

**Wilmington Urban Area MPO  
Technical Coordinating Committee  
Wednesday, November 15, 2023  
Remote Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present in Person**

Sam Boswell, Cape Fear Council of Governments  
Carolyn Caggia, WMPO  
Mike Kozlosky, TCC Chairman, WMPO  
Karlene Ellis Vitalis, New Hanover County  
Michelle Howes, NCDOT

**Members Absent**

Michelyn Alston, Town of Navassa  
Robert O'Quinn, Town of Wrightsville Beach  
Mandy Sanders, Town of Kure Beach  
Granseur Dick, Wilmington International Airport

**Members Present Remote**

Stephanie Ayers, NC State Ports Authority  
Adam Moran, Pender County  
Helen Bunch, Brunswick County  
Granseur Dick, Wilmington International  
Airport  
Mark Hairr, Cape Fear Public Transit  
Authority  
Adrienne Harrington, Town of Belville  
Gloria Abbotts, Town of Carolina Beach  
Nazia Sarder, TCC Vice Chair, NCDOT  
Denys Vielkanowitz, City of Wilmington  
Jessica Moberly, Town of Leland

**Others Present**

Tera Cline, WMPO  
Scott A. James, WMPO  
Abby Lorenzo, WMPO  
Greer Shivers, WMPO  
Emma Stogner, WMPO  
Jon Dodson, Cape Fear Public  
Transportation Authority  
Vanessa Lacer, WMPO

**1) Call to Order**

Chairman Mike Kozlosky called the meeting of the Technical Coordinating Committee to order at 10:01 a.m., confirmed a quorum was present, and called the roll as follows:

**Present In Person:** Sam Boswell, Carolyn Caggia, Mike Kozlosky, Karlene Ellis Vitalis, and Michelle Howes.

**Present Remotely:** Adam Moran, Helen Bunch, Adrienne Harrington, Mark Hairr, Jessica Moberly, Nazia Sarder, Stephanie Ayers, Gloria Abbotts, and Denys Vielkanowitz. **Absent:** Michelyn Alston, Stephanie Ayers, and Marissa Ernst

**2) Approval of Agenda**

Adam Moran made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Nazia Sarder, and the motion carried unanimously.

3) Presentations

a. Pender County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Emma Stogner, WMPO, gave a brief update on the development of the Pender County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. She stated the WMPO worked alongside a private consultant, WSP and Pender County staff. Planning staff started towards the end of 2022 and finished up mid-summer of 2023. Ms. Stogner explained that the planning study included the WMPO boundary and Pender County boundary overlap area.

Ms. Stogner stated the plan objectives were to understand the challenges and opportunities surrounding biking and walking in Pender County, to conduct public and stakeholder engagement and outline a proposed bicycle and pedestrian network as well as policy, program, and infrastructure plans. The values were developed by the steering committee. She said the steering committee met a total of 3 times and developed values, objectives, and project priorities. Ms. Stogner explained the guiding values the steering committee identified were Connectivity, meaning to enhance access to commercial areas, health centers, and schools. Safety, to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety, improved connections across US 17. Complimentary, the plan should complement and support other county initiatives and development. Readiness, she stated the plan should respond to current needs, show community support, help prepare the County for future growth, and be fiscally feasible. Choices, supporting the desire not to use vehicles for every trip, and supporting opportunities for walking and biking. Comfort, focus on an increase in facilities and amenities for walkers and bikers of all ages and abilities. Equity, understanding while most activity occurs near US 17, there is a need to equitably distribute bike/ped facilities across the county. Lastly, Health, the committee understands the plan needs to support the region's goals to improve public health. Ms. Stogner stated that when starting the plan, the committee looked at the population trends and used this information to help come up with the values listed above.

Ms. Stogner stated that as many know Pender County is growing and based on WMPO's Travel Demand model by 2025, we expect the eastern portion of the study area to grow, but also the area in the middle as well. She stated that developing this plan is one way to get ahead of the growth. The committee looked at the bike and pedestrian crash rates, there were many crashes east of US 17 and the Hampstead neighborhood areas. She noted there was also a lot of feedback on pedestrian accidents on US 17 and the data supported that as well.

Ms. Stogner explained that the public engagement stage included online surveys, flyers, social media, e-mail blasts and media releases and a video. Ms. Stogner stated that the WMPO staff along with Pender County staff engaged in numerous pop-up events to raise awareness and receive feedback on the plan. She said all the feedback from the surveys and outreach was reviewed in the proposed Bike/Ped network.

She then reviewed the policy recommendations that the planning partners can do to ensure the recommendations are carried out. These included defining active transportation facilities and include these definitions in the UDO. Others include expanding the number of bicycle and pedestrian improvement overlay districts, as well as expanding the corridors identified in the network recommendations and match regional mixed-use areas in the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Stogner said the other recommendations include adopting active transportation policies consistent with the Coastal Area Management Act. As well as to expand permitted uses to allow for active transportation facilities. She stated additional recommendations were to establish an active transportation maintenance plan to include routine maintenance, restriping, long-term resurfacing; stating some of which could fall under County responsibilities or procurement of a vendor. She stated the policy will also promote bike and pedestrian connections and include updated codes to require connections between developments. Ms. Stogner explained another policy recommendation is to adopt outdoor lighting requirements, to include lighting codes that support a safe trail system and healthy environments. She concluded stating the plan will establish wayfinding standards and include provisions for public access.

Ms. Stogner then reviewed the next steps involving all the planning partners. These steps include adoption of the plan, include the bike/ped network into CTP and MTP updates, adopt bicycle/pedestrian overlay districts and develop project funding plans. She said other steps are developing a maintenance plan, identifying developer requirements to build a network, and continuous plan revisions and updates.

Adam Moran, Pender County, stated they were excited about the plan and thanked everyone for their support with the plan.

**b. Get There Greener Update**

Carolyn Caggia, WMPO, gave a brief overview of the Get There Greener campaign. The campaign includes structure on how participants track bike, walk, carpool, bus, and telework trips between October 1-31, 2023, and get entered to win prizes donated by local businesses. The goal was to sustain focus with rebrand from Commuter Challenge, and \$935 worth of prizes were donated this year.

She touched on the promotional efforts of the challenge to include a web page, press release, social media, constant contact emails, weekly emails, an announcement at Brunswick Heritage Riverside Ride and handouts.

Ms. Caggia stated the following were the results of the campaign, approximately 26 participants logged trips (39 were interested), 3,857 miles were logged via telework, bike, carpool, walk, and bus. This resulted in 1542.93 KG CO2 savings in our atmosphere. She shared several trends that were noted from this year and years past. She said that pre-covid had a big impact on the numbers. Ms. Caggia said the biggest takeaways were bouncing back from Covid-related transportation habits, having many more experienced participants, and a lot more email and social media presence. Ms. Caggia then overviewed future considerations to include, spending more time and budgeted funds on advertising, possibly changing the month of the challenge to better coincide with the weather and holidays, doing more outreach to attract new participants, promote transit rides, suggest employer competitions and incentives, and identify news media pickup and coverage.

**c. Wave Short Range Transit Plan Development**

Mark Hiarr, Cape Fear Transit Authority, stated that it is an exciting time to reimagine the transit system. Spending time on public outreach is going to go in full force the week after Thanksgiving. He then introduced Keaton Wetzel, Senior Associate, Nelson/Nygaard consulting firm.

Mr. Wetzel gave an overview of the plans for the short-range transit plan. He stated that the primary goal is to redesign Wave Transit and create implementable transit plans for an uncertain funding environment. He explained the three funding scenarios, cost neutral, 30% revenue reduction, and 30% revenue increase are being considered. He said the planning timeline is Fiscal year 2024-2028. Mr. Wetzel stated the goal regardless of funding is to evolve Wave to make service more efficient, effective, and convenient. He stated the early findings from the update include who rides Wave Transit. This information included race, vehicle ownership, age, and poverty status. Mr. Wetzel stated this information is vital for the outreach portion of the plan.

Mr. Wetzel then explained a composite demand map to show where the demand is for transit. He stated that Wilmington has the density, demographics, and job types to support higher frequency transit than it currently provides. He noted that transit demand is highest on the Northside of New Hanover County, the Historic District, the Medical District, and north of UNCW. He also noted that transit demand is moderate in the Monkey Junction and Mayfair areas. Mr. Wetzel said that Wave already does a great job of providing at least hourly bus service anywhere it is merited, and the schedules and transfers are well-coordinated.

Mr. Wetzel also touched on where the strongest travel flows are oriented and explained these areas may be suited for more frequent service. He said these areas include downtown Wilmington, the medical district, UNCW, and Monkey Junction. Specifically, 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> streets in the medical district, Independence Boulevard, College Road north of Oleander Drive, Carolina Beach Road north of Greenfield Drive, and Market Street west of Independence Boulevard. He stated the information also showed the opportunity to straighten out routes to reduce trip times and the opportunity to evolve RideMICRO service to better serve low-demand suburbs where the need is concentrated.

Mr. Wetzel stated that all this information gathered thus far is being used to focus on next steps for the Reimagine Wave Transit plan. He said his group is working with Wave Transit staff and users to build on Wave's strengths to make service more efficient and effective. They are working on breaking down the system to see where they can redesign the service to be more direct, less duplicative, and easier to understand routes. He stated riders and stakeholders will supply the transit planning "guardrails". These include "Would you rather" questions like would you rather improve existing service or expand service to new areas, make the service more frequent or operate it for more hours of the day, and lastly, make the bus operate faster and more direct or have a shorter walk to the bus?

Mr. Wetzel also noted public outreach events are scheduled Monday, November 27, time from 3-7 PM and Tuesday, November 28, time from 6-11 AM as well as stakeholder workshops will be held. He gave a brief overview of the online survey and where to find it online. Mr. Wetzel also asked the MPO and TCC board to help promote the survey. He noted they are discussing coordinating with partners to overcome shared challenges such as limited funding, unsafe waiting areas for passengers, and pedestrian infrastructure to help with access to and from stops. He concluded with a timeline of events to finalize the plan.

4) **Consent Agenda**

- a. **Approval of TCC Meeting Minutes- September 13, 2023**
- b. **Resolution approving the donations for prizes for the 2023 Get There Greener Challenge**
- c. **Resolution approving 2024-2033 STIP/MPO Administrative Modifications #23-1.**
- d. **Resolution approving Amendment #1 to the FY 24 Unified Planning Work Program**

Sam Boswell made a motion to approve the consent agenda and it was Seconded by Adrienne Harrington. Motion carried unanimously.

5) Discussion

a. NCDOT's recommended process improvements for the use of the Wilmington Urban Area MPO's Direct Attributable Funds

Mike Kozlosky, WMPO, stated that in September the TCC and Board received a presentation from NCDOT on August redistribution. As part of that presentation, they identified some potential suggestions for process improvements that would utilize our direct attributable funds more efficiently and effectively and to assist the departments.

Mr. Kozlosky said that under the proposal DOT presented, each year DOT would provide each of the TMAs (Transportation Management Areas) the amount of direct attributable funds available over the next 5 years. Each TMA would select the projects and submit those to NCDOT.

Mr. Kozlosky further explained that NCDOT would then review the projects versus the funding eligibility and whether it falls under STBG-DA or TASA-DA or carbon reduction funds. NCDOT would then use the most appropriate funding source for those projects. He said NCDOT would then work collaboratively with the MPOs to manage the project funding and switch any program funds to assist the Department with August redistribution.

Mr. Kozlosky stated after a review of the request, he saw no objections to the proposal so long as DOT remains collaborative in their process and that the MPOs continue to select the projects and continue to receive 100 % of the DA funds. He stated that this would also be presented to the MPO Board for feedback and discussion.

Helen Bunch stated that she did not see any reason we would not consider the proposal if the NCDOT continues collaboration, and we get all the funds.

b. Wilmington Urban Area MPO 2020 Decennial Census member jurisdiction population estimates

Greer Shivers, WMPO, explained that following the 2020 Decennial Census, the Federal Highway Administration, in collaboration with the US Census Bureau, published population estimates for all Metropolitan Planning Organizations nationwide.

Ms. Shivers stated the 2020 Census results indicate the total population within the WMPO's planning area reached 297,183 residents, a 17.4% increase from the 2010 Census results of 253,045 residents for the area. She said they have come up with an estimate for each of the WMPO jurisdictions to include all our counties and municipalities. She said aside from the two correlated areas, which they worked with the census block groups and aggregated the numbers, all the others are officially published.

Mike Kozlosky, WMPO, followed up by stating these numbers affect the amount the member jurisdictions pay for membership based on the local match of their population.

**c. 2024-20233 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modifications #23-2**

Mr. Kozlosky said this is for informational purposes only for review and will be brought back for consideration at the next meeting.

**7) Updates**

**a. Wilmington Urban Area MPO**

Mike Kozlosky, WMPO, stated the update is included in the packet and there are no other updates outside of those.

**b. Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority**

Mark Hairr, Cape Fear Transit Authority, stated nothing else to add besides what is included in the packet.

**c. NCDOT Division**

Michelle Howes, NCDOT, wanted to highlight the Smith Creek Bridge ribbon cutting ceremony that took place and all other updates are included in the packet.

Mike Kozlosky, WMPO, added that at the MPO Board November 29<sup>th</sup> meeting Chad Kimes will be presenting on the traffic revenue forecast for the replacement of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge.

**d. NCDOT Transportation Planning Division**

Nazia Sarder, Division 3, stated regarding The Pender County CTP, the study letters went out last month and they will hold their first committee meeting after the first of the year. Brunswick County CTP is being updated to present at an upcoming steering committee meeting.

**8) Announcements**

**a. MPO Direct Attributable Training- November 16<sup>th</sup>**

Scott James, WMPO, stated that Direct Attributable fund training will be held in the 6<sup>th</sup> floor conference room in the county building. The room will open at 9 AM and training will start at 9:30.

**b. Go Coast Committee Meeting- November 16th.**

**c. Cape Fear Navigating Change 2050 MTP Outreach Period – through November 30, 2023**

**d. WMPO Bicycle and pedestrian Committee Meeting- December 12th**

Stephanie Ayers, NC Ports Authority, thanked the TCC and MPO Boards for their continued support. The Port was awarded an \$11 million USDOT infrastructure grant for a new north gate that will be located on South Front Street. They will close the existing Northgate that is in the Sunset Park neighborhood.

Next meeting- January 17, 2024 (proposed)

There being no further business, Mark Hairr made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Sam Boswell and the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

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