMPLETION OF THE WILMINGTON MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION CENTER

The Wilmington Multimodal Transportation Center was completed in January 2020, replacing Wave Transit's previous downtown transfer station on 2nd Street. Located at 520 3rd Street, the Transportation Center offers upgraded amenities including waiting areas, restrooms, and free WiFi. The location adjacent to the former rail corridor owned by NCDOT is critical to future plans for passenger rail in Wilmington. The Wilmington Rail Trail, which is planned for this corridor, would provide an additional bicycle and pedestrian connection. The project was a collaborative effort between the City of Wilmington, the WMPO, and the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority (Wave Transit). The WMPO contributed \$4.1 million of the \$5.5 million project through Surface Transportation Block Grant - Direct Attributable (STBG-DA) funds.



COMPLETION OF THE SHIPYARD BLVD BUS PULLOUT

Construction of the Shipyard Blvd Bus Pullout was completed in February 2020. The project included a bus pullout and loading area along Shipyard Blvd as well as the installation of sidewalk from Rutledge Drive to Vance Street. By removing stopped buses from the through lanes, the new bus pullout will decrease travel delays on Shipyard Blvd and improve safety at this location.



COMPLETION OF 5TH AVENUE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

Pedestrian upgrades at the intersections of 5th Avenue & Dawson Street and 5th Avenue & Wooster Street in Wilmington were completed in June 2020. These improvements, which include high visibility crosswalks, curb ramps, and pedestrian activated signals, will improve safety and accessibility at these two intersection locations.

COMPLETION OF WILMINGTON TRAFFIC SIGNAL PREEMPTION (PHASE I)

This project included the installation of preemption equipment at 27 traffic signal locations throughout the City of Wilmington as well as the installation of GPS devices on 21 Wilmington Fire Department (WFD) vehicles. Construction was completed in December 2019.

TELECOMMUTE OPTIONS OFFERED

In the effort to limit community spread of COVID-19, many employers required, encouraged, or allowed employees who could work remotely to do so. Even as North Carolina has entered Phase 2 of its reopening, many employees are continuing to work remotely, either by choice or out of necessity. While some may still be required to work from home by their employers, others may have to work from home due to lack of childcare.

In a recent survey conducted by the WMPO's Transportation Demand Management program, Go Coast, only 28% of respondents telecommuted at least one day a week before COVID-19. During the pandemic, this number increased to 69%. When asked about their productivity while working from home, 25% of telecommuters responded that they were more productive while 36% reported no change in productivity.

PPP UPDATE & VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, and the subsequent cancellation of meetings and public open houses, the WMPO's Public Participation Plan (PPP) was amended to allow the WMPO to hold meetings electronically. The WMPO Board approved the opening of a 45-day public comment period for the amended PPP in June 2020.

IMPACTS TO NCDOT REVENUES AND PROJECT DELAYS

Approximately 40% of NCDOT's revenues come from North Carolina's motor fuel tax. Another 16% comes from the State's highway use tax. The decrease in traffic volumes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in NCDOT revenue losses estimated at \$300 million for FY 2020. Additional losses of \$370 million are anticipated for FY 2021.

Prior to COVID-19, NCDOT was hovering just above the agency's cash floor for several reasons:

- Rising construction costs;
- Storm cleanup and damage repair from Matthew (2016), Florence (2018), and Dorian (2019); and
- MAP Act settlements

The revenue losses associated with COVID-19 caused NCDOT to fall below the cash floor in May 2020 resulting in the following limitations:

- No new contracts for projects
- No contract modifications
- No new contracts with consultants in order to resume projects
- No property purchases for future projects

Projects already under construction were allowed

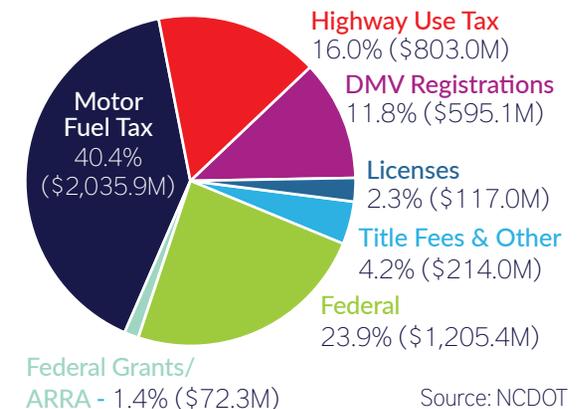
to continue as long as funds were available; however, no contract modifications or change orders were allowed.

Additional actions taken included temporarily suspending Preliminary Engineering (PE) on most projects. Of the current STIP projects in the Wilmington region, only the US421/Front Street Widening was allowed to continue with PE. While the Hampstead Bypass was also allowed to continue with PE, that project was in the right-of-way acquisition phase, which was suspended. (Right-of-way acquisition was suspended on most projects, with the exception of design-build.) NCDOT also suspended programs such as the wildflower program and reduced operating costs by cutting back mowing.

NCDOT REVENUE SOURCES

SFY 2019 - \$5.0 Billion

(Excludes receipt supported funding of \$0.1B)

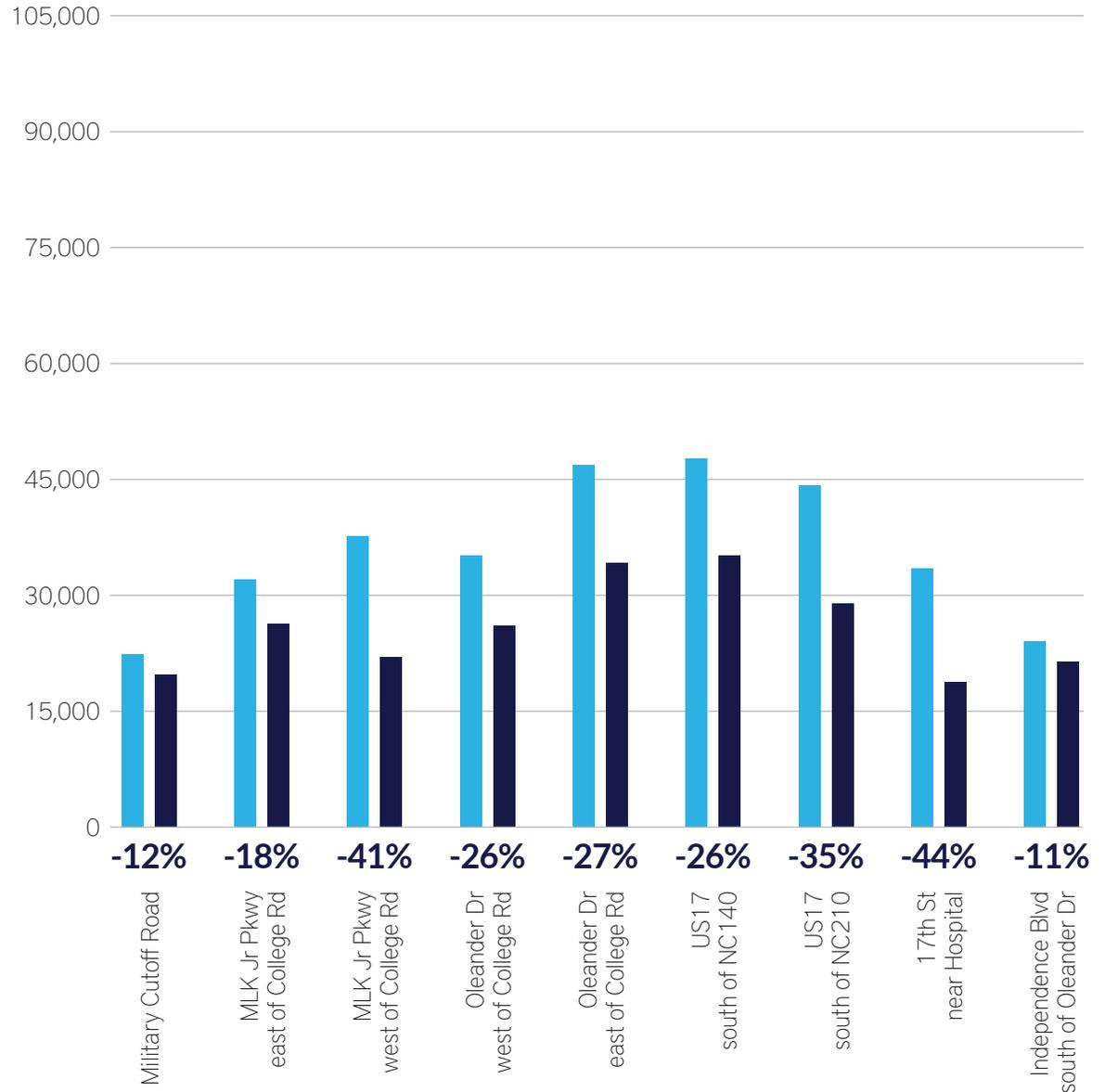


COVID-19 IMPACTS

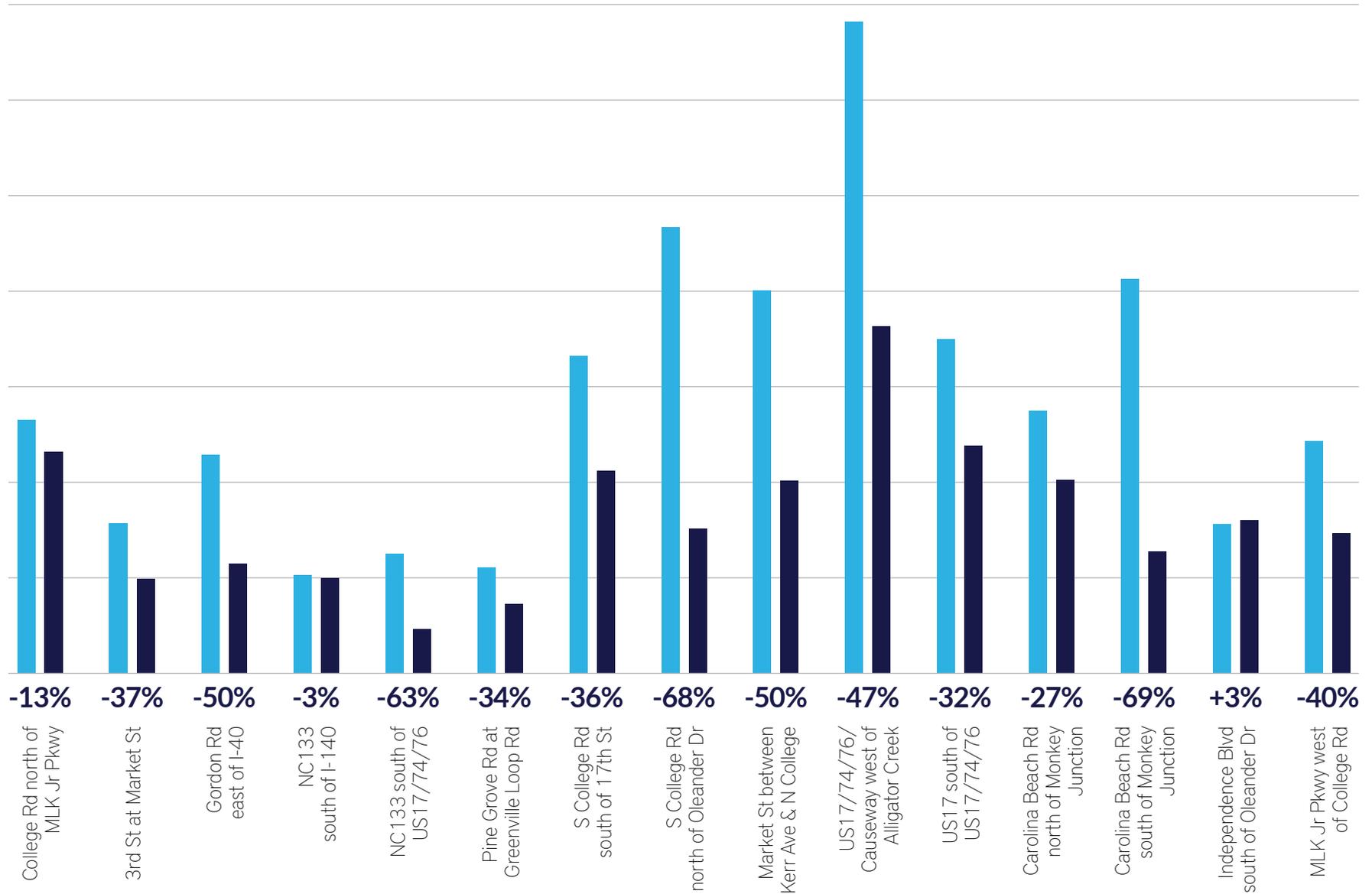
TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Closures and other restrictions put in place in response to COVID-19 caused traffic volumes to decrease 40-50% in North Carolina, according to NCDOT. WMPO staff performed special traffic counts during the pandemic to better understand the impact in our region. Of the 24 locations counted, only one location showed an increase in traffic volume from the last pre-COVID count (+3% on Independence Blvd south of Oleander Drive). Traffic volume at the remaining 23 locations decreased by an average of 35%. The most significant decrease occurred on Carolina Beach Road south of Monkey Junction (-69%). The count comparisons are shown in the graph to the right.

- 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Last count completed before COVID-19 (dates vary from 2019 to early 2020)



COVID-19 IMPACTS



TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



Go Coast is the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program for the Wilmington Urban Area. This program, which is a partnership between NCDOT and the WMPO's member jurisdictions, seeks to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and mitigate the growth of traffic congestion by encouraging and enabling community members to use alternative modes of transportation rather than single occupancy vehicles (SOVs).

Notable accomplishments during FY 2019-2020 include the completion of the Go Coast website, www.GoCoastNC.org, the Short-Range TDM Plan update, and the TDM element of the 2045 MTP, Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045.

The TDM Coordinator, with support from the Go Coast Committee, completed a first draft of the Short-Range Plan update, Cape Fear Change in Motion 2020, in April. Updated every five years, this plan includes goals, objectives, and measurable outcomes for decreasing VMT in the region. Over 250 residents completed an

online survey pertaining to the future of TDM in the region and these results will be used to guide priorities within the plan. Cape Fear Change in Motion 2020 is scheduled to be adopted by the WMPO Board in the Fall of 2020.

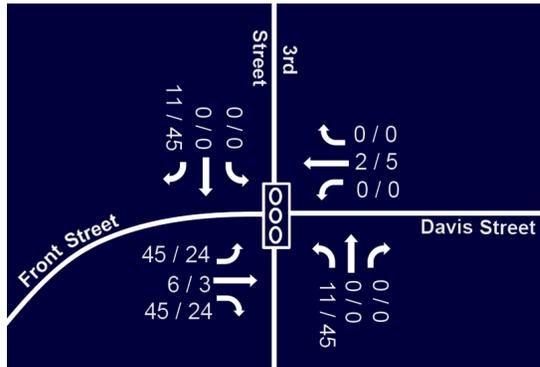
The TDM element of the 2045 MTP includes short-range, medium-range, and long-range TDM strategies that may be implemented over the next 25 years to increase alternative transportation use in the region and mitigate traffic congestion as the Wilmington Urban Area continues to grow.

REGIONAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

Go Coast hosted its Annual Commuter Challenge in October 2019. This challenge is intended to encourage WMPO Area residents to decrease their SOV use and utilize alternative modes of transportation such as walking, biking, carpooling, telecommuting, and public transit.

Typically, Go Coast hosts two major events during the month of May: The Annual River to Sea Bike Ride and Bike to Work Month. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 River to Sea Ride has been postponed indefinitely and Bike to Work Month was re-named Bike Month. With the significant increase in telecommuting, residents were encouraged to travel by bike not only to work, but to run errands, for leisure, and more. One hundred and eight participants reported riding a total of 5,587 miles, eliminating 342 SOV trips by bicycling.





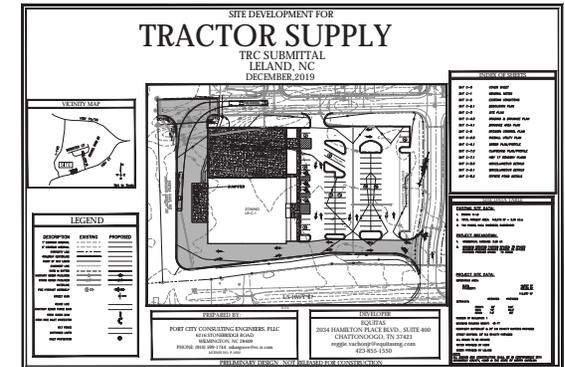
Queuing and Blocking Report Baseline

Intersection: 3: US 421 & Sutton Steam Plant

Movement	EB	EB	NB	NB	NB	SB	SB
Directions Served	L	R	L	T	T	T	T
Maximum Queue (ft)	79	46	183	91	120	136	96
Average Queue (ft)	24	12	93	50	32	89	44
95th Queue (ft)	60	39	153	93	77	137	87
Link Distance (ft)	914			991	991	930	930
Upstream Blk Time (%)							
Queuing Penalty (veh)							
Storage Bay Dist (ft)		120	250				
Storage Blk Time (%)							7
Queuing Penalty (veh)							10

Network Summary

Network wide Queuing Penalty: 15



In addition to transportation planning services, the WMPO also provides the following technical services:

- Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) Review
- Development Review
- Traffic Counting
- Management of the Direct Attributable Program*
- Project Management Assistance

*Includes projects funded by the Surface Transportation Block Grant - Direct Attributable (STBG-DA) Program and the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside - Direct Attributable (TASA-DA) Program

The following TIA and development review, traffic counting, and project management activities were completed during FY 2019-2020:

41 TIA REVIEWS

Forty-one TIAs were reviewed during FY 2019-2020, 18 of which were new submittals. The remaining 23 were ongoing reviews that began in the previous fiscal year.

1,231 SITE PLAN REVIEWS**

**Includes formal reviews (818), informal reviews (338), and concept plan reviews (75)

There was a decrease in the number of reviews from the previous fiscal year, which can be attributed to government closures due to Hurricane Dorian in September 2019 as well as reduced staffing and additional closures due to COVID-19 that occurred from March 28th to June 1st 2020.

377 TRAFFIC COUNTS

Three hundred and seventy-seven traffic counts were completed by WMPO staff during FY 2019-2020. Of these, 260 were WMPO annual counts while 117 were special counts. No annual counts were performed during the month of March due to COVID-19, resulting in a lower number of annual counts than the previous fiscal year.

18 STBG-DA PROJECTS***

7 TASA-DA PROJECTS***

***Includes multimodal

NOTE: The Middle Sound Greenway Extension project includes both STBG-DA and TASA-DA funds and is, therefore, counted in both categories

DIRECT ATTRIBUTABLE PROGRAM

STBG-DA AND TASA-DA PROJECTS COMPLETED OR IN DEVELOPMENT

There are currently 20 projects receiving Direct Attributable funding, either through the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program or the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TASA) Program. These projects are at various stages of planning, design, or construction, as indicated to the right. Additionally, four Direct Attributable projects were completed during FY 2019-2020.

BOLD = Completed during FY 2019-2020



FY 2020/2021*

- S Lake Park Blvd & Hamlet Avenue Intersection Improvements (U-6233) *Design*
- St Joseph Street/Lewis Drive Bike Lanes (U-6039) *Design*
- Wilmington Multimodal Transportation Center Phase 1B (U-6234) *Planning*
- Wilmington/New Hanover County Traffic Signal Preemption Phase II (U-6235) *Design*

FY 2019

- Middle Sound Greenway (EB-6027) *Design*
- Market Street & 21st Street HAWK Signal (EB-6028) *ON HOLD*
- Clarendon Ave MUP (EB-6029) *Design*

FY 2017

- **Wilmington Traffic Signal Preemption (U-5534T)**
- Belville Elementary MUP (EB-6026) *ON HOLD*
- Rice Hope MUP (EB-6025) *ON HOLD*

FY 2016

- **Wilmington Multimodal Transportation Center (TD-4721)**
- Navassa Park MUP (U-5534U) *Design*

FY 2015

- South College Road/Holly Tree Road Crosswalks (U-5534Q) *ON HOLD*

FY 2014

- Hooker Road MUP (U-5534G) *Design*
- Hinton Avenue MUP (U-5534H) *Design*
- **5th Ave at Wooster and Dawson Pedestrian Upgrades (U-5527B)**
- Old Fayetteville Loop Road Pedestrian Loop (U-5534J) *Anticipated Bid Date July 2020*
- Village Road MUP Extension (U-5534I) *Anticipated Bid Date July 2020*
- Leland Middle School Sidewalk (U-5534K) *Anticipated Bid Date July 2020*
- Middle Sound Greenway Extension to Middle Sound Village (U-5527C) *Bid May 2020*
- Coral Drive Sidewalks (U-5534S) *Anticipated Bid Date Summer 2020*

FY 2013

- **Shipyard Bus Pullout (U-5534N)**
- Wrightsville Avenue/Greenville Avenue to Hinton Avenue Pedestrian Improvements (U-5534C) *Design*
- Park Avenue MUP Phase II (U-5534F) *Design*
- Old Fayetteville Road MUP (U-5534D) *Anticipated Bid Date July 2020*

* The WMPO awarded both FY 2020 and FY 2021 projects during FY 2020. The awarded funds included \$500,000 for the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority (Wave Transit).

SEE MAPS ON OPPOSITE PAGE FOR LOCATIONS OF WMPO DA PROJECTS

DIRECT ATTRIBUTABLE PROGRAM

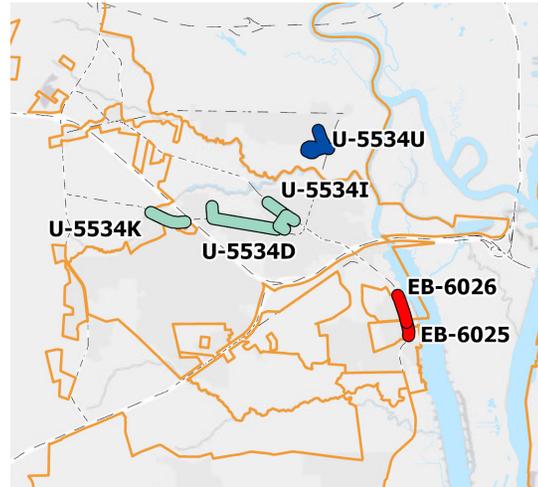


LEGEND

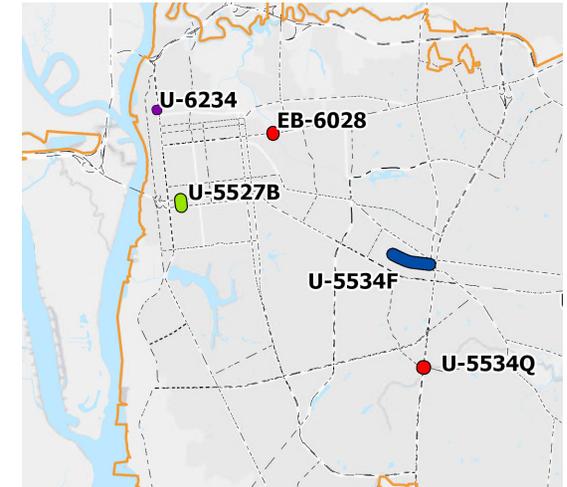
PROJECT STATUS:

- On Hold
- Planning
- Design
- Bidding
- Completed, FY 2019-2020

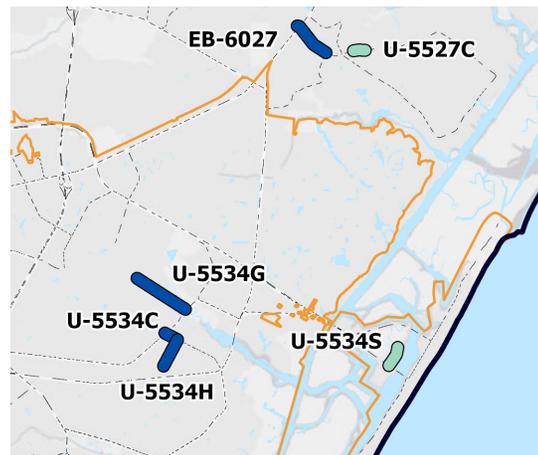
SCALE:



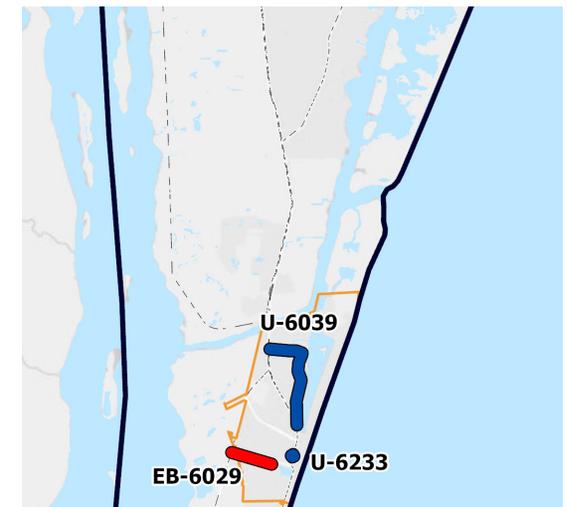
1 BRUNSWICK COUNTY



2 WILMINGTON

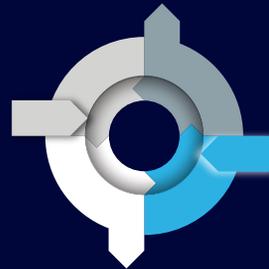


3 EASTERN NEW HANOVER COUNTY



4 CAROLINA BEACH

WILMINGTON URBAN AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION



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