

**Wilmington Urban Area MPO
Technical Coordinating Committee
Wednesday, April 14, 2021
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present

Mike Kozlosky, WMPO Executive Director
Rebekah Roth, New Hanover County
Nick Cannon, MPO Go Coast Program
Robert O’Quinn, Town of Wrightsville Beach
Adrienne Harrington, Town of Belville
Ashli Barefoot, Town of Leland
Barnes Sutton, Town of Navassa
Helen Bunch, Brunswick County
Patrick Flanagan, Cape Fear Council of Governments
Nazia Sarder, Transportation Planning Branch,
NCDOT
Vanessa Lacer, Cape Fear Public Transportation
Authority

Others Present

Abby Lorenzo, WMPO Deputy Director
Scott James, WMPO Transportation Planning
Engineer
Trevor Stewart, WMPO GIS Analyst
Kayla Grubb, WMPO Project Manager
Regina Hopkins, WMPO Senior Accountant
Zach Manfredi, WMPO Associate Transportation
Planner
Marie Parker, Executive Director, Wave Transit
Megan Matheny, Deputy Director, Wave Transit
Marty Little, New Hanover County
Zachary Bugg, Senior Engineer, Kittelson &
Associates
Cheryl Hannah, Senior Transportation Planner, HDR

1) Call to Order

Chairman Mike Kozlosky called to order the remote meeting at 10:01 a.m. and took a roll call pursuant to Section 4.31 of Senate Bill 704 (Session Law 2020-3). A quorum was present, as follows:

Present: Mike Kozlosky, Rebekah Roth, Nick Cannon, Robert O’Quinn, Adrienne Harrington, Ashli Barefoot, Barnes Sutton, Helen Bunch, Patrick Flanagan, Nazia Sarder and Vanessa Lacer. **Absent:** Denys Vielkanowitz, Ed Parvin, Mandy Sanders, Granseur Dick, Stephanie Ayers, Travis Henley and Caitlin Marks.

2) Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Bunch made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Barefoot seconded the motion and it carried unanimously by roll call, as follows:

Ayes: Mike Kozlosky, Rebekah Roth, Nick Cannon, Robert O’Quinn, Adrienne Harrington, Ashli Barefoot, Barnes Sutton, Helen Bunch, Patrick Flanagan, Nazia Sarder and Vanessa Lacer. **Nays:** None. **Absent:** Denys Vielkanowitz, Ed Parvin, Mandy Sanders, Granseur Dick, Stephanie Ayers, Travis Henley and Caitlin Marks.

3) Presentation

a. “Be A Looker” Campaign - Nick Cannon, WMPO

Go Coast TDM Program Coordinator Nick Cannon gave brief presentation on the “Be A Looker,” a biennial bicycle and pedestrian safety campaign. He gave the following crash statistics:

Time span	Crash type	North Carolina	WMPO Region
Annually	Pedestrian-to-vehicle	2,000	341
2015-2019	Bicycle-to-vehicle	1,000	504

Mr. Cannon stated that New Hanover County has the 4th highest number of bike and pedestrian crashes and the highest number of crashes per capita, double that of Mecklenburg and Wake counties. He explained that the “Be A Looker” campaign seeks to reduce the number of bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities by promoting biking and walking as legitimate modes of

transportation and educating those in the WMPO region on the rules of the road for driving, walking, and bicycling. He gave a brief overview of the previous marketing campaign from April to September 2019. He noted that the final report including community feedback from the 2019 campaign is available at www.GoCoastNC.org.

Mr. Cannon stated that the 2021 campaign will run from May to October and be similar to the 2019 campaign with an increased emphasis on community programming to include helmet fittings, and safety lessons in collaboration with the Wilmington Fire Department, and other identified partners. He requested partnering opportunities for education with the WMPO's member jurisdictions such as health and safety events.

Ms. Roth said that in addition to a previously provided contact at New Hanover County Parks and Gardens, she would e-mail contact information for Health Educator Julia Phelps at the Health Department. Mr. Cannon noted that Tara has been in touch and although Parks has no in-person events planned; it would share information on its social media pages.

b. Proclamation: "May as Bike Month"

MPO Deputy Director Abby Lorenzo stated that a proclamation naming May 2021 as Bike Month is included in the agenda packet for the MPO Board to consider at its next meeting. She noted that due to the impacts of COVID-19, the City of Wilmington did not present the proclamation last year or this year as it has in previous years.

c. Belville 2030 Plan – Adrienne Harrington, Smart Moves Consulting

Ms. Adrienne Harrington, Smart Moves Consulting, the Town of Belville's on-call consulting firm and the TCC's voting representative, gave brief presentation on the Belville Vision 2030 Plan. She encouraged TCC members to visit Brunswick Riverwalk Park at Belville, which is considered the gym of the town. She noted that for the purposes of the plan, the town is looking to expand the park and it's boardwalk to provide access to future downtown amenities fronting the Brunswick River to the east, bounded by US-74/76 further to the north and NC-133 to the west. She added that NCDOT is looking to relocate its facilities on Old River Road, and the availability of the land makes the plan possible.

Ms. Harrington displayed some examples of southeastern coastal and river front downtowns and small urban developments that preserve the character of those locations. She gave an overview of possible downtown amenities and retail sectors that would be most beneficial to a successful downtown Belville based on an economic impact analysis. She noted that the public would be surveyed to learn their top-10 preferences for amenities. She added that multi-modal projects that would compliment the plan include the following:

- Gullah Geechee Heritage Trail (greenway and blueway)
- Chappell Loop Road Bike Lanes and Sharrows (MPO 2045 MTP: BP-298)
- Belville Elementary Multi-use Path (STBGP-DA funded and in design)
- Rice Hope Multi-use Path (STBGP-DA funded and in design)
- NC-133 Modernization (U-5914, let date FY22)
- NC-133/River Road Widening (MPO 2045 MTP: RW-51, 2040)

Ms. Harrington said that the Belville Vision 2030 Plan is currently in the public input phase, which is open until April 28. Surveys of 18 questions can be completed in 10-15 minutes online or on paper. Two in-person public meetings are planned outdoors for today at the Brunswick Riverwalk Park and tomorrow at the future downtown area.

Mr. Kozlosky inquired about the connection between the Battleship North Carolina and the Town of Belville envisioned by former Town Commissioner and MPO Board Member Joe Breault. Ms. Harrington responded that the Vision 2030 Plan will include a section on future regional connections to the towns of Leland and Navassa, and the City of Wilmington.

4) **Consent Agenda**

a. **Approval of TCC Meeting Minutes – March 17, 2021**

b. **Resolution approving the 2020-2029 STIP/MPO TIP Administrative Modifications 21-3**

No items were pulled from the Consent Agenda.

Ms. Harrington made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Items 4a and 4b, as presented, and to forward the items to the MPO Board for consideration. Ms. Roth seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mike Kozlosky, Rebekah Roth, Nick Cannon, Adrienne Harrington, Ashli Barefoot, Barnes Sutton, Helen Bunch, Patrick Flanagan, Nazia Sarder and Vanessa Lacer. **Nays:** None. **Absent:** Denys Vielkanowitz, Ed Parvin, Mandy Sanders, Robert O’Quinn, Granseur Dick, Stephanie Ayers, Travis Henley and Caitlin Marks.

5) **Regular Agenda**

a. **Resolution adopting the Cape Fear Change in Motion 2020 TDM Plan**

Go Coast TDM Program Coordinator Nick Cannon stated that this plan will guide initiatives to increase multi-modal and decrease single-passenger vehicle travel over the next five years. He noted that the plan will go before the MPO Board for consideration later this month.

Mr. Cannon made a motion to recommend approval of the TDM Plan. Ms. Lacer seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mike Kozlosky, Rebekah Roth, Nick Cannon, Robert O’Quinn, Adrienne Harrington, Ashli Barefoot, Barnes Sutton, Helen Bunch, Patrick Flanagan, Nazia Sarder and Vanessa Lacer. **Nays:** None. **Absent:** Denys Vielkanowitz, Ed Parvin, Mandy Sanders, Granseur Dick, Stephanie Ayers, Travis Henley and Caitlin Marks.

6) **Discussion**

a. **COVID-19 Direct Attributable Funding Allocation**

MPO Transportation Planning Engineer Scott A. James gave an overview of the COVID-19 Direct Attributable (DA) Funding Allocation. He reminded committee members that there was some discussion on the 2021 Supplemental Appropriations Act in March. He noted that it allocated \$1,133,044 to the Wilmington MPO, which are available for obligation until September 30, 2024. Both discussions with the TCC and the MPO Board found agreement in offering the funds payable of 100% as opposed to the traditional 80/20 split for DA funds, which necessitates a local match.

After review of the methodology used to score and award the projects, staff suggests modifying the evaluation method to allow for additional factors resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. Remove the local match percentage (up to five points out of 83 total)
2. Include a metric to distinguish an existing project from a new project
3. Include a metric to permit documentation of hardships resulting from COVID-19

Mr. Kozlosky stated that staff is proposing to change the submittal guide and application for these funds. He requested some feedback from the Committee.

Ms. Harrington inquired about the second change. Mr. James responded that staff has not made a distinction between filling a gap versus a greenfield project; only continuing an existing project that has suffered a hardship versus a new project that has not been considered.

Mr. Flanagan asked for an example of a hardship resulting from COVID-19. Mr. James said that some examples of hardships might include an inability to secure materials, perform work due to labor force being sent home, funding source may have suffered a setback, other ways to defray the hardship, limited availability of key staff. He added that this is an opportunity to document a unique COVID-19 event versus a recurring event since this is a one-time offering.

Mr. Barnes stated that the Town of Navassa has expressed concerns that some of its projects already in the works have increased in cost due to project suspension in response to NCDOT's revenue shortfall related to COVID-19. He inquired if such a project delayed more than a year with increased engineering and material costs would qualify. Mr. James responded that this is a concrete example of the proposed methodology change.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the proposal will be presented to the MPO Board for feedback, after which the methodology and application will be brought back for consideration.

b. Community Project Funding (Earmarks)

Chairman Kozlosky reminded Committee members that a discussion was held regarding earmarks at the last TCC meeting. He noted that shortly thereafter, staff received information that Congress would be accepting submittals for earmarks between April 1 and April 16. Since time was of the essence, staff worked with NCDOT regarding its concerns, and developed a project that would both help and not harm the MPO in either scenario, whether existing money or new money. He noted that staff identified Project U-5710A Interchange at Military Cutoff/Eastwood Road (Drysdale Drive Extension), which is funded in fiscal year 2022 for \$4.8 million, and the Board supported applying to Congressman Rouzer's office for potential earmark consideration.

c. Prioritization 6.0 Local Input Methodology

MPO Deputy Director Abby Lorenzo gave a presentation on the MPO's Local Input Methodology for Prioritization 6.0. She reminded Committee members that the MPO submitted projects late last summer, which are currently being reviewed for scoring. She gave an overview of the prioritization process, funding tiers, and STI project eligibility. She noted that the methodology requirements are defined by North Carolina General Statute §136-18.42 and summarized that the standards ensure a readable document and a transparent process.

Ms. Lorenzo stated that the methodology remains similar to that of Prioritization 5.0. She noted that the method of calculating Local Input Points (LIP) has changed in Prioritization 6.0 to allow the MPO an additional 100 points in the Regional and Division tiers, and gives an option to include a flex policy that would allow up to 500 points to be flexed between the Regional and Division tiers. She explained that the requirements are two criteria, one of which needs to be quantitative.

Ms. Lorenzo explained the difference between scoring in Prioritization 5.0 and Prioritization 4.0. She noted that Prioritization 5.0 considered its quantitative score, the previous Prioritization 4.0 score, consistency with plans, status of project in development, and inclusion in the adopted strategic business plan for a total of 1,500 points per tier, and the top 15 highest scoring projects receiving 100 points. Prioritization 6.0 proposes to drop the previous prioritization score criteria, and add a criterion of project alignment with NCDOT Division 3 as well as the flex policy language. Also proposed is a modal project mix standard to commit 100 points to each of the modes where

possible. She stated that the methodology must be approved by July 30, 2021 and gave an overview of the tentative remaining Prioritization 6.0 timeline as follows:

- 8/31/21 – Quantitative scores released
- 9/1/21-11/30/21 – Regional Impact point assignment window
- 1/30/22 – Programmed Regional Impact projects released
- 2/1/22-4/29/22 – Division Needs point assignment window
- August 2022 – Draft 2023-2032 STIP released

Ms. Bunch inquired about the multi-modal standard and expressed concerns that Brunswick County has no public transit. Ms. Lorenzo responded that the standard would score all projects across all modes. She noted that the highest scoring projects are typically roadway projects. At a minimum, the modal project mix standard would add 100 points to the highest scoring modal projects and these five highest scoring modal projects would replace the five lowest scoring highway projects. This will allow support for the multi-modal approach for the region. An example of this might be the Wallace to Castle Hayne rail connection project or favoring a multi-modal path to align with NCDOT.

Ms. Roth pointed out that it would also benefit bicycle and pedestrian projects that might not be in the strategic plan.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that staff desires feedback from the Committee and the MPO Board to considering replacing the five lowest scoring highway projects with modal projects.

Ms. Roth commented that it is difficult to project how this change will play out. Mr. Kozlosky responded that he was skeptical of this approach at first. However, a clause exists to deviate from the methodology with documented justification if the result is unsatisfactory.

Ms. Lorenzo pointed out that deviations in the past have aligned with this additional language.

Roth asked if this proposal is based on past experience with the scoring criteria and its implications. Ms. Lorenzo confirmed that it is.

There being no further questions, Mr. Kozlosky stated that staff would proceed with the recommended methodology and address implications as they arise.

d. **2020-2029 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modifications #21-4**

Chairman Kozlosky noted that this item is for information purposes only and will be brought back for consideration at the next TCC meeting.

7) **Updates**

- a. **Wilmington Urban Area MPO**
- b. **Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority**
- c. **NCDOT Division**
- d. **NCDOT Transportation Planning Division**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the updates are included in the agenda packet.

8) **Announcements**

- a. **Go Coast TDM Committee Meeting – May 20, 2021**
- b. **Next TCC meeting – May 12, 2021**

9) **Adjournment**

Ms. Bunch made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Roth, and the motion carried unanimously by roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mike Kozlosky, Rebekah Roth, Nick Cannon, Robert O'Quinn, Adrienne Harrington, Ashli Barefoot, Barnes Sutton, Helen Bunch, Patrick Flanagan, Nazia Sarder and Vanessa Lacer.

Nays: None. **Absent:** Denys Vielkanowitz, Ed Parvin, Mandy Sanders, Granseur Dick, Stephanie Ayers, Travis Henley and Caitlin Marks.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.

THE ABOVE MINUTES ARE NOT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS.
THE ENTIRE PROCEEDINGS ARE RECORDED DIGITALLY AS PART OF THIS RECORD.