

**Wilmington Urban Area MPO
Technical Coordinating Committee
Wednesday, October 12, 2022
Remote Meeting Minutes**

Members Present

Stephanie Ayers, NC State Ports Authority
Helen Bunch, Brunswick County
Adrienne Cox, NCDOT
Jeremy Hardison, Town of Carolina Beach
Adrienne Harrington, Town of Belville
Vanessa Lacer, Town of Leland
Rachel LaCoe, New Hanover County
Abby Lorenzo, WMPO
Marie Parker, Wave Transit
Nazia Sarder, NCDOT Transportation Planning
Denys Vielkanowitz, City of Wilmington
Carolyn Caggia, WMPO

Members Absent

Michelyn Alston, Town of Navassa
Granseur Dick, Wilmington International Airport
Patrick Flanagan, Cape Fear Council of Governments
Mike Kozlosky, WMPO
Travis Henley, Pender County
Robert O'Quinn, Town of Wrightsville Beach
Mandy Sanders, Town of Kure Beach

Others Present

Carolyn Caggia, WMPO
Karlene Ellis Vitalis, New Hanover County
Cheryl Hannah, HDR Engineering
Regina Hopkins, WMPO
David Hursey
Scott James, WMPO
Jamar Johnson, WMPO
Sean Kane
Bill Kincannon, HDR Engineering
Rachel McIntyre, WMPO
Amy Passaretti, Port City Daily
Seth Poole, Stantec
Greer Shivers, WMPO
Emma Stogner, WMPO

1) Call to Order

Vice Chair Nazia Sarder turned over the remote meeting to MPO Deputy Director Abby Lorenzo, who called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. She called the roll, and a quorum was present, as follows:

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

Ms. Lacer noted that she now represents the Town of Leland.

2) Approval of the Agenda

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

Ayes: Stephanie Ayers, Adrienne Cox, Jeremy Hardison, Adrienne Harrington, Vanessa Lacer, Rachel LaCoe, Abby Lorenzo, Marie Parker, Nazia Sarder and Denys Vielkanowitz. **Nays:** None.

Absent: Michelyn Alston, Helen Bunch, Granseur Dick, Patrick Flanagan, Mike Kozlosky, Travis Henley, Robert O'Quinn and Mandy Sanders.

3) Presentations

- a. **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Grant Opportunities, Emma Stogner- WMPO**

WMPO Associate Transportation Planner Emma Stogner gave an overview of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Grant Opportunities available to MPO:

Planning Grants

- Prioritization Process Pilot Program
- PROTECT Grants
- Reconnecting Communities
- Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program (Inflation Reduction Act)
- Railroad Crossing Elimination Program
- RAISE
- Safe Streets and Roads for All
- SMART

Project Grants (Implementation)

- Consent Agenda INFRA
- Bridge Investment Program
- Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program
- Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grants
- Strategic Innovation for Revenue Collection
- ATTAIN
- Low-Carbon Transportation Materials Grants
- MEGA

Ms. Stogner said that other grants available to local governments, but not to the MPO, are also included in the presentation. Ms. Ayers asked for a copy of the presentation. Ms. Stogner responded that the presentation will be distributed to all members of the TCC.

4) **Consent Agenda**

- Approval of TCC Meeting Minutes- September 14, 2022**
- Resolution approving 2020-2029 STIP/MPO Amendments # 22-6**
- Resolution approving 2020-2029 STIP/MPO Administrative Modification #22-9**
- Resolution accepting donations for the 2022 Commuter Challenge**

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

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

5) **Regular Agenda**

- Resolution approving Amendment #2 to the FY 23 Unified Planning Work Program**

Ms. Lorenzo said that Amendment #2 to the MPO's FY23 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) would add a special study for a MPO organizational analysis using existing funds in the budget. She noted that the organizational study will evaluate the MPO's current staffing structure and provide recommendations to handle any changes to the MPO area resulting from the 2020 Census.

Ms. Lorenzo estimated that the special study would cost approximately \$50,000. She noted that staff recommends reallocating \$8,000 in surplus balance from the Pender County Bicycle and Pedestrian Study, \$15,000 for the MTP Development Study to be postponed until FY24, and \$26,000 in savings from the management and operations line.

Ms. Cox made a motion to approve Amendment #2 to the FY23 UPWP. Ms. Parker seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by roll call as follows:

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

b. Resolution requesting the North Carolina Department of Transportation complete a Safety Feasibility Study on NC 210 in Pender County

Ms. Lorenzo said that Pender County has requested a feasibility study for the NC 210 corridor between Hampstead and Rocky Point to study safety and capacity challenges impacted by population growth and the current construction of the Hampstead Bypass. She noted that the study will help determine the need for widening the NC 210 corridor and is supported by the MPO’s current long-range transportation plan, Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045.

Ms. Lacer made a motion to request the feasibility study. Mr. Parker seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by roll call as follows:

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

c. Resolution approving the award of FY 23 Direct Attributable Funds

Transportation Planning Engineer Scott A. James expressed appreciation to those who responded to the call for projects by the deadline with complete applications. He said that six projects were reviewed and scored according to the new State Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) guidelines. He noted that for FY23, a new category, Carbon Reduction (CR), has been added with a \$492,634 allocation. He added that one project was recommended from CR funds and the rest were awarded from Direct Attributable (DA) funds. He announced the six recommended project awards as follows in descending order, from high score to lower score:

| | |
|--|----------------|
| New Hanover County | |
| Monkey Junction Pedestrian Improvements Project – Multi-use path (W – 5703C) | \$461,949 |
| Town of Leland | |
| US 17 Pedestrian Crossing Safety Improvements | \$666,623 |
| City of Wilmington | |
| South 3 rd Street and Ann Street Traffic Signal Installation | \$971,840 |
| Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority (WAVE) | |
| Passenger Amenity Upgrades (installation of transit shelters and benches) | (CR) \$339,000 |
| Town of Wrightsville Beach | |
| Causeway Drive Bicycles and Pedestrian Improvements | \$269,245 |
| NC Department of Transportation – Division 3 Traffic Services | |
| South 3 rd Street and Orange Street Traffic Signal Installation | \$542,400 |

Mr. James reminded committee members that the annual FY23 allocation is slightly more than \$5 million. He said that since the total amount awarded did not exceed the amount available, the balance of funds will remain in reserve.

Ms. Ayers made a motion to approve the award of FY23 DA funds. Mr. Lacer seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by roll call as follows:

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

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Lacer, Mr. James said that no additional call would be held and that the target dates for calls is typically in July of each year. He noted that the reserved funds will be available for previously approved projects based on past practices.

Ms. Cox expressed appreciation on behalf of NCDOT.

6) **Discussion**

a. **2020-2029 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modifications #22-10**

Ms. Lorenzo said that this item is for information purposes only.

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

Ms. Lorenzo said that a memo has been included in the agenda packet outlining potential project swap scenarios identified by the MPO and NCDOT Division 3. Based on conversations with Division 3 and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) unit, a revised memorandum with two potential swap scenarios was distributed to members last night, as follows:

| Scenario A | Scenario B |
|---|--|
| Swap in: U-5734, US-421/South Front Street Widening Project between Burnett Boulevard and the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge U-6128, Greenville Loop Road and Greenville Avenue at Oleander Drive intersection Improvements Swap to PE only: U-5732, Conversion of US-17 in Hampstead to a Superstreet from Washington Acres Road to Vista Lane Swap out/remove: U-4902B, Access Management Improvements on US-17 Business/Market Street | Swap in: U-5734, US-421/South Front Street Widening between Burnett Boulevard and the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge U-6128, Intersection Improvements at Greenville Loop Road and Greenville Avenue Accelerate by one year: U-3300 Hampstead Bypass Section A, construction to FY26 Swap to PE only: U-5732, Conversion of US-17 in Hampstead to a Superstreet Delay by two years: U-3338C, Interchange at Kerr Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway, let date to FY 28 Swap out: U-4902B, Access Management Improvements on US-17 Business/Market Street |

Ms. Lorenzo said that Wilmington International Airport has also proposed to swap in Runway Rehabilitation Project (AV-5885) and swap out Runway Extension 6-24 Phase 1 (AV-5730). She added that staff requests feedback from TCC members on the proposed swap scenarios, which will be forwarded to the MPO Board at the end of the month for discussion.

Ms. Cox expressed appreciation and added that Mr. Kimes would like to review the timing of MLK and College Road Interchange Project to avoid conflicts in project management. She noted that dates would be added to the swap table. In response to an inquiry by Ms. Ayers, Ms. Cox responded that no conflict is anticipated, and advised that discussion regarding the swap scenarios continue.

Ms. Lacer expressed appreciation for the compromise on U-5732 in Pender County and for keeping it in the STIP. She noted that Pender County plans to invest in sidewalks for this portion of US 17.

c. 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Ms. Lorenzo said that staff is recommending some process improvements for the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). She noted that after the development of the 2045 Plan, staff discussed the development structure and researched the development processes of the other MPOs in the state of North Carolina.

Ms. Lorenzo said that staff intends to kick-off development efforts for the 2050 MTP in the spring of 2023. Prior to the launch, staff will create a branding package, and formulate public outreach and committee schedules. She reminded committee members that the MTP must be adopted within five years of the current plan, which was adopted on November 18, 2020. Therefore, November 18, 2025, is the absolute deadline for adoption of the 2050 Plan.

Ms. Lorenzo said that staff proposes to change the role of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to advise and assist with public outreach activities throughout the development of the plan. Staff also proposes to establish a MTP Committee to guide and direct the development of the plan and work closely with MPO staff. The proposed MTP Committee would consist of a modal subject matter expert, local planning partners, members of the Environmental Justice (EJ) community as well as representatives from the CAC and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC). It would also incorporate new voices into the development process, possibly from the public health sector. Additionally, instead of having individual modal subcommittees, staff proposes to use the MTP Committee to develop a modal criteria matrix from the plan's overarching vision and goals, rather than from separate modal goals and objectives.

Ms. Lorenzo explained that these changes will simplify the process and utilize the MPO's existing BPAC to identify priority areas in the region for the MTP Committee. For the next cycle, she noted that staff envisions holding numerous regional stakeholder meetings, which were not part of the 2045 MTP process. She commented that subject specific stakeholder meetings will help ensure that the MPO is hearing from every sector in the community and will feed into the overall public outreach results presented to the MTP Committee working through the modal elements. Additionally, staff intends to meet with each of the member jurisdictions' TCC member, BPAC member, CAC member and MPO Board member to discuss the results from public outreach to get a better understanding of project priorities and align the plan with them for better support in the region.

Ms. Lorenzo said that modal deliverables will be similar to the 2045 Plan's with project recommendations and policy recommendations. However, staff proposes to endorse the airport's

layout plan to avoid duplication of efforts, since it is the only airport in the region. Staff also recommends referring to the bicycle and pedestrian element as active transportation. And as mentioned earlier, staff would work with BPAC to narrow down priority areas in the region and have meetings with each member jurisdiction to better understand the type of projects needed in those areas. Additionally, instead of having a freight/rail component and passenger rail component under public transportation, staff proposes to include passenger rail in the rail element, and truck freight in the roadway element.

Ms. Lorenzo said that the final recommendation is to include the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) update as an appendix to the document. She noted that during the 2045 MTP process, hundreds upon hundreds of needs were identified, and more than a thousand projects were identified in the bicycle and pedestrian element. To avoid plan fatigue in the region, and to recognize the hard work that goes into the MTP in identifying all projects, whether fiscally constrained or not, as being regionally significant, staff proposes that the CTP be an appendix of the MTP. She added that the proposed changes will be presented to the MPO Board at the end of the month.

Ms. Lacer expressed support for the proposed changes, particularly unified goals and visions, which would create a stronger plan.

7) **Updates**

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

Ms. Lorenzo said that the updates are included in the agenda packet.

8) **Announcements**

- a. **Wilmington MPO Bike/Pedestrian Committee- December 13th**
- b. **Commuter Challenge- October 14th-30th**
Ms. Lorenzo announced that the 2022 Commuter Challenge will kick off on Friday at Wave's Fall Festival. She encouraged members to participate.
- c. **Next TCC meeting- November 16th**

Ms. Lorenzo acknowledged that the MPO is now fully staffed. She introduced Associate Transportation Planner Carolyn Caggia, who will be assisting with the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program. Ms. Caggia, who relocated from Raleigh, expressed appreciation, and gave a brief overview of her prior experience at UNC-Chapel Hill and NC State University.

9) **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Ms. Cox made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Bunch, and meeting was adjourned at 11:03 a.m. by roll call as follows:

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

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