

**Wilmington Urban Area MPO  
Technical Coordinating Committee  
Wednesday, January 15, 2025  
Remote Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present in Person**

Mike Kozlosky, TCC Chairman, WMPO  
Carolyn Caggia, WMPO  
Sam Boswell, Cape Fear Council of  
Governments  
Michelle Howes, NCDOT

**Members Absent**

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

**Others Present In-Person**

Tera Cline, WMPO  
Tessa Jones, WMPO  
Greer Shivers, WMPO  
Beth King, WMPO  
Regina Hopkins, WMPO  
Krysdan Burden, WMPO

**Members Present Remote**

Helen Bunch, Brunswick County  
Mark Hairr, Cape Fear Public  
Transportation Authority  
Adrienne Harrington, Town of Belville  
Gloria Abbotts, Town of Carolina Beach  
Karlene Ellis Vitalis, New Hanover County  
Stephanie Ayers, NC State Ports Authority  
Nazia Sader, NCDOT  
Ashli Barefoot, Town of Leland  
Adam Moran, Pender County  
Mandy Sander, Town of Kure Beach  
Denys Vielkanowitz, City of Wilmington

**Others Present Remote**

Kristina Whitfield, Kimley Horn  
Eric Seidel, CFPUA

**1) Call to Order**

Chairman Mike Kozlosky called the meeting of the Technical Coordinating Committee to order at 10:00 a.m., confirmed a quorum was present, and called the roll as follows:

**Present In Person:** Mike Kozlosky, Sam Boswell, Michelle Howes, Carolyn Caggia. **Present Remotely:** Helen Bunch, Mark Hairr, Adrienne Harrington, Karlene Ellis Vitalis, Gloria Abbotts, Stephanie Ayers, Nazia Sader, Ashli Barefoot, Adam Moran, and Mandy Sander, and Denys Vielkanowitz. **Absent:** Michelyn Alston, Robert O'Quinn, and Granseur Dick.

**2) Approval of Agenda**

Mark Hairr made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Sam Boswell, and the motion carried unanimously

**3) Election of Officers**

Michelle Howes nominated Mike Kozlosky for Chairman, seconded by Stephanie Ayers, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mike Kozlosky nominated Nazia Sarder for Vice-Chairman, seconded by Mark Hairr, and the motion carried unanimously.

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#### **4) Presentations**

##### **Go Coast Update-Carolyn Caggia, WMPO**

Ms. Caggia stated that TDM stands for Transportation Demand Management. Go Coast is one of several TDM programs. TDM refers to strategies that support and encourage the use of alternative transportation. The Go Coast program is promoting any mode other than driving alone. For example, carpooling, public transportation, bicycling, walking, and teleworking.

These strategies that encourage alternative transportation modes could include incentives. For example, Get There Greener challenge and a subsidized bus pass provided by an employer.

These strategies could also look like events such as the River to Sea bike ride. This ride is to celebrate and popularize bicycling with outreach, education and marketing. TDM is intended to support relatively low-cost ways to mitigate traffic congestion, improve air quality, and serve a variety of commuter transportation needs. The Go Coast program is guided by an advisory committee as well as a short-range plan which is currently being updated.

Ms. Caggia stated that for quarter 2 the annual sustainable transportation challenge Get There Greener was rebranded from when it was called Commuter Challenge in 2023. Participants track their miles, that they traveled by alternative transportation and reported their miles which are entered for prize drawings that are donated by local businesses. This year's challenge over 2000 miles were tracked and a total of 1,101 kg of carbon dioxide savings.

Also Go Coast sponsored a Bike to Work Day. This was done to encourage local organizations and businesses to sponsor pit stops where they would provide water, coffee, or snacks, and swag to cyclists that pass by their stop on that day.

Go Coast also participated in a helmet distribution. Every year WMPO/Go Coast applies for NCDOT's Bicycle Helmet Initiative. 100 helmets were received and at the end of December, 92 of them were distributed. Go Coast also hosted several employer commuting workshops for the short-range plan update.

She stated that for quarter 3 Go Coast will be promoting the Be A Looker Campaign. This campaign is an educational and outreach campaign to promote driver awareness and bicycle and pedestrian safety. It includes messages and safety tips for people who bike, walk, and drive. This campaign is promoted year-round but paid advertising and media coverage is done every 2 years with the 2025 campaign is kicking off in April.

The next event is the River to Sea bike ride that will be held on Saturday, May 3, 2025. This is a casual paced ride from downtown Wilmington to Wrightsville Beach and back. There are usually around 450 participants annually and this year we are looking into a sponsorship model to help offset the ride costs and keep the ride free for registrants.

She stated that the bicycle helmet initiative 2025 will be completed in quarter 3 as well as developing an implementation plan for TDM short-range plan update and MTP elements.

#### **3) Consent Agenda**

- a. Approval of TCC Meeting Minutes- November 13, 2024
- b. Resolution approving 2024-2033 STIP/MPO Administrative Modifications #24-11
- c. Opening of the 30-day public comment period for 2024-2033 STIP/MPO Amendment #25-1
- d. Resolution supporting the WMPO's application for the NCDOT's Bicycle Helmet Initiative

Helen Bunch motioned to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Sam Boswell, motioned carried unanimously.

## 5) Regular Agenda

### a. Resolution Endorsing Targets of Safety Performance measures established by the NCDOT

Mike Kozlosky stated that MPO's must adopt performance measures within 180 days of NCDOT adopting them. NCDOT adopts their performance measures by August 31<sup>st</sup> annually. MPO's may establish their own safety targets or adopt NCDOT's. The resolution being brought for approval is adopting the States' measures.

Adam Moran asked how these targets mesh with DOT's Vision Zero initiative. Mr. Kozlosky deferred to Michelle Howes with NCDOT Division 3. They both stated they would investigate it and get back to Mr. Moran with that information. Mr. Moran stated that he was not comfortable adopting any target greater than zero and recommended looking at each instance locally and addressing the situations locally.

Sam Boswell mentioned that everyone might not be familiar with Vision Zero and asked if a presentation on Vision Zero with an update on what was discussed today could be added to the TCC agenda in the future. Mr. Kozlosky stated that he would reach out to NCDOT and see if they have a presentation or if they would be willing to come and talk about Vision Zero. He also noted that Vision Zero will be folded into the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan that is being developed by the WMPO.

Mike Kozlosky made a motion to approve the adoption of NCDOT's safety performance measures and Nazia Sarder seconded the motion. Motion carried with Adam Moran abstaining from the vote.

### b. Resolution adopting the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) objectives for Cape Fear Navigating Change 2050- Carolyn Caggia, WMPO

Ms. Caggia stated that the short-range plan update is being done differently from how it's been done previously. The objectives will be included in the Cape Fear Navigating Change 2050, which is the upcoming Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). There will be a chapter for TDM, containing an overview of TDM, Go Coast and the objectives.

The second part of the update is a separate document containing a detailed work plan for Go Coast, updates approved by the Go Coast Committee, and annual reviews of the process if needed. The Go Coast committee approved some modal objectives to include in the MTP. These objectives are all in accordance with the MTP's goals, which are Safe, Equitable, Connected, Resilient, and Proactive. The objectives are intended to detail how these 5 goals will be achieved. She also noted that they are intended to be broad enough to be accomplished with potentially more than one approach. The initiatives and strategies will be informed that go into the implementation plan and they are designed to complement the adopted modal objectives.

Ms. Caggia noted that the first goal, Safe, has two objectives. Bolster education and outreach for safe bicycling and walking to all road users and develop tools for education and awareness surrounding safety for motorized forms of alternative transportation, i.e. carpooling, vanpooling, and public transportation.

The next goal, Equitable, has one objective and that is to prioritize employer outreach in areas which are transportation disadvantaged, and employers which qualify as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise.

She stated the next goal, Connected, there are three objectives. To pursue opportunities to increase carpooling and facilitate carpool ride-matching. Coordinate with Wave Transit on outreach to increase familiarity with public transportation and investigate opportunities for Park and Ride lots within the WMPO boundary.

Ms. Caggia stated that the one objective for the goal, Resilient, is to foster a regional culture where alternative transportation usage is legitimized and embraced.

She then noted that the two objectives for the goal, Proactive. Increase marketing and outreach to improve awareness and understanding of alternative transportation options to audiences including area employers, neighborhoods, schools, and others. Identify opportunities to facilitate commuter incentives at the employer level.

She concluded by stating that these TDM objectives have been approved by the Go Coast committee and will be presented to the MPO Board for approval at the January meeting. When adopted, staff will begin drafting the chapter for the TDM chapter for Cape Fear Navigating Change 2050.

Motion for approval made by Adrienne Harrington and seconded by Adam Moran and motion carried unanimously.

**c. Resolution requesting the NCDOT pursue contingency funding for the traffic signal and associated intersection improvements at Lanvale Road and Fletcher Road NE Village Road in Brunswick County**

Mike Kozlosky stated this project was submitted by Division 3, in our call for Direct Attributable Funds. There was significant support from the MPO Board that identified this as a priority improvement in Brunswick County. The traffic signal and associate intersection improvements supports an improvement for safety and replacement of the Sturgeon Creek bridge.

The Division has been unable to identify or secure funding for this project currently. There are contingency funds available through the General Assembly. This resolution would request NCDOT pursue contingency funding for this project.

Motion to approve made by Helen Bunch and seconded by Ashli Barefoot, motion carried unanimously.

**d. Resolution supporting the WMPO's application for the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and cost saving Transportation (PROTECT) grant program**

Greer Templer, WMPO stated that the WMPO wishes to apply to USDOT's Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and cost saving Transportation discretionary grant program. The premise behind applying to this grant program is to develop a resiliency improvement plan for our planning area boundary.

This would include a risk-based assessment completed to address the vulnerabilities that affect our service transportation network within this region and to prioritize projects from that assessment.

She noted that this grant is 100% federally funded, meaning no local match is needed.

Motion to approve made by Adrienne Harrington and seconded by Adam Moran, motion carried unanimously.

**e. Resolution adopting the 2025 WMPO Legislative Agenda**

Mike Kozlosky stated that the Legislative Agenda is very similar to the one adopted in 2024. The MPO Board had a discussion and requested an addition. The suggested revision is regarding drainage improvements.

Motion made by Mark Hairr, seconded by Sam Boswell, motion carried unanimously.

**f. Opening of the 30-day Public Comment Period for the FY26 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

Regina Hopkins, WMPO stated a copy of the draft UPWP is included in the agenda packet. In addition to normal annual operating costs, highlights of this draft are funding for staff compensation, which is a priority, and includes the recommendations by the Board. It also includes a special study to hire an outside consultant to assist in developing the WMPO's 2027-2031 Strategic Plan and a consultant to perform a compensation update.

She noted that additional funding is included for rent for the WMPO's building located at 525 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street and indirect costs which are both contained in the draft of the Lead Planning Agency Agreement (LPA).

Included as well is \$100,000 in "member only" funding for a grant assistant pilot program. This program aims to provide WMPO staff and/or our members with funding assistance to cover expenses related to transportation grant application costs.

She concluded that costs may be refined as staff work through the process and possibly receive public comments with the opening of the 30-day comment period.

Motion made by Helen Bunch, seconded by Carolyn Caggia, motion carried unanimously.

**g. Resolution amending the 2025 TCC/MPO Board meeting schedule**

Mike Kozlosky stated that the April 16<sup>th</sup> TCC meeting is conflicting with the MPO conference that is being held in Wilmington. He is requesting that the meeting be moved to April 9<sup>th</sup> and add a joint TCC/MPO Board meeting on June 25<sup>th</sup>. Additionally add a regular meeting of the MPO Board to December 3<sup>rd</sup> for a work session to identify budget priorities and help develop the Unified Planning Work Program.

Motion made to approve by Mark Hairr, seconded by Helen Bunch, motion carried unanimously.

**5) Discussion**

**a. 2024-2033 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modifications #25-1**

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

**b. Cape Fear Navigating Change 2050 Alternative Funding Mechanisms-Kristina Whitfield, Kimley Horn**

Kristina Whitfield stated that they were bringing back some discussion topics about alternative revenue and will present what Kimley Horn thinks is the most feasible way of increasing capacity for transportation funding.

She stated that she is going to give a quick refresher of the funding type, the order of magnitude that is expected, and if this were a funding stream that was moved forward as an alternative scenario in the MTP what projects or programs could be funded.

She started with a review of the local option sales tax. The first one is a generalized one and the second is one dedicated to transit improvements. New Hanover County already has the generalized local option sales tax but there is not much guidance on how much of these funds, if any are going to transportation. There are a lot of way counties can levy the local option sales tax. We are seeing counties across the state partner with their local incorporated municipalities to use some of this funding to better serve transportation needs.

Ms. Whitfield stated that Durham County has established a transportation staff. This has allowed them to have a better seat at the table in their MPO discussions and state discussions. This helps unincorporated portions of the county have a say in their transportation needs.

She stated Catawba County has a program where neighborhoods who were built prior to traditional subdivision regulations have what is referred to as orphan roads. This allows the county to act as the intermediary and use some of their funding to help get those roads up to standard.

She noted that the way the generalized local option sales tax is structured funding does not necessarily have to be used on roads, it could be greenways and trails as well.

Ms. Whitfield stated that the local option sales tax (for public transportation) could help increase frequency on the highest performing routes, assist with high-capacity transit routes and park and rides. Bicycle and pedestrian projects that serve direct access to those transit facilities can also be funded with this tax.

The vehicle registration fees are very similar to the local option sales tax for transit. This can be used for some of those public transportation projects. It does not have quite the order of magnitude that the sales tax does, but it can still be used for a lot of the same purposes that the sales tax can be used for in terms of improving transit and bicycle and pedestrian facilities going into those transit facilities.

She stated the motor vehicle license tax has already been levied in Leland and Wilmington and the estimates presented are just for those incorporated municipalities not using this funding stream today. This tax also has a much smaller dollar value and restrictions around it. It must be used on off-system roadways, meaning locally owned facilities. It can also be used for bicycle and pedestrian priorities.

Ms. Whitfield stated that the short-term vehicle rental tax can be levied to fund further advanced STIP projects. It can be used as a supplement for public transit as well. This tax is currently being administered in New Hanover County just not being explicitly dedicated to transportation funding.

She then noted that tolling was the only source approved for inclusion in the 2045 MTP. The estimated tolling contributions for Cape Fear Crossing and the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge were pulled for the SPOT 7.0 process. She also noted that the Cape Fear Crossing estimate is a little out of date but that is what the scoring is based on. The Cape Fear Memorial Bridge project has also been successful in obtaining a large discretionary grant but due to it not covering all costs, tolling is still being included as a source of alternative funding.

Mike Kozlosky, asked Ms. Whitfield since the toll estimate shows \$359 million dollar costs for tolling and the scoring for P 7.0 did not incorporate the \$242 million dollars from the grant funds would that reduce the estimate by \$242 million? She stated that is how Kimley Horn would interpret it, but it would be worth a discussion with the SPOT office. Mr. Kozlosky also stated that he would be interested in how long with the reduced amount a toll would need to be included on the bridge before it could sunset. He noted that states state that once it paid off the toll would come off. It was suggested to contact David Roy with the Turnpike Authority for clarification.

Ms. Whitfield stated that she had shared some community research from recently passed transportation bond referendums in North Carolina at the last meeting. As part of that research, Kimley Horn looked at the order of magnitude of bonds, as well as the per capita. The per capita median for the jurisdictions of Leland and Wilmington is about \$470 per person. That amount equated to roughly a 2 to 3 cent property tax increase to cover the bond. This equals approximately \$120 million dollars for Wilmington and \$24 million for Leland. She stated she wanted to emphasize that these bonds can't necessarily cover the entirety of all projects but they do provide the opportunity to speed projects up by providing a little bit more local match.

She then noted that the last funding program researched was not something that would necessarily fiscally constrain this process. This funding might be able to fund some of the bigger bridge projects that may not score well in the traditional STIP process. Through conversations with DOT, both the STIP Bridge Program and the Highway Bridge Fund are influenced by the bridges condition rating. Once they reach structurally deficient, they make it onto this list for replacement from the structures management unit. They then work with the local Division offices to get them programmed and replaced. She stated that this does seem like the more likely way that Heide Trask Bridge and Snows Cut Bridge would be able to get State and Federal funding.

Ms. Whitfield stated that the MTP committee provided a rank of how feasible they thought the funding streams were for their respective communities as well as the impact on getting transportation projects completed. The lower the rank number the better and the higher the impact number the better. There was a lot of discussion regarding the vehicle rental tax not putting the burden directly on residents and splitting where the burden gets placed on tourism and those coming into the region. This might have better feasibility in terms of getting passed whereas a transportation impact fee but due to this being illegal in the state of North Carolina it would need serious lobbyist action to get passed.

In terms of impact, the local option sales tax was noted by the MTP committee as most likely to have the greatest impact on getting transportation projects funded largely because of the magnitude of them and the ease of collection.

She noted in Charlotte the passing of their Charlotte Strategic Mobility Plan last year they made an intentional move to reduce the single occupancy vehicle mode split by 50%. They recognized they could not do this without serious investment in transit. They are now working with a private firm to study the kind of capacity for bonding. They are one of the few counties in North Carolina that have legislatively been allowed to do a half cent sales tax instead of a quarter cent sales tax. They are now working on a strategy for getting the information out to voters and considering supplementing it with a bond request at the same time.

Ms. Whitfield stated that one of the key metrics in the SPOT scoring priority process is the cost to NCDOT. The lower the cost the more likely the project will be boosted. It may not score better but the lower the cost in DOT dollars the better the chances of the project having a better benefit/cost score.

Karlene Ellis Vitalis stated that some communities in New Hanover County whose infrastructure was no longer functional, or they had some stormwater issues the county has assisted the communities in terms of their presentation to NCDOT. She noted that on three occasions they have told the communities what they needed to do. The community would have their own meetings and then put their bids out with the counties help. They help with the process of selecting a contractor as well. The county then fronts the money, and it is paid back as an even split with the landowners.

Ms. Whitfield stated she would recommend reaching out to Catawba County, NCDOT and other jurisdictions to ask if they have funded these types of projects without ever having to put ownership back on the property owners.

She then stated that any of the options that are decided to be put in the MTP is not a binding effort. They can be placed in the plan alongside the already adopted fiscally constrained scenario that uses traditional revenue streams.

Adam Moran asked how the vehicle registration fees, and the motor vehicle license fees are levied and who has the authority to do it.

Ms. Whitfield explained that the vehicle rental fee is at the county level, but you must have a vehicle rental company within your county limits. The motor vehicle tax is only allowed to be levied by incorporated municipalities. She then clarified that the vehicle registration fee is established at the county level.

She also noted that the registration fee is a flat fee that is written in the State legislation no matter the vehicle type.

There was more discussion among committee members on the types of funding presented.

Ms. Whitfield then noted that the direction they need to continue to explore based on this discussion is local option sales tax, tolling, and then for Pender County and New Hanover County the vehicle registration fee.

Mr. Kozlosky recommended Ms. Whitfield contact Deputy Manager Thom Moton, who is the committee liaison between the City Council and the city managers' office about any efforts they might consider regarding a 2026 transportation bond.

## **7) Updates**

### **a. Wilmington Urban Area MPO**

Mike Kozlosky stated the written updates are included in the packet. He recognized Krysden Burden as the new Grants Coordinator for the WMPO

### **b. Cape Fear Public Transit Authority**

Mark Hiarr, WAVE Transit, stated that updates are included in the packet.

### **c. NCDOT Division 3**

Michelle Howes stated that all projects in development are included in the packet. They are still seeking funding for the Lanvale Road and Fletcher Road intersection. NC 133 in Belville is working through their final punch list items and waiting for temperatures to rise to finish final paving. The Drysdale Drive extension is also waiting for temperatures to rise to finish the last overlay of pavement. Market Street is ongoing and there are more changes pushing that project completion date out to the fall of 2025. Gordon Road has been let and the date of availability for them to begin is in March.

The resurfacing preservation projects are ongoing. Confirmation with the resident engineer about the Wrightsville Beach resurfacing will start soon based on conversations with the contractor once temperatures rise.

### **d. NCDOT Integrated Mobility Division**

No Update.

### **e. NCDOT Transportation Planning Division**

Nazia Sader NCDOT, stated that they will continue to work with the WMPO on the Wilmington Travel Demand Model. Booklets noting Brunswick County CTP that closed out last year are being given to the adopting agencies. Pender County CTP will have their next meeting at the end of February.

## **Announcements**

- a. WMPO BPAC committee meeting will be February 11., 2025.**

**10) Next meeting- February 12, 2025**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

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

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