

**Wilmington Urban Area MPO
Technical Coordinating Committee
Wednesday, August 14 2024,
Remote Meeting Minutes**

Members Present in Person

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

Members Absent

Michelyn Alston, Town of Navassa
Robert O'Quinn, Town of Wrightsville Beach
Stephanie Ayers, NC State Ports Authority

Others Present In-Person

Tera Cline, WMPO
Abby Lorenzo, WMPO
Greer Shivers, WMPO
Beth King, WMPO
Regina Hopkins, WMPO
Trevor Carroll, NCDOT

Members Present Remote

Adam Moran, Pender County
Helen Bunch, Brunswick County
Granseur Dick, Wilmington International
Airport
Mark Hairr, Cape Fear Public
Transportation Authority
Adrienne Harrington, Town of Belville
Jeremy Hardison, Town of Carolina Beach
Amanda Killian, NCDOT
Denys Vielkanowitz, City of Wilmington
Julian Griffiee, Town of Leland
Mandy Sander, Town of Kure Beach

Others Present Remote

Andrew Ooms, Kittelson
Nicholas Morrison, FHWA
Cheryl Hannah, HDR
Maksym Bezruchko, NCDOT

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: Mike Kozlosky, Michelle Howes, Sam Boswell, Carolyn Caggia, and Karlene Ellis Vitalis.

Present Remotely Adam Moran, Helen Bunch, Granseur Dick, Mark Hairr, Adrienne Harrington, Jeremy Hardison, Amanda Killian and Deny Vielkanowitz, Julian Griffiee, Mandy Sander. **Absent:** Michelyn Alston, Robert O'Quinn, and Stephanie Ayers.

2) Approval of Agenda

Mark Hairr made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Karlene Ellis Vitalis and the motion carried unanimously

3) Presentations

a. NCDOT Division 3 Update-Trevor Carroll P.E., NCDOT

Trevor Carroll acknowledged Chad Kimes and Landon Zimmer and gave a quick overview of Division 3. He noted that the division covers 6 counties: Brunswick, Onslow, Duplin, Pender, New Hanover and Sampson. He mentioned the number of bridges, rest areas, and road miles that Division 3 is responsible for.

Mr. Carroll presented the Prioritization timeline (P7.0). This timeframe is for regional impact points, those collective input point assignments. He stated that there are 3 tiers of projects. Statewide tier, Regional Tier, and Division Tier. All projects are scored for all these tiers, meaning if a project does not score well at the State level it may score at the regional level and so on. He presented an interactive map, outlining the WMPO area and projects included in that area. He stated that you can click on the dots, and it will give you details about each one of the projects.

He then presented the following projects in development.

- U-6202- Gordon Road widening is scheduled for later this fall. NCDOT is working through some utility conflicts that could potentially impact the exact letting date. The letting date is currently scheduled for September and once those challenges are resolved another update can be given to the exact timeframe. He showed a current picture of Gordon Road and then a drawing of the widening project. It consists of building a separated road with a multi-use path with 5-foot sidewalks. Mr. Carroll noted he will gather more details on any structures affected by the widening and share this information with the Board. He stated that contact has been made with the homeowners and processes are being established to move forward with the project. More information will be provided once the project moves from development to construction.
- U-5792- College Road from US 17 (Market Street) to SR 2048 (Gordon Road). He presented a concept drawing of the bridge that will be constructed going over Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway from College Road. The timeframe is fiscal year 2025 (Right of Way) and construction year 2028 for the price of \$137 million.
- U-5881- NC 132 (North College) from SR 2048 (New Centre Dr) to Market Street. This project is currently still in the planning process and continued development with a price tag around \$40.5 million. Once development and a timeframe are established a more detailed update will be provided.
- U-4902C- Market Street at Eastwood Road. The current right-of-way date is fiscal year 2028 and a construction date of 2030 with a price of \$112 million.
- HB-0040- Replacement of bridges on US 74 (Salisbury Street) and US 76 (Causeway Drive) in Wrightsville Beach. Right-of-way date is 2025 and construction is planned for 2028. The three bridges will be phased and built under the same project. NCDOT is seeking alternative delivery methods for this project to accelerate the timeframe due to a lot of challenges with traffic flow and foundation installation. These construction methods passed through the General Assembly, but Mr. Carroll noted it has not been assigned to a Construction Manager/General Contractor (CMGC) slot yet. These bridges have low clearance, and the goal of this project is to raise the grade of these structures between a 4–6-foot in elevation and utilizing fiber reinforcing for the bridges. Currently, carbon steel is being used in the reinforcing strands. This has contributed to the accelerated deterioration of the bridges.

- U-5710- Military Cutoff at Eastwood Road. The current right-of-way date is 2023 and planned construction date is 2026 with a price of around \$75 million.
- U-3338C Kerr Avenue at Martin Luther King Jr Parkway. The purchase of some right-of-way has been done for this project. The planned construction date is 2028 with a cost around \$27 million.
- U-5954- Castle Hayne Road at N. 23rd Street roundabout. Its cost is around \$7 million and the planned construction year of 2027.
- F032023-J- N 23rd Street widening at the intersection and entrance to Wilmington International Airport. The current price is \$3.5 million dollars, and the right-of-way and contract times are still to be determined. NCDOT does believe that the utility and right-of-way impacts will be minimal and are working through those details.
- U-5731- US 74 at US 17/US 421 is the interchange north of the battleship. The planned construction date is 2029 with a cost around \$54.5 million dollars.
- U-6199- Wilmington Citywide Signal System. The planned construction is 2030. There is minimal right-of-way impacts regarding where these new signals will be installed. The cost is around \$60.5 million dollars.
- U-5790- US 421 (Carolina Beach Road) widened from NC 132 (College Road) down to SR 1187 (Sanders Road) with a continuous flow interstation. The plan is to start construction in FY 2029 with a cost of \$35 million dollars.
- U-4434- Independence Blvd Extension. The draft environmental impact study has been completed and is being reviewed. When approval of the impact study is verified the next step with this project will be public comment this fall. The construction timeframe is 2031 with a cost of \$200.4 million. These times are based on the approval of the impact study.
- U-5704- NC 132 (College Road) and US 17/76 (Oleander Drive Interchange) is currently in project design only. NCDOT is looking at different designs and waiting on most recent traffic forecast will impact the project.
- R-3300A/B/U-5732-Hampstead Bypass A. The right-of-way for this project started back in 2018 and the department is looking to start construction in fiscal year 2026. The B portion is under construction already. Cost for section A is \$228 million.

Mr. Carroll then presented projects that are under construction at this time:

- R-3300A/B Hampstead Bypass B section. The overall project is 45% complete with detours on Hoover Road, NC 210 and Holiday Drive. Six of eight culverts have been completed and structures on NC 210 and Hoover Road have been started. He showed some updated construction photos showing the progress of the project.
- U-5914-NC 133 at US 17/US 74/US 76 to SR 1554 (Old River Road) is expected to be completed in the next few weeks.
- U-5710A Drysdale Extension is expected to be open this fall. The contractor has been doing a great job staying on timeframe.

- U-4902D Market Street is anticipated to be completed spring 2025.

Mr. Carroll then moved onto future projects that have yet to be funded.

He presented some background information on the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge Replacement project. He stated the project has been moving forward since 2020. During that time and now, the MPO Board voted to score the project as a toll project and a grant has been awarded. There are also two other grants that are out there for review. He then presented the three main options that are being considered at this time. The first being a 65-foot moveable span this comes with a high cost to build and maintain. The second option, 135-foot fixed span. The third and final option is 100-foot+/-35-foot fixed span to be determined by USACE 408 Section and the USCG. Based on the NCDOT STIP and the Large Bridge Grant the remaining fund source amount is around \$157 million. This is where the other two grant options will become a valuable option. He shared the feasibility study results showing 6-lane median- divided facility, multi-use path, and 12-foot outside shoulders.

b. Cape Fear Memorial Bridge Closure Alternative Transportation Survey Results, Carolyn Caggia, WMPO

Ms. Caggia stated the preservation project replaced the grid deck and support beams underneath the deck to extend the life of the bridge. Eastbound lane closures started January 29, 2024, through March 31, 2024, and the Westbound Lane closures lasted April 8, 2024, through May 8, 2024. The WMPO began outreach in November 2023 to member jurisdictions and to some major local and regional employers to advise them of the project.

Teleworking, alternative work schedules, carpooling, public transportation, bicycling and walking were Travel Demand Modal (TDM) strategies promoted with assistance from the GO Coast program also offering personalized commuter plans.

Ms. Caggia stated that in January, Wave Transit and the WMPO submitted a joint funding request to NCDOT's Integrated Mobility Division (IMD) for shuttles and communications to assist with congestion mitigation during the project. NCDOT agreed to provide up to \$500,000 for the expansion of RideMICRO service in Zone 1, an additional vehicle, expanded service hours, and marketing for RideMICRO and TDM strategies.

She then noted the marketing channels used such as digital billboards, google search ads, social media posts and local media advertising. The number of advertising hits were substantial with digital ad impressions hits at 98,119 and video ad impression at 146,250, Google ad impressions at 1,640, and social media ad reach at 64,330.

Ms. Caggia stated that the marketing effort was a big part of the increase in RideMICRO numbers during the closures.

The survey was opened in May, and it received 366 responses. The first question was where the respondents were from. The largest response was from Brunswick County and as far south as South Carolina. The next question was did respondents utilize any detours during the project. 210 respondents said yes, they changed their route to avoid traffic, 108 respondents stated they used NCDOT -signed detours, and 45 respondents stated they stuck to their regular route. Respondents were asked if they utilized alternative transportation during the closures. Most respondents stated they drove alone in their personal vehicles, 37 respondents stated they drove alone but were interested in utilizing alternative transportation, and 21 respondents stated they used alternative transportation at some point during the project. The follow up question was why respondents that were interested in alternative transportation did not utilize it. Out of 35 responses to this question, 34% said transit hours did not work for them, 34% said that they had no access to transit or RideMICRO in their area, 14% needed additional support to try a new option, 40% stated they could not work remotely, 34% stated they could not walk or bicycle in their area, 29% stated they could not shift work hours, and 23% stated they could not find a carpool partner, and 23% answered with other.

Ms. Caggia then noted the results of the survey for people who did utilize alternative transportation, what mode did they use. 21 respondents answered this question with 66% stating teleworking and 52% used an alternative work schedule. Then respondents were asked if they utilized alternative transportation for the first time during this project. 25% said yes, 45% said no but it was the first time in a while and 30% stated they have regular experience with alternative transportation.

She then presented the results of the question, what made you decide to use alternative transportation during the project, or what supported your decision. Advertisement and employer encouragement/support and saving time were some of the answers. She then noted how many respondents saw or heard any of the marketing advertisings.

Ms. Caggia stated that the biggest take aways from the survey information was digital billboards, TV advertising, and social media ads were most effective. Teleworking/alternative work schedules were most used. Opportunities for Go Coast included reaching employers who cannot offer teleworking with other TDM strategies and promoting personalized commuter plans. The data from the survey will also be used for the TDM short-range plan update.

4) Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of TCC Meeting Minutes- June 12, 2024
- b. Approval of TCC/WMPO Board Joint Special Meeting Minutes-June 26, 2024
- c. Resolution approving 2024-2033 STIP/MPO Administrative Modifications #24-7

Granseur Dick made a motion to approve the consent agenda; Helen Bunch seconded it. Motion passes unanimously.

5) Regular Agenda

a. Resolution approving the WMPO's Local Input Point Assignment for Regional Impact Tier Projects for P7.0

Abby Lorenzo, WMPO noted that Included in the packets is the draft Prioritization 7.0 Regional impact point assignment. Back in February the WMPO approved its Local Entry Point Methodology, which a copy is also included in the agenda packet, which outlines the criteria used to essentially score the eligible projects at their respective tier the regional impact and division needs and assign our 1,600 impact points to the highest scores and projects.

She stated the criteria for those projects or scoring those projects in between the opportunities for coordination with NCDOT consistency to adopt the plans, the status of the project and development and the number of prioritization cycles that a project has explored through.

The draft open point for regional projects was presented to the MPO Board at the July meeting. At which time they open a 14-day public comment period, which runs through the end of day today. The draft will be presented to the MPO Board at the August meeting, and the final point assignments are due to the NCDOT Strategic Prioritization Office (SPOT) office by August 30th.

She noted the importance that when looking at the general input point assignment the division needs input point assignment later in the prior decision cycle, that current estimates for the available funding to program these projects, In the regional tier is in the negative. Regarding new projects in the Regional or Division Tiers the opportunity of new projects being funded is unlikely. However, the process of creating scores with regional and

division eligible projects and local input as part of the score is still going to proceed.

Motion to approve the WMPO's Local input point assignment for Regional Impact Tier projects made by Mark Hairr and seconded by Mike Kozlosky. Motion passes unanimously.

6) Discussion

a. 2024-2033 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modifications #24-8

Mike Kozlosky stated this is for informational purposes only and will be brought back at the next meeting for approval.

7) Updates

a. Wilmington Urban Area MPO

Mike Kozlosky noted that the updates are included in the packet. Mr. Kozlosky noted the Direct Attributable project submittals are due no later than 5:00 PM on September 13th.

b. Cape Fear Public Transit Authority

Mark Hiarr, WAVE, stated the updates were in the packet. He added that WAVE was still currently doing public outreach and has the survey located on their website and encouraged the TCC members to share the information. It is open until September 15th and hope to share all the information gathered at the September 26th Cape Fear Transportation Board Meeting.

c. NCDOT Division 3

Michelle Howes stated that the East Channel Bridge Preservation project should be finishing up in a few weeks.

d. NCDOT Integrated Mobility Division

e. NCDOT Transportation Planning Division

Amanda Killian, NCDOT, stated the fiscal year 25 approval letter for the WMPO were sent last week. The Carteret County CTP is underway and the next meeting for the Pender CTP is September 4th.

9) Announcements

a. WMPO Go Coast will meet August 15th

10) Next meeting- July 17, 2024

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

THE ABOVE MINUTES ARE NOT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS.

THE ENTIRE PROCEEDINGS ARE RECORDED DIGITALLY AS PART OF THIS RECORD.