

**Wilmington Urban Area MPO  
Technical Coordinating Committee  
Wednesday, August 17, 2022  
Remote Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present**

Stephanie Ayers, NC State Ports Authority  
Ashli Barefoot, Town of Leland  
Helen Bunch, Brunswick County  
Adrienne Cox, NCDOT Division of Highways  
Patrick Flanagan, Cape Fear Council of Governments  
Adrienne Harrington, Town of Belville  
Mike Kozlosky, WMPO  
Vanessa Lacer, Pender County  
Rebekah Roth, New Hanover County  
Marie Parker, Wave Transit  
Mandy Sanders, Town of Kure Beach  
Nazia Sarder, NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch  
Denys Vielkanowitz, City of Wilmington

**Others Present**

Cheryl Hannah, HDR  
Regina Hopkins, WMPO  
Sean Kane  
Jessica Loeper, New Hanover County  
Rachel McIntyre, WMPO  
Seth Poole  
Greer Shivers, WMPO  
Emma Stogner, WMPO  
Sarah Lipkin Sularz  
Tony Sumpter, NCDOT-IMD  
Scott A. James, WMPO  
Thomas Bradshaw, City of Wilmington

**Members Absent**

Michelyn Alston, Town of Navassa  
Granseur Dick, Wilmington International Airport  
Jeremy Hardison, Town of Carolina Beach  
Abby Lorenzo, MPO Go Coast Program  
Robert O'Quinn, Town of Wrightsville Beach

**1) Call to Order**

Chairman Mike Kozlosky called the remote meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. He took a roll call and a quorum was present, as follows:

**Present:** Stephanie Ayers, Helen Bunch, Adrienne Cox, Patrick Flanagan, Adrienne Harrington, Mike Kozlosky, Vanessa Lacer, Rebekah Roth, Marie Parker, Mandy Sanders, Nazia Sarder and Denys Vielkanowitz. **Absent:** Michelyn Alston, Ashli Barefoot, Granseur Dick, Jeremy Hardison, Abby Lorenzo and Robert O'Quinn.

**2) Approval of the Agenda**

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

**Ayes** Stephanie Ayers, Helen Bunch, Adrienne Cox, Patrick Flanagan, Adrienne Harrington, Mike Kozlosky, Vanessa Lacer, Rebekah Roth, Marie Parker, Mandy Sanders, Nazia Sarder and Denys Vielkanowitz.

**Nays:** None. **Absent:** Michelyn Alston, Ashli Barefoot, Granseur Dick, Jeremy Hardison, Abby Lorenzo and Robert O'Quinn.

**3) Presentation**

**a. New Hanover County Proposed ¼ cent Sales Tax- Jessica Loeper, NHC**

New Hanover County Communications Director Jessica Loeper gave a presentation on the proposed ¼-cent sales tax authorized by the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners to be on the ballot as a referendum in November. She said that the goal of the proposed ¼-cent sales tax is to increase

mobility across the community, giving everyone access to “Move Forward and Go Further” with public transportation and connectivity. She noted that the sales tax would equal 25 cents for every \$100 spent or one quarter of one penny, which would not apply to groceries, fuel, or prescriptions and would raise about \$14 million a year. She pointed out that this significant source of local funding is in perpetuity and would increase connectivity, trails, transit, and rail realignment while providing leverage for state and federal funding. She added that the current sales tax rate is 7%, and this would increase the sales tax rate to 7.25%. She gave an overview of three funding buckets: Wave Transit, bicycle and pedestrian, and the rail realignment.

Mr. Kozlosky noted that 39% of the proposed sales tax revenue has been identified for bicycle and pedestrian improvements. He pointed out that public outreach efforts related to long-range plans and other plans have shown that people desire walkable, bikeable communities. He said that funding for these efforts could be used for design, the purchase of right-of-way, and construction of bicycle and pedestrian improvements in the City, the County, and the beach communities. He added that in the first five years, the proposal is for more than 10 miles of new multi-use trails throughout the County as well as sidewalks at five additional locations in the City of Wilmington, and intersection improvements along many major corridors to increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists. He said that staff is also working with the beach communities and will continue to do so to identify improvements in those locations if the sales tax proposal passes.

Wave Transit Executive Director Marie Parker said that this funding would support more available and more convenient service. She noted that in the first five years, Wave Transit hours of operation will be expanded beyond 8:00 p.m. on weekdays, and beyond weekend hours to accommodate work and school evening commuters. She added that micro-transit service would also be expanded to include additional vehicles and coverage areas. She noted that service frequency on 60-minute routes would be increased to 30 to 45 minutes. She commented that 30-minute service recently implemented on some routes has resulted in an increase in usage.

Ms. Parker said that an investment would be made in passenger amenities as well. She added that only 7% of Wave’s more than 420 stops have a covered shelter with seating. She noted that the funding would support the installation of 17 new benches and 10 new shelters, expanding the current system. Sales tax revenue would also support the purchase of technologies including passenger wayside technology for shelters that would reflect real time arrivals, free passenger Wi-Fi on all the buses, and a mobile app to purchase and book trips and track vehicles all in one location. Finally, sales tax revenue would implement free youth passes for all children younger than 18 years of age, which would help support transportation for children and young adults to school, after-school activities, summer jobs, shopping, or other activities, at no cost to parents.

Ms. Loeper reminded the Committee that these are all initial priority projects for the first five years. She commented that even more could be done in the years that follow.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Roth, Ms. Parker said the regular youth pass is \$5 per day. She noted that Wave currently has stops at all the major schools.

City of Wilmington Director of Economic Development and Rail Realignment Aubrey Parsley said that the Article 43 Sales Tax is the state’s way of enabling counties, cities, and towns to raise local funds for projects that NCDOT traditionally does not cover, typically anything non-highway, since 94% of NCDOT’s funds go towards highway projects. He added that Article 43 Sales Tax allows local units to diversify transportation spending and leverage other state and federal funds for capital uses and

upstart projects that don't fit the mold, such as the rail realignment project that with few hundred thousand dollars in local funds, leveraged a \$2.5 million grant at the federal level.

Mr. Parsley said that NCDOT's widening of a section of South Front Street, which encompasses a Wave bus stop and Port railroad tracks, is an example of a project that could benefit from Article 43 Sales Tax funds for betterments enhancing sidewalks, bus stops, removing the railroad from the middle of the street, and eliminating crossings. He pointed out that these funds can unlock synergies across different agencies locally and at the state level.

Ms. Loeper said that further education on the proposed ¼-cent sales tax and potential five- or 10-year projects can be found at [www.trailstransitnhc.com](http://www.trailstransitnhc.com) and on social media. She added that educational presentations to organizations and groups are available upon request.

**b. Navassa Collector Street Plan- Susan Westberry, AECOM**

Susan Westberry, AECOM, gave a presentation on the Navassa Collector Street Plan, which was developed in coordination with staff from the MPO and the Town of Navassa. She added that the plan will be presented tomorrow to Navassa's Town Council for consideration. She explained that this plan will supersede the previous collector street plan from 2004, since many changes to the town have occurred since that time, such as the redevelopment of the Kerr-McGee Superfund site and the construction of I-140 through the middle of the town.

Ms. Westberry said that the update was guided by a steering committee comprised of NCDOT, town staff, and the MPO. She noted that the vision of the plan is to provide a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation network to accommodate growth and development in town by improving interconnectivity and removing traffic from existing roads. She added that the network will also preserve the cultural heritage and neighborhood vitality as the community grows. She said that the plan can be found on the MPO's website, [www.wmpo.org](http://www.wmpo.org).

Ms. Westberry said that some of the goals of the plan include the following:

- Working with the community
- Improving mobility and safety
- Encouraging growth
- Improving access
- Considering future school transportation, transit, and other multi-modal transportation
- Developing policies and awareness of environmental constraints and natural resources

She noted that the proposed collector street network was developed by exploring:

- Existing conditions
- Demographics
- Socio-economic factors
- Land use and development
- The natural environment
- Existing local and regional plans
- Community features
- Existing transportation network and infrastructure

Ms. Westberry said that the proposed network consists of 12 streets, accounts for known constraints and was separated into existing needs and future needs. She pointed out that proposed collector streets north of I-140 are dependent on anticipated development in that area. She said that existing needs (highlighted in yellow on the map) will serve current residents, and other collector streets that address the town's concerns regarding landlocked communities, which could be stranded by trains on Old Mill Road, and tie into multi-use paths and parks.

Mr. Kozlosky inquired about the lack of connection between collector streets #8 and #5.

Ms. Westberry responded that they are separated by a wetland and a big pond in the middle of Cedar Lakes Resort.

Ms. Westberry said that three typical sections were developed with curb and gutter for stormwater and three sections were developed without curb and gutter. She noted that the only difference between the two is that the typical section without curb and gutter has a wider swath of grass for drainage. She added that typical sections for each are as follows:

1. Multi-use path on one side and sidewalk on the other
2. Sidewalks on both sides of the road
3. Sidewalks and bicycle lanes

Ms. Westberry said that policies and guidelines recommended for the town include modifications to existing guidelines and four new policy topics. She noted that an action plan was developed to assist the town in implementing the recommendations.

Mr. Kozlosky reminded committee members that this plan has been included under today's Consent Agenda in anticipation of the Town Council of Navassa's consideration of the plan tomorrow night.

**c. Wilmington Urban Area MPO's Direct Attributable Funding Call for Projects- Scott A. James, WMPO**

MPO Transportation Planning Engineer Scott A. James gave a presentation on Wilmington Urban Area MPO's Direct Attributable Funding Call for Projects. He said that the call for projects has been issued and that staff is awaiting submittals and is available to answer questions.

Mr. James recapped previous presentations on this topic by reminding the committee that the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) is federally funded, distributed through the state DOT, and oriented toward smaller transportation infrastructure projects. He noted that the allocation is slightly more than \$5 million this fiscal year. He added that the funding allocation is set up for qualifying projects to compete against one another, and, subject to the availability of funds, will be awarded up to 80% of the project request.

Mr. James said that examples of recent qualifying projects include the Park Avenue shared-use path, Middle Sound Loop multi-use path, bicycle facilities, and the pedestrian beacon for traffic control on Market Street. He noted that a yearly call is issued each year in late spring or early summer, and applications are reviewed with a 100-point scale with prioritization of projects closest to construction. He added that the 100-point scale is composed of six (6) categories with some overlap anticipated, weighted for safety or capacity improvements with a subsection for multi-modal elements. Points are also available for accessibility improvements or upgrades, and administration.

Mr. James said that the current allocation can be broken down as follows:

- STBGP >\$4 million
- Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TASA) >\$0.5 million
- Carbon Reduction (new category) <\$0.5million

Mr. James noted that the allocation may be subject to increase and, if so, the amounts will be revised prior to award. He reminded members that each requires a 20% local match.

Mr. James said that two pre-submittals were received prior to August 8<sup>th</sup>. He noted that the official deadline is September 15<sup>th</sup> and that the award of funds will be made at the October Board meeting. He added that all recipients will be required to participate in training as early as November.

Ms. Roth asked about parameters for the local match. Mr. James responded that the request for the application requires a resolution from the jurisdiction committing to 20% of the requested amount. He added that the local match cannot be from another federally funded source.

Mr. Kozlosky encouraged committee members to contact Mr. James with any questions.

4) **Consent Agenda**

- a. **Approval of TCC Meeting Minutes- July 13 2022**
- b. **Resolution approving 2020-2029 STIP/MPO Amendment #22-5**
- c. **Opening of the 30-day public comment period for 2020-2029 STIP/MPO Amendment #22-6**
- d. **Resolution approving 2020-2029 STIP/MPO Administrative Modification #22-7**
- e. **Resolution authorizing the Chairman to enter into an agreement with the City of Wilmington and Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority for the FY 23 and FY 24 Section 5303 Funding**
- f. **Resolution adopting the 2022 Navassa Collector Street Plan**

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

**Ayes** Stephanie Ayers, Ashli Barefoot, Helen Bunch, Adrienne Cox, Patrick Flanagan, Adrienne Harrington, Mike Kozlosky, Vanessa Lacer, Rebekah Roth, Marie Parker, Mandy Sanders, Nazia Sarder and Denys Vielkanowitz. **Nays:** None. **Absent:** Michelyn Alston, Granseur Dick, Jeremy Hardison, Abby Lorenzo and Robert O'Quinn.

5) **Discussion**

a. **2020-2029 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modifications #22-8**

Ms. Kozlosky said that this item is for information purposes only. He noted that it includes funding is for CSX, the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority, and safety improvements. He added that this item will be brought back for consideration at the TCC's next meeting.

b. **Revised Draft 2024-2033 State Transportation Improvement Program**

Mr. Kozlosky said that the initial draft of the 2024-2033 State/MPO Transportation Improvement Program (STIP/MTIP) was released on April 25<sup>th</sup>. He noted that the legislature included in the adopted budget a transfer of sales tax to NCDOT, which increases annually up to 2025. Based on its inclusion, NCDOT reviewed its financial projections and released a revised draft. He added that staff is currently reviewing the revised draft and will make a presentation on the changes to the TCC at its next meeting. He noted that some projects have been added and others have been accelerated. He added that projects swaps will still be allowed and are required to be approved by March 17, 2023.

Mr. Kozlosky said that discussion will be held at the next meeting regarding project swaps. He noted that when the initial draft was released, the MPO received requests for a project swap from the Aviation Division, supported by ILM, and from the Ports (South Front Street Widening, and Carolina Beach Road Access Management Improvements). He added that information is included in the agenda packet.

Mr. Vielkanowitz asked for the location of more detailed information about State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) projects. Ms. Cox offered to provide more information. Mr. Kozlosky added that NCDOT has a STIP website with an interactive map that gives brief information. Mr. Flanagan said that project sheets generated from SPOT online or the identified need forms completed to identify projects in the last round of prioritization will have more information. Mr. Kozlosky added that if members e-mail their questions, MPO staff can obtain more information on projects as well.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Bunch regarding preparation for the next meeting, Mr. Kozlosky said that the MPO intends to present the changes from the initial draft to the revised draft at the next meeting. He added that since any project swap will have to be agreed upon by NCDOT and the MPO, discussions are underway between both. He noted that options will be presented to the Committee for discussion at the October TCC meeting if not at the September meeting.

6) **Updates**

a. **Wilmington Urban Area MPO**

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

Mr. James reported the building renovation at 525 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street has begun. He noted that demolition started on Monday, August 8<sup>th</sup>. He added that the contractor, Paragon Building Corp., has an office and storage trailer on site.

b. **Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority**

c. **NCDOT Division**

d. **NCDOT Transportation Planning Division**

7) **Announcements**

a. **Wilmington MPO Go Coast Committee Meeting- August 25th**

b. **Direct Attributable Project Submittals Due- September 15th**

c. **Next TCC meeting- September 14<sup>th</sup>**

Ms. Ayers expressed appreciation to the TCC for the resolution of support for a USDOT grant application submitted in April that was recently awarded \$18 million toward a \$22.5 million project to build a new intermodal yard at the Port of Wilmington.

8) **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Ms. Bunch made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Vielkanowitz, and meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m. by roll call as follows:

**Ayes** Stephanie Ayers, Ashli Barefoot, Helen Bunch, Adrienne Cox, Patrick Flanagan, Adrienne Harrington, Mike Kozlosky, Vanessa Lacer, Rebekah Roth, Marie Parker, Mandy Sanders, Nazia Sarder and Denys Vielkanowitz. **Nays:** None. **Absent:** Michelyn Alston, Granseur Dick, Jeremy Hardison, Abby Lorenzo and Robert O'Quinn.

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