

WMPO SS4A Community Engagement Plan

INTRODUCTION

On December 13, 2023, the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) was awarded a Planning and Demonstration Grant from the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program to develop the WMPO SS4A Safety Action Plan (referred to as WMPO SS4A SAP throughout the rest of this document). The goal of WMPO SS4A SAP is to develop a holistic, well-defined strategy to prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries in the WMPO region. The project team kicked off the Plan in March 2025, and the Plan will be completed by October 2026.

A critical component of the WMPO SS4A SAP is community engagement. This Community Engagement Plan (CEP) is intended to strategize gathering input from the Steering Committee, community groups, and people that live, work, and play in the WMPO region. Engagement will consist of three rounds:

- **Community Engagement Round 1:** Introduce the WMPO SS4A SAP goals, Safe Systems Approach, and existing conditions. Gather community input on safety concerns and priorities through surveys and mapping. This engagement period took place from August – September 2025.
- **Community Engagement Round 2:** Share draft recommendations for infrastructure, policies, and programs. Collect community feedback. This took place from January 2026 – February 2026.
- **Community Engagement Round 3:** Present final WMPO SS4A SAP results and implementation strategies. This will take place in May 2026.

This document discusses the following components of community engagement for the WMPO SS4A SAP development:

- WMPO SS4A SAP Milestones
- Engagement Goals
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Levels of Engagement Framework
- Outreach Strategies
- Engagement Documentation and Evaluation

The CEP is intended to be dynamic in that it will initially thoroughly describe community engagement strategies; however, the project team can update and modify the CEP as the SAP is developed to leverage engagement opportunities as they arise.

WMPO SS4A PLAN MILESTONES

The project has several tasks that are split into three technical phases (Figure 1). Several milestones throughout the project are identified to integrate engagement into the deliverables and outcomes. Milestone needs inform engagement activity decisions.

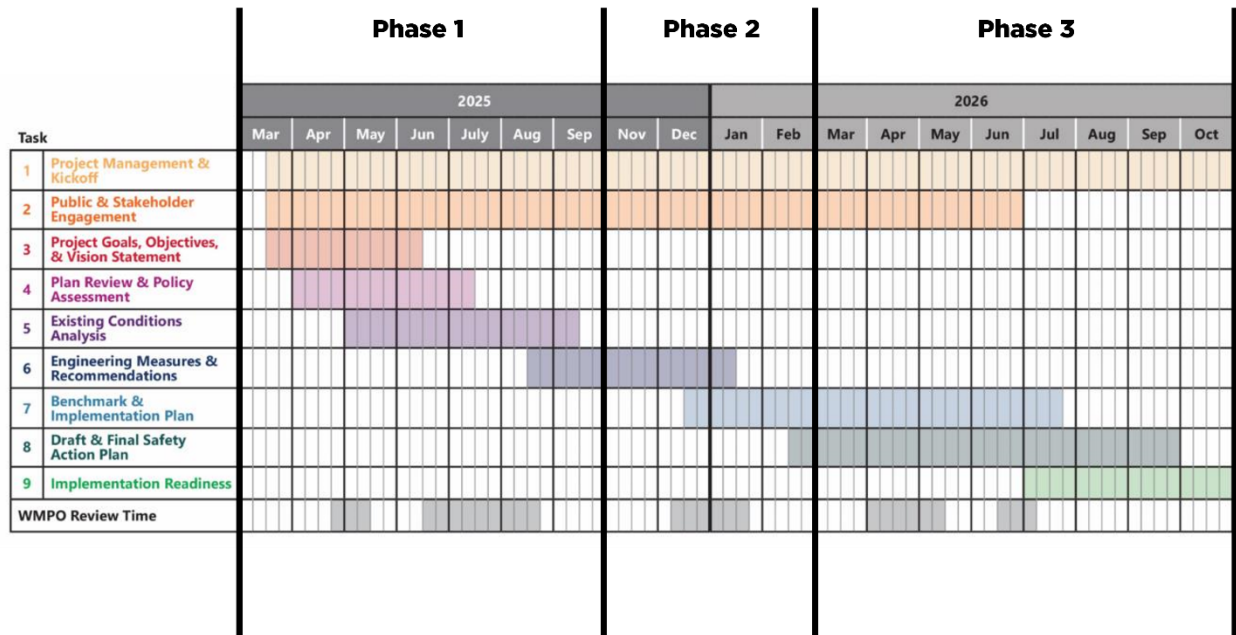


Figure 1. WMPO SS4A SAP Milestones

Community engagement for the SAP will consist of the following three phases to correspond with key milestones within the SAP development and implementation:

- **SAP Development Phase 1:** Existing Conditions (March 2025 to September 2025)
 - Round 1 of engagement
- **SAP Development Phase 2:** Draft Recommendations (October 2025 to February 2026)
 - Round 2 of engagement
- **SAP Development Phase 3:** Results and Implementation (March 2026 to October 2026)
 - Round 3 of engagement

ENGAGEMENT GOALS

The project team has several community engagement goals throughout the process (Table 1):

Table 1. WMPO SS4A Engagement Goals

Goal	Objective
Maximize Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand outreach efforts to ensure all community members have access to information and opportunities to participate Use plain language and culturally relevant communication materials Communicate clearly and tailor materials to be accessible and meaningful for different audiences Encourage broad participation to reflect the broad range of perspectives and experiences within the community
Reduce Barriers to Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer engagement opportunities at different times, formats, and locations Provide Spanish translation for community engagement announcements, social media text, and online surveys. Build on existing meetings or events where possible to reduce engagement fatigue Adjust engagement strategies as needed
Educate the Community on Transportation Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly explain data, decisions, and goals around traffic safety Foster a sense of shared responsibility for traffic safety
Measure and Report Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track engagement participation and input themes Report publicly on how community feedback influenced decisions
Center Lived Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect and incorporate qualitative data (e.g., personal stories, interviews, focus groups) from those most impacted Engage local leaders, grassroots organizations, and residents
Build Trust and Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share clear, accessible information about the project scope, timeline, and decision-making process Provide regular updates on how community feedback is being used Acknowledge historical or existing inequities
Sustain Long-Term Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage SAP Steering Committee and SS4A Community Coalition as a space to maintain and create new relationships

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

There are several key groups supporting the development of the WMPO SS4A SAP in various capacities:

- Project Development Team
- Marketing and Engagement Core Team
- SAP Steering Committee
- Marketing and Engagement Outreach Team
- SS4A Community Coalition

This section documents the roles and responsibilities of each group.

Project Development Team

The Project Development team will lead the development of the WMPO SS4A SAP. The Project Development Team will meet bi-weekly to discuss current project status and upcoming tasks. While the consultant team will develop the WMPO SS4A SAP and lead community engagement, the other members of the Project Development Team are responsible for reviewing and providing feedback on all project deliverables. Additionally, they will be key participants in all community engagement activities and will assist the consultant team in finalizing community engagement logistics such as event locations, meeting times, and outreach. Table 2 identifies the Project Development Team.

Table 2. Project Development Team

Name	Title/Organization	Email
Mike Kozlosky	Executive Director, WMPO	Mike.Kozlosky@wilmingtonnc.gov
Abby Lorenzo	Deputy Director, WMPO	Abigail.Lorenzo@wilmingtonnc.gov
Tessa Jones	Public Information Officer, WMPO	Tessa.Jones@wilmingtonnc.gov
Greer Templer	Senior Transportation Planner, WMPO	Greer.Templer@wilmingtonnc.gov
Carolyn Caggia	Associate Transportation Planner, WMPO	Carolyn.Caggia@wilmingtonnc.gov
Beth King	Associate Transportation Planner, WMPO	Beth.King@wilmingtonnc.gov
Regina Hopkins	Accounting Manager, WMPO	Regina.Hopkins@wilmingtonnc.gov
Krysdan Burden	Grants Manager, WMPO	Krysdan.Burden@wilmingtonnc.gov
Amanda Halbert	GIS Analyst	amanda.halbert@wilmingtonnc.gov
Bastian Schroeder	Senior Principal Engineer, Kittelson (KAI)	bschroeder@kittelson.com
Andrew Ooms	Associate Engineer, KAI	aooms@kittelson.com

Name	Title/Organization	Email
Zach Bugg	Associate Engineer, KAI	zbugg@kittelson.com
Sarah Brown	Planner, KAI	sbrown@kittelson.com
Catherine Suria	Transportation Analyst, KAI	csuria@kittelson.com
Lauren Blackburn	Multimodal Safety Planning Lead, VHB	lblackburn@vhb.com
Jordan Powell	Transportation Engineer, VHB	jpowell@vhb.com
Ian Hamilton	Transportation Planner, VHB	lhamilton@vhb.com
Jason Pace	Engineer, Exult Engineering	JasonP@ExultEngineering.com
Lisa Lundeen	Traffic Engineer, Exult Engineering	LisaL@ExultEngineering.com
Adrienne Harrington	Founder/Owner, Smart Moves Consulting	adrienne@smartmovesconsulting.net

Marketing and Engagement Core Team

Members of the Project Development Team also participate in the Marketing and Engagement Core Team. This team meets outside of the bi-weekly project management check-ins needed to ensure engagement pieces focused on external material are developed collaboratively and effectively.

Responsibilities include feedback on marketing, branding, and education. The following Project Development Team members are involved in this effort:

- Beth King
- Carolyn Caggia
- Tessa Jones
- Sarah Brown
- Catherine Suria
- Adrienne Harrington

The Marketing and Engagement Core Team began research into contacts for public information, social media, and marketing professionals within agencies and organizations represented on the Steering Committee. The following professionals will be essential to the broad engagement strategies described later in the CEP (Table 3). The project team sent a survey to the Marketing and Engagement Outreach team in Round 1 to document and synthesize their communication strategies. This will support the refinement of the strategy for efficiencies and consistencies.

Table 3. Marketing and Engagement Outreach Team

Name	Title/Organization	Email
Lauren McConville	Communication & Outreach Manager, New Hanover County	lmconville@nhcgov.com
Bailey Hartsell	Communications Manager, Town of Wrightsville Beach	bhartsell@towb.org
Sheila Nicholson	Administrative Services Officer, Town of Carolina Beach	sheila.nicholson@carolinabeach.org
Mandy Sanders	Director of Administration, Town of Kure Beach	m.sanders@tokb.org
Sharon Niemann	Town Clerk, Town of Belville	sniemann@townofbelville.com
Brandi Cobb	Communications Manager, Pender County	bcobb@pendercountync.gov
Anita Baggie	Director of Communications, New Hanover County Schools	anita.baggie@nhcs.net
Bob Fankboner	Communications Coordinator Pender County Schools	Robert_fankboner@pender.k12.nc.us
Ben Strauss	Communications & Marketing Coordinator Brunswick County Schools	bstrauss@bcswan.net
Meagan Kasczak	Communications Director Brunswick County	meagan.kasczak@brunswickcountync.gov
Brianna D'Itri	Public Relations Manager, Wave Transit	bditri@wavetransit.com
Christina Hallingse	Director of Media Relations, Cape Fear Community College	challingse@cfcc.edu
Jessica Jewell	Communications Manager, Leland	jjewell@townofleland.com
Emily Flax	Public Information Officer, Brunswick County Sheriff Office	emily.flax@brunswicksheriff.com
Sydney Bouchelle	Media Relations, UNCW	bouchelles@uncw.edu
Molly McKeown	Communications Director, UNCW	mckeownm@uncw.edu
Rebekah Thurston	Public Information Officer, Wilmington Fire Department	Rebekah.Thurston@wilmingtonnc.gov
Brandon Shope	Public information Officer Wilmington Police, Department	Brandon.Shope@wilmingtonnc.gov
Lauren Edwards	Director of Corporate Affairs, City of Wilmington	Lauren.Edwards@wilmingtonnc.gov
Amber Merklinger	Communications Specialist, Brunswick County	amber.merklinger@brunswickcountync.gov

Name	Title/Organization	Email
Veronica Newsome	Communications Officer, NCDOT Divisions 2 and 3	vgnewsome@ncdot.gov
Elly Kane	Senior Communications Manager NC Ports	elly.kane@ncports.com
Michelyn Alston	Town Clerk, Town of Navassa	malston@townofnavassa.org

Safety Action Plan Steering Committee

The Project Development Team will identify Steering Committee members and invite them to join. The Steering Committee will meet five (5) times throughout the development of the WMPO SS4A SAP.

The responsibilities of the Steering Committee are the following:

- Attend and participate in five SAP Steering Committee meetings (to be held in-person with virtual option). Meetings 2-4 will be held 2-3 weeks prior to community engagement rounds
- Provide input for community engagement strategies that would be most successful for their respective jurisdictions/community groups/organizations. These will be community events in which tabling would be an option or contact information for other entities that may be interested in helping share the community engagement opportunities with their connections.
- Assist with sharing the community engagement materials with their respective jurisdictions/community groups/organizations.

Table 4. Project Steering Committee Meeting Times

Meeting #	Timeline
Meeting #1 – Kick Off	May 8, 2025
Meeting #2 – Existing Conditions	August 7, 2025
Meeting #3- Project Recommendations	December 8, 2025
Meeting #4 – Draft Plan	March 23, 2026
Meeting #5- Implementation Strategy	Summer 2026

Potential Steering Committee members include planners, engineers, emergency management, and members of the WMPO’s Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) or other WMPO committees.

Table 5. Project Steering Committee Members

Name	Title/Organization	Email
Denys Vielkanowitz	Traffic Engineer, City of Wilmington	denys.vielkanowitz@wilmingtonnc.gov
Linda Painter	Director of Planning & Development, City of Wilmington	linda.painter@wilmingtonnc.gov
Wendy Giannini-King	Community Risk Reduction Coordinator for Fire Department, City of Wilmington	wendy.giannini.king@wilmingtonnc.gov
Adrienne Cox	Planning Engineer, NCDOT Division 3	amcox1@ncdot.gov
Lt Joseph LaChapelle	Police Lieutenant, Wilmington Police Department	Joseph.Lachapelle@wilmingtonnc.gov
Dylan McDonnell	Long Range Planner, New Hanover County	dmcdonnell@nhcgov.com
Jeremy Hardison	Community Development Director Town of Carolina Beach	jeremy.hardison@carolinabeach.org
Haynes Brigman	Town Manager, Town of Wrightsville Beach	hbrigman@towb.org
Mandy Sanders	Director of Administration, Town of Kure Beach	m.sanders@tokb.org
Chad Staradumsky	Planner, Town of Belville	planning@townofbelville.com
Marcy Waters	Long Range Planner, Pender County	mwaters@pendercountync.gov
Debbie Trafton	Director of Transportation, New Hanover County Schools	deb.trafton@nhcs.net
Michael Taylor	Chief Officer of Student Support, Pender County Schools	michael_taylor@pender.k12.nc.us
Lloyd Willis	Director of Transportation, Brunswick County Schools	lwillis@bcswan.net
Jonathan Dodson	Deputy Director, Wave Transit	jdodson@wavetransit.com
Shawn Spencer	Transportation Operations Manager, University of North Carolina Wilmington	spencerjs@uncw.edu
Shawn Breedlove	Safety and Security Coordinator, Cape Fear Community College	sbreedlove@cfcc.edu

Name	Title/Organization	Email
Ben Andrea	Planning & Inspections Director, Town of Leland	bandrea@townofleland.com
Liam Mikeal	Transportation Planning Engineer, Town of Leland	lmikeal@townofleland.com
Kirstie Dixon	Planning Director, Brunswick County	kirstie.dixon@brunswickcountync.gov
Landin Holland	Town Administrator/Planner, Town of Navassa	Lholland@townofnavassa.org
Walter Sellers	Deputy Sheriff, Brunswick County Sheriff's Office	Walter.Sellers@brunswickncsheriff.gov
Paul Divitantonio	Deputy Sheriff, Brunswick County Sheriff's Office	Paul.divitantonio@brunswickncsheriff.gov
Daniel Little	Lieutenant, Brunswick County Sheriff's Office	Daniel.little@brunswickncsheriff.gov
Stoney Mathis	Division Traffic Engineer, NCDOT Traffic Services	sdmathis@ncdot.gov
Brian Murphy	Traffic Safety Systems Engineer, NCDOT Traffic Safety Unit	bgmurphy@ncdot.gov
Britney Melvin	Community Risk Reduction Coordinator, New Hanover County	bmelvin@nhcgov.com
Toni Scollins	Injury & Violence Prevention Coordinator, Novant Health	toni.scollins@novanthealth.org
Steve Zinder	Chairman of the WMPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)	zinders@uncw.edu
Rosemary Guendner	Business Engagement Manager, Cape Fear Workforce Development Board	rguendner@capefearcog.org
Major Michael Collier	Chief Deputy, Pender County Sheriff's Office	mcollier@pendersheriff.com
Detective Lazaro Ramos	Detective, Pender County Sheriff's Office	lazaro.ramos@pendersheriff.com
Major Chris Smith	Command Staff, New Hanover County Sheriff's Office	chsmith@nhcgov.com

Name	Title/Organization	Email
1st Sgt. E. Luther	Patrol Division, New Hanover County Sheriff's Office	eluther@nhcgov.com

WMPO SS4A SAP Community Coalition

The project team will form an informal WMPO SS4A SAP Community Coalition to share plan updates, promote engagement opportunities, and encourage event participation. The Coalition will include diverse organizations and stakeholders serving the community in areas such as housing, transportation, health, education, employment, food security, youth, and safety. Members may represent nonprofits, churches, businesses, HOAs, senior centers, parks and recreation, media, and other local groups. The consultant team will maintain a member list via a shared spreadsheet, and Coalition members will receive bi-monthly plan updates by email ahead of key milestones detailing project progress, important dates, and next steps.

A smaller, prioritized list of contacts from the WMPO SS4A Community Coalition will receive additional targeted outreach to maximize information dissemination. This group was chosen based off geographic distribution and community focus areas, such as youth or older adults. The project team will encourage these members to participate in the following ways:

- Disseminate information to their email list serves or social media about the events
- Attend engagement events
- Display flyers or QR codes at their offices/field sites
- Optional participation in focus groups

Table 6. Priority Outreach Contacts

Title/Organization	Email	Area Served	Lead Outreach	Notes
Cape Fear Cyclists - Brunswick County rep.	the.morrison@verizon.net	Brunswick County	WMPO	Mobility
Disability Resource Center	a.mcfadden@drc-cil.org	Brunswick County	WMPO	Disability
North Brunswick Chamber of Commerce	northbrunswickchamber@gmail.com	Brunswick County	WMPO	Business
Senior Center / Brunswick Senior Resource Center	generalbsri@bsrinc.org	Brunswick County	WMPO	Seniors
YMCA Youth Services	Elisha.Dixon@ymcasenc.org	Brunswick County	KAI	Youth

WMPO SS4A Community Engagement Plan

Title/Organization	Email	Area Served	Lead Outreach	Notes
Safe Kids Brunswick	jhartman@smartstartbrunswick.org	Brunswick County	WMPO	Youth
New Hanover County NAACP	info@nhcnaacp.org	New Hanover County	KAI	Community
Safe Kids New Hanover	ecary@nhcgov.com	New Hanover County	WMPO	Youth
Senior Resource Center New Hanover County	asmith@nhcgov.co	New Hanover County	WMPO	Seniors
YMCA Youth Services	Heather.Rogers@ymcasenc.org	New Hanover County	KAI	Youth
ACCESS of Wilmington	paula@accessilm.org	Region	KAI	Disability
Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern North Carolina	ccampagna@bgcsenc.org	Region	KAI	Youth
Cape Fear Housing Coalition	info@capefearhousingcoalition.com	Region	WMPO	Housing
Cape Fear Latinos	contact@capefearlatinos.com	Region	WMPO	Limited English Proficiency
Terry Benjey Bicycling Foundation	terrybenjeybicyclingfoundation@gmail.com	Region	WMPO	Mobility
Good Shepherd Center	kknight@goodshepherdwilmington.org	Region	WMPO	Housing
i9 Sports	league.office352@i9sports.com	Region	Smart Moves	Youth
Mt. Calvary AME Church	Mtcalvaryamecnav@gmail.com	Navassa	KAI	Community
One Christian Network	info@onechristiannetwork.com	Wilmington	KAI	Community
Two-Wheeler Dealer	twowheelerdealerNC@gmail.com	Wilmington	WMPO	Mobility
Northside Food Co-Op	gcbowen@gmail.com	Wilmington	KAI	Community
Sokoto House	abdullah@sokotohouse.org	Wilmington	KAI	Community
Special Pedals	specialpedalsinc@gmail.com	Wilmington	WMPO	Mobility

Title/Organization	Email	Area Served	Lead Outreach	Notes
Wilmington Chamber of Commerce	info@wilmingtonchamber.org	Wilmington	WMPO	Business
Wilmington and Beaches	visit@wilmingtonandbeaches.com	Wilmington	WMPO	Tourism
Wilmington Downtown, Inc.	christina@wilmingtondowntown.com	Wilmington	WMPO	Business
Wilmington Run Club	wilmingtonrunclub@gmail.com	Wilmington	KAI	Mobility

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The project team is committed to implementing an effective approach to maximize engagement efforts across the WMPO region. Engagement will be comprised of both broad engagement as well as geographically dispersed in-person opportunities. To achieve this goal, the project team will analyze several metrics about community growth and mobility, as well as insights from past engagement experience, and community knowledge.

Engagement Approach Analysis

The project team reviewed the following data to identify geographic focus areas for in-person opportunities:

- Population Density
- Job Density
- Projected Population Growth
- Projected Employment Growth
- Percentage of Multimodal Users
- Pedestrian and Bicyclist Crash Density
- NCDOT Roadway Severity Scores
- Recently Completed and Planned NCDOT Safety Projects

These concepts were critical to shaping an effective engagement approach for a transportation safety plan as they helped identify where the greatest needs and opportunities for impact exist. The data helped identify high activity levels, identified future demand to ensure that safety investments are forward-looking, highlighted multimodal safety risks, and documented planned investments. Collectively, these data-driven factors supported targeted, inclusive, and effective community outreach and project development. Figures 2 through 9 display data used to identify the geographic focus areas. Table 7 summarizes the identified focus areas.

The project team also integrated qualitative data gained through community knowledge and reflections on past community engagement efforts for other WMPO and local plans.

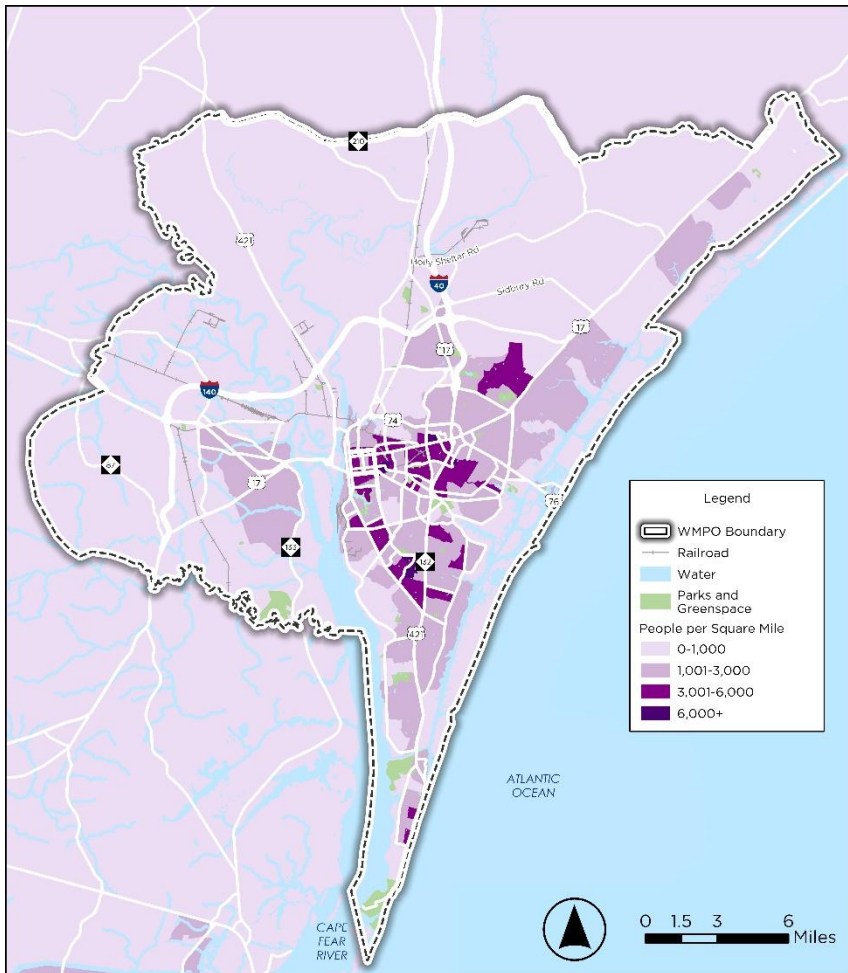


Figure 2. Population Density (Source: ACS 5-Year-Estimates, 2019-2023)

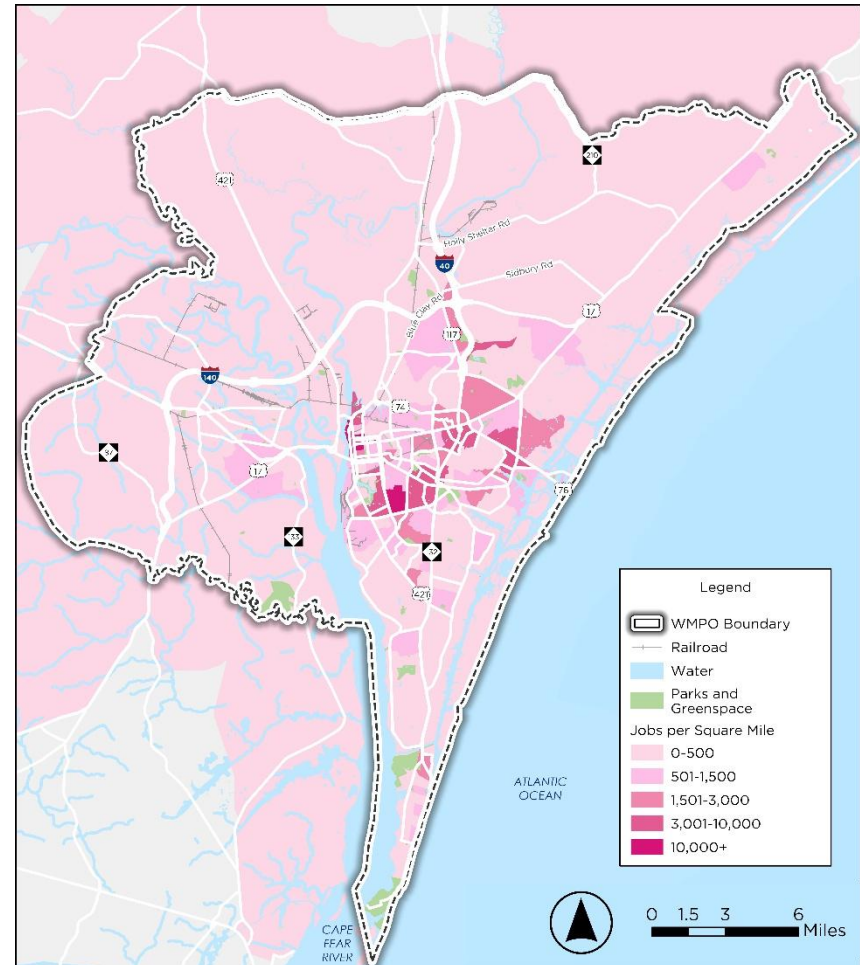


Figure 3. Employment Density (Source: LEHD OntheMap, 2022)

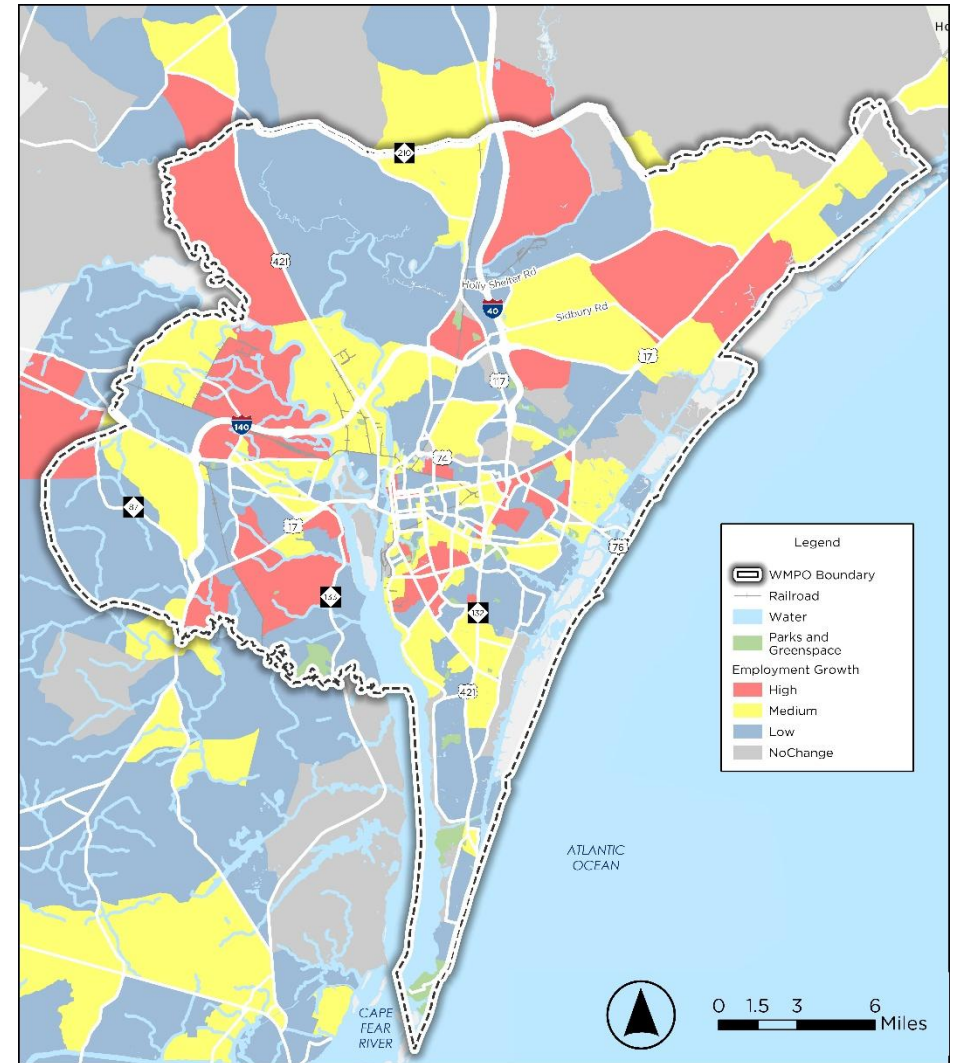
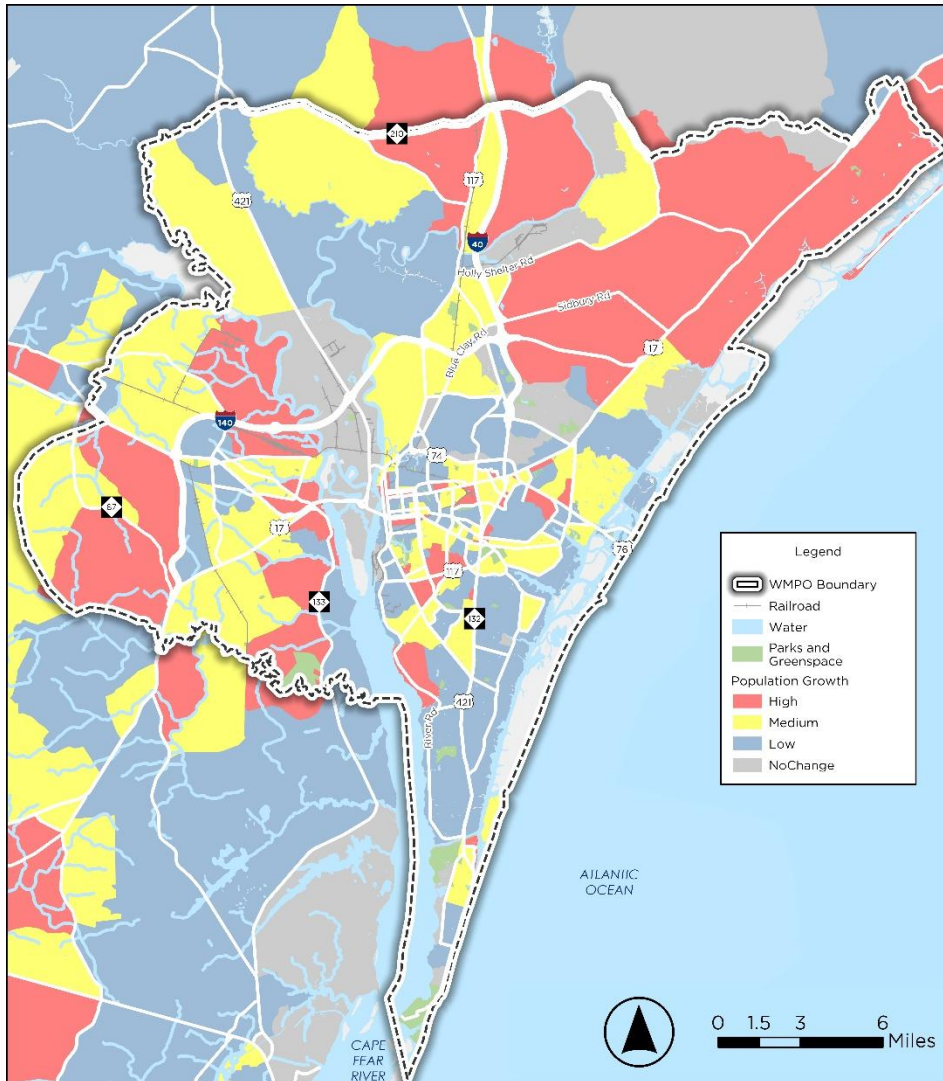


Figure 4. Projected Population Growth (Source: WMPO Transportation Demand Model)

Figure 5. Projected Employment Growth (Source: WMPO Transportation Demand Model)

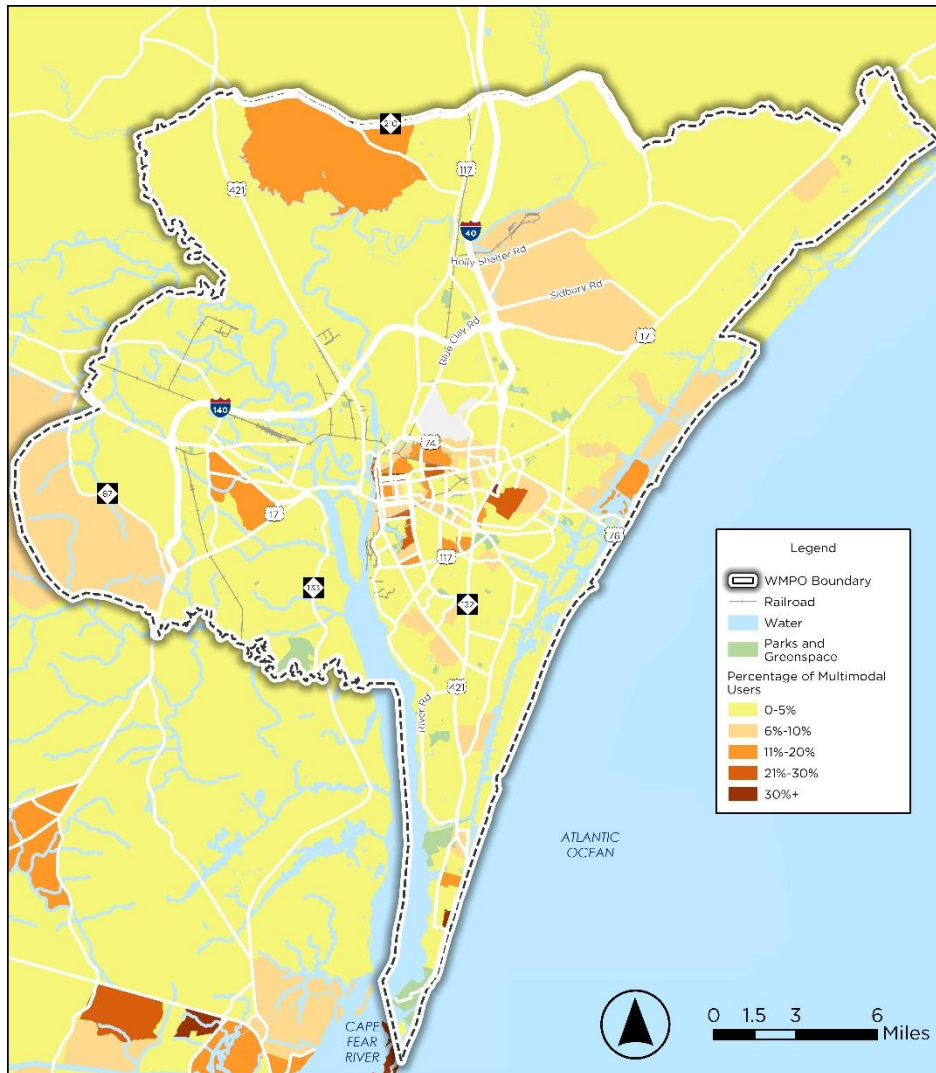


Figure 6. Percentage of Multimodal Users (Source: ACS 5-Year-Estimates, 2019-2023)

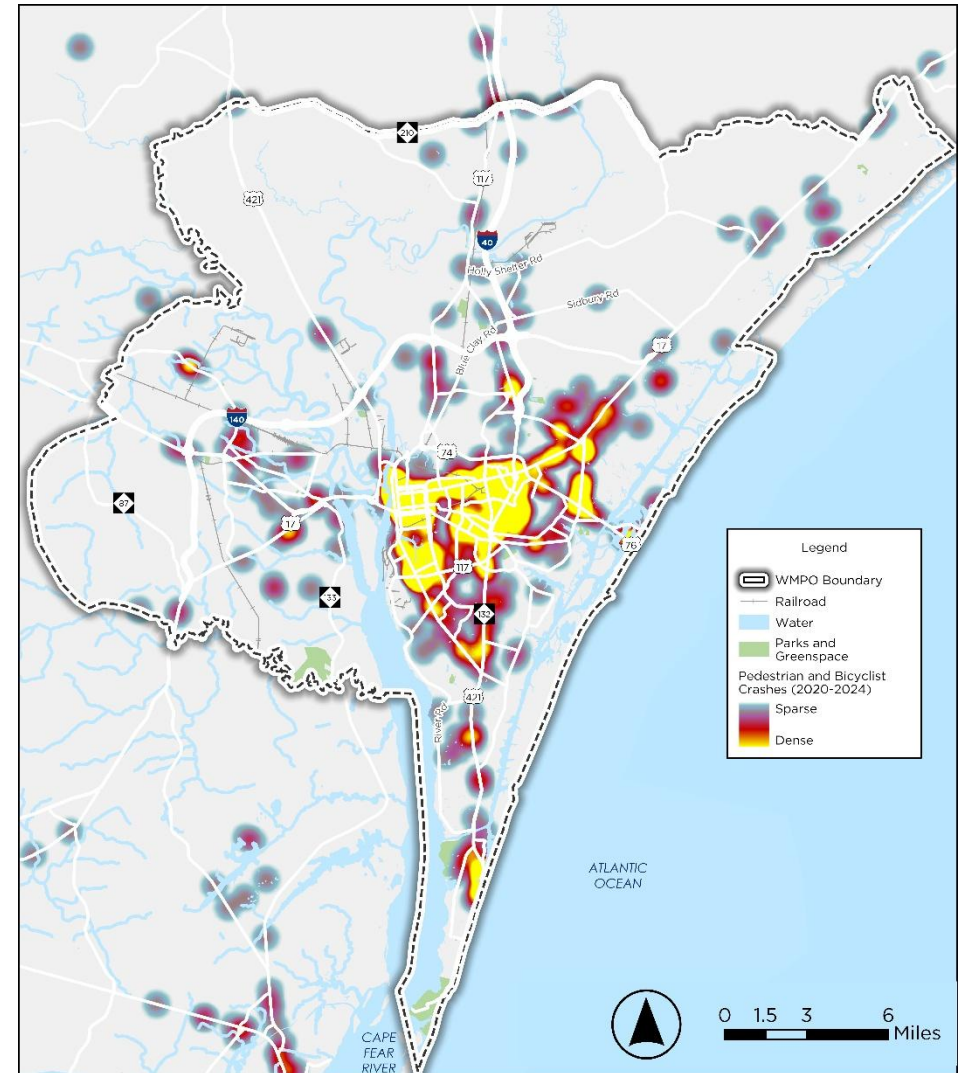


Figure 7. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Crash Density, 2020-2024 (Source: NCDOT Traffic Safety Unit)

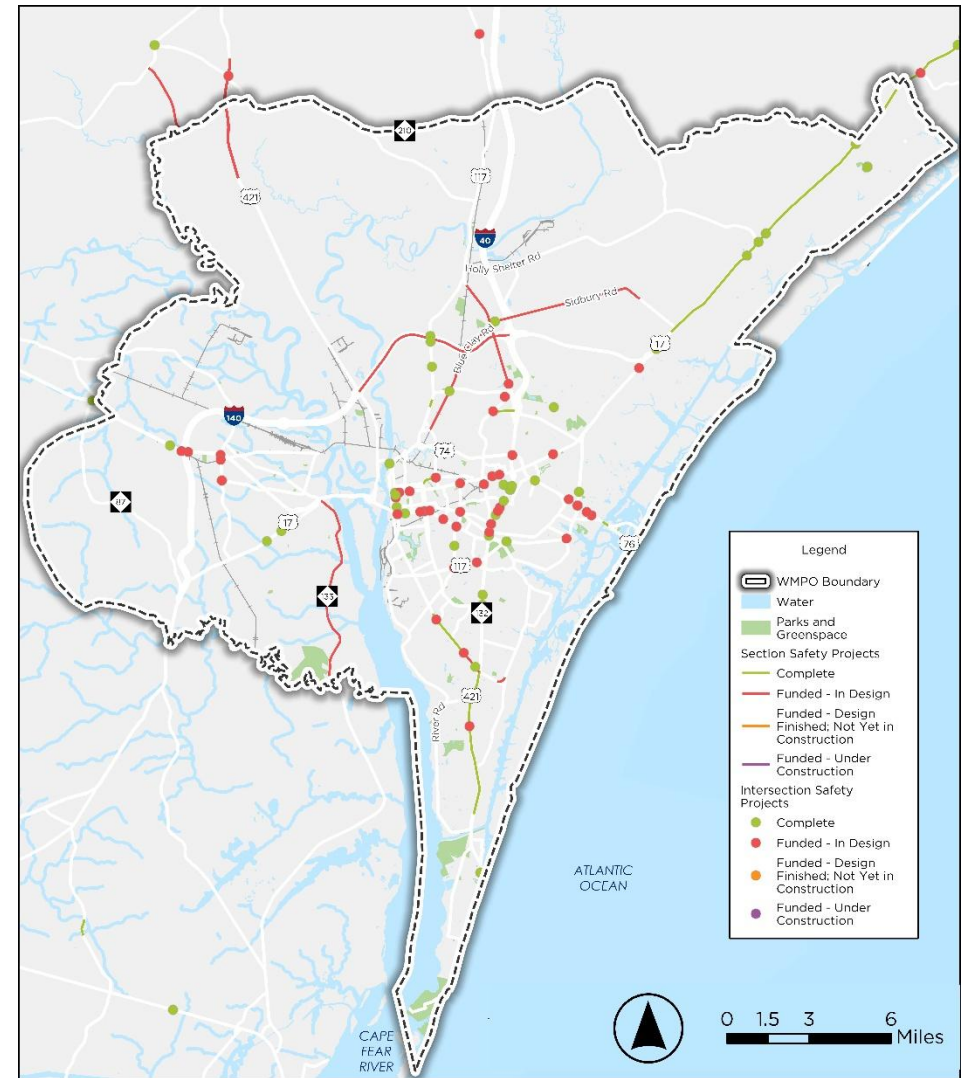
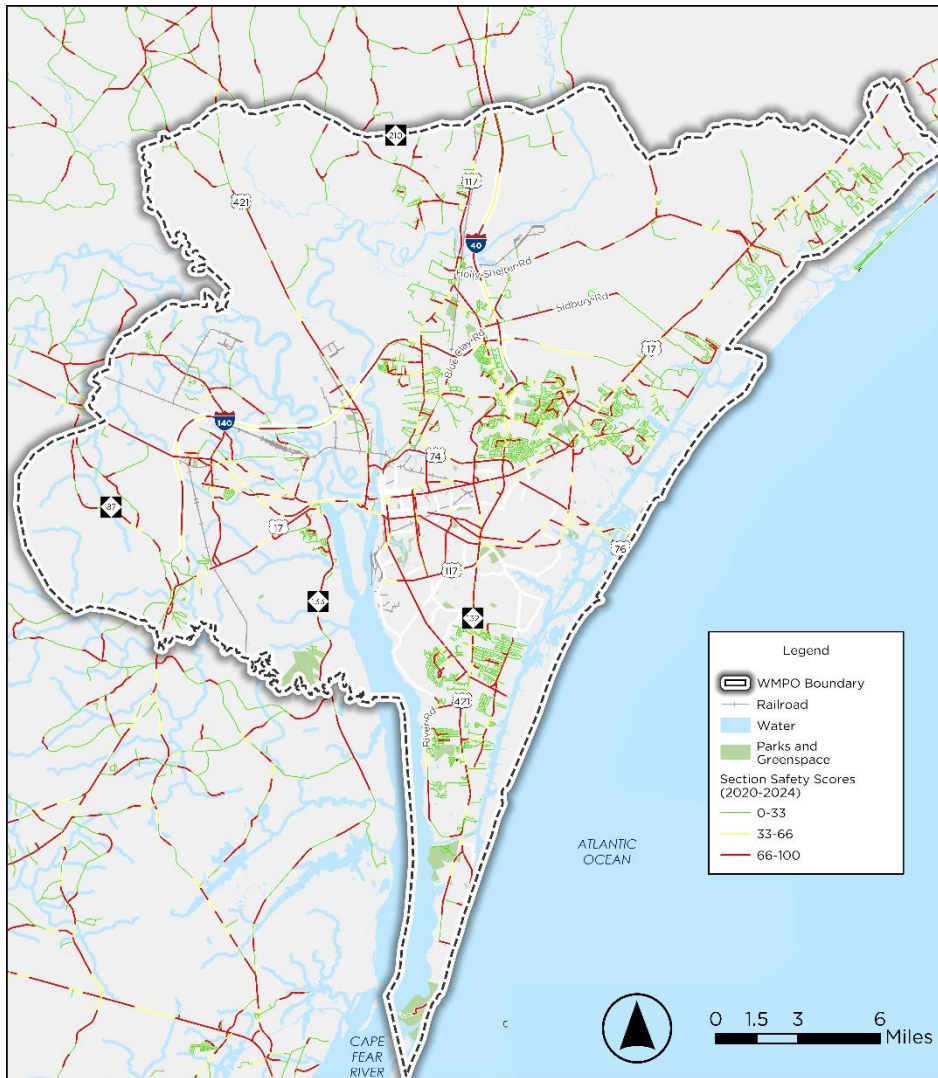


Figure 8. NCDOT Roadway Severity Scores (Source: NCDOT Traffic Safety Unit)

Figure 9. Recently Completed and Planned NCDOT Safety Projects (Source: NCDOT Traffic Safety Unit)

Table 7. WMPO SS4A Geographic Engagement Focus Areas

Area #	Approximate Geography	Description/Key Data	Previous Engagement Insights
Area #1	Downtown Wilmington	Higher population density, higher job density, higher projected employment and population growth, higher amounts of people who walk, bike, take transit, higher amount of planned NCDOT safety projects, several recently completed NCDOT safety projects	The Project Development Team has had success tabling at existing events, online surveys and maps
Area #2	Midtown/ UNCW Area	Higher population density, higher projected employment density, higher amounts of people who walk, bike, take transit, higher amount of planned NCDOT safety projects, several recently completed NCDOT safety projects	KAI has had success with online engagement for UNCW
Area #3	Monkey Junction	Higher NCDOT crash severity score, lower amount of planned NCDOT safety projects, several recently completed NCDOT safety projects	
Area #4	Navassa	Higher projected employment and population growth, higher numbers of people who walk or bike, higher NCDOT crash severity score, lower amount of planned NCDOT safety projects	The Project Development Team has had success meeting at Town Hall and asking the Mayor to use the phone tree
Area #5	Belville	Higher projected employment and population growth, higher NCDOT crash severity score, lower amount of planned NCDOT safety projects	The Project Development Team has had successful pop-up events at the Fall Festival and the Easter Egg Hunt
Area #6	Castle Hayne / Unincorporated New Hanover County	Higher projected employment and population growth, higher numbers of people who walk or bike, lower amount of planned NCDOT safety projects	

Area #7	Hampstead / Unincorporated Pender County	Higher NCDOT crash severity score, several recently completed NCDOT safety projects
Area #8	Pleasure Island	High job density, high tourist populations, higher NCDOT crash severity score, lower amount of planned NCDOT safety projects

Areas not identified as focus areas will still be engaged, and all areas will be a part of the project identification and prioritization process. They will have access to all broad outreach strategies as described in the following section. Additionally, all in-person meetings are open to all residents of the WMPO region if they wish to attend.

One municipality in the WMPO region, Leland, has completed their own SS4A project (adopted in 2025). Leland residents that wish to know more about this regional safety planning process will be encouraged to attend meetings in other Brunswick County communities, including Navassa or Belville. Recommendations and projects from Leland SS4A will be integrated into this planning process.

OUTREACH STRATEGIES

To meet the community engagement goals, a variety of outreach materials/resources will be used, offering both in-person and virtual input opportunities. Engagement efforts will reach both the broad community as well as focus areas. This section documents the project team's plans for each round of engagement.

Round 1 introduced the community to the goals of the Safety Action Plan, the Safe Systems Approach, and existing conditions. The community will provide information about their roadway safety concerns and priorities through survey questions and mapping activities. During the existing conditions phase of the plan, it is crucial to collect community input that reflects current experiences, perceptions, and challenges related to transportation safety. The project team will collect several key types of information:

- Perceived dangerous locations (e.g., "I don't feel safe crossing this street")
- Common near-miss locations (where crashes nearly happen)
- Areas where people avoid walking/biking due to safety concerns
- Times of day when people feel unsafe (e.g., night vs. day)
- Personal stories of crashes or unsafe situations
- Top safety concerns (speeding, visibility, lighting, crossings)
- Street design feedback (wide roads, blind corners, curb ramps)
- Tradeoffs residents are willing to make (e.g., slower car travel for more pedestrian safety)
- Desired outcomes (e.g., more kids walking to school)
- Preferred safety improvements

Round 2 focused on showcasing how engagement ideas and feedback were integrated into the plan as well as, introducing draft safety countermeasures and project locations. Round 2 will provide the community with draft recommendations for infrastructure, policies, and programs that will improve roadway safety. The community will be asked to comment on the draft recommendations. The project team will collect several key types of information:

- Feedback on countermeasures
- Perceptions of candidate projects
- Perceptions of the top 20 highest-priority locations for improvement
- Feedback on policy and process strategies
- Willingness to support specific interventions (e.g., road diets, traffic calming, enforcement measures)
- Concerns about unintended consequences (e.g., traffic diversion, loss of parking)

Round 3 will focus on showcasing how engagement ideas and feedback were integrated into the plan and present the community with the results of the SAP and the implementation strategies. The project team will collect the following information:

- Overall feedback on implementation strategy
- Any changes that need to be accounted for since existing conditions
- Feedback on overall thoughts on engagement process

Table 8 provides a summary of initial engagement strategies that can be used throughout all rounds of WMPO SS4A engagement, including broad engagement, geographic focused engagement, additional strategies, and specific engagement tools. This section provides an overview of the initial approach, and each strategy will be described in more detail in the following corresponding sections.

Table 8. SS4A Initial Outreach Strategies

Engagement Strategy	Specific Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Communications Toolkit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social media -Newsletter/ email list -Printable one-page and quarter-page flyers -Spanish translation • Press releases • Online maps • Online surveys • Pop-up event at existing event • Open house • Meeting briefings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups or listening sessions • Boards • Paper comment cards • Paper surveys • iPad surveys • In-person activity • Youth activity

Engagement Strategy

Broad engagement refers to the strategic effort to involve a wide range of people, perspectives, and communities. The team has identified several initial strategies to use in each round.

WMPO SS4A PROJECT WEBPAGE

The WMPO is [hosting a webpage](#) within the WMPO website for the WMPO SS4A SAP. It will follow a blog format in that the content will be structured and presented for readability and engagement. Headings, subheadings, short paragraphs, lists, and images will enhance the user experience and provide clear information about the WMPO SS4A SAP's development (Figure 10).



Figure 10. WMPO SS4A SAP Webpage

The consultant team will provide the WMPO with text and graphics to be used on the webpage. This content will be further refined alongside WMPO staff. Throughout the engagement process, the website will continually allow people to submit their email addresses to sign up for updates. The website is laid out in several sections:

- Get Involved
- SS4A Safety Action Plan Timeline
- What is a SS4A Safety Action Plan?
- SS4A Safety Action Plan Vision & Goals
- Crash Facts
- High Injury Network Map
- Round 1 Community Engagement

Throughout the project, several sections will remain consistent (What is an SS4A Safety Action Plan?; SS4A Safety Action Plan Vision & Goals; SS4A Safety Action Plan Timeline; Get Involved). Updates will be made as the project team enters Round 2 of engagement. Example updates are documented in this doc. Further coordination and materials will be done with WMPO PIO to make updates. Alt text for all graphics will be provided.



Alt text: WMPO SS4A Safety Action Plan logo with people crossing the street in a crosswalk.

SS4A Safety Action Plan Timeline



Alt Text: The timeline for the Safety Action Plan. The project kicked off in March 2025, and the draft Safety Action Plan will be delivered in April 2026.

What is a SS4A Safety Action Plan?



Alt Text: The Safe Systems approach focuses on safer people, roads, speeds, vehicles, and post-crash care.

SS4A Safety Action Plan Vision & Goals

Vision:

Our region will eliminate fatal and serious injury crashes by 2050 through a collaborative, comprehensive, and evidence-based approach to ensure all people, regardless of mode or ability, can move freely and safely.

Goals:

- 

Increase community awareness of and support for the SS4A action plan by promoting its vision, actions, and recommendations, while fostering a culture of roadway safety through education and engagement.
- 

Enhance collaboration and partnership across a broad range of safety stakeholders.
- 

Advance roadway safety by implementing proven countermeasures and multimodal designs, and by promoting innovative, low-cost, high-impact solutions.
- 

Identify funding opportunities and resources for transportation safety projects
- 

Commit to fostering safe mobility for all by carrying the plan's vision into the future.

Alt Text: The plan vision includes eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes by 2050. Goals include increasing community awareness, enhancing collaboration across stakeholders, implementing proven countermeasures, identifying funding, and fostering safe mobility for all.

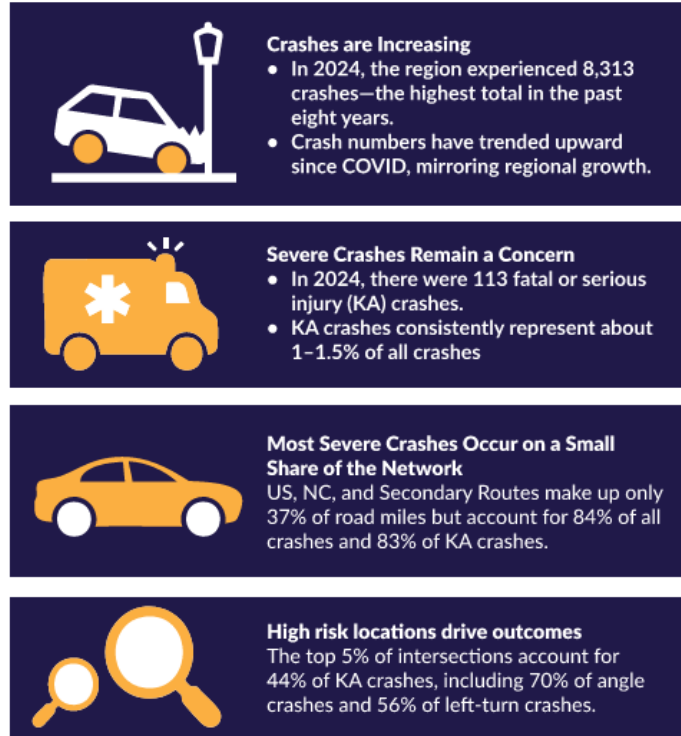
Crash Facts

The website will be updated at a high level to reflect what was presented in round 1 at the open houses.



Alt Text: Total crashes in the region are trending upward, with 63,252 crashes between 2017 – 2024.

Crashes

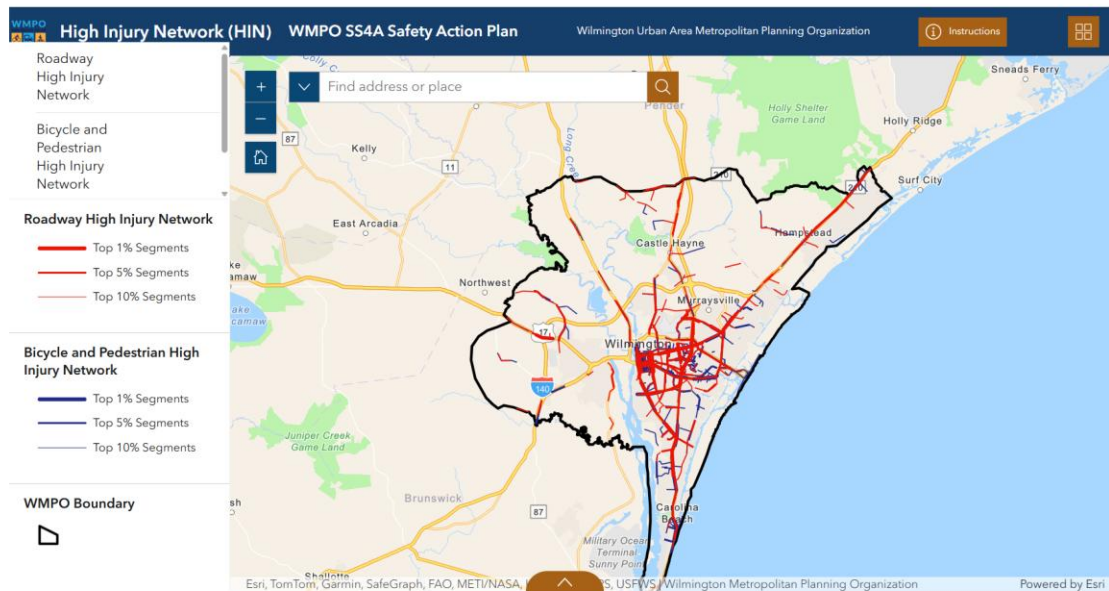


Alt Text: Several main crash themes were identified in the region, including: crashes are increasing, severe crashes remain a concern, most severe crashes occur on a small share of the network, and high-risk locations drive outcomes.

Analysis was done in the first phase of the project to identify the **High Injury Network (HIN)**. The HIN is a map of the roads where the most serious crashes happen, the ones that result in deaths or life-changing injuries. By identifying these corridors, the WMPO SS4A SAP can focus on the highest-impact areas first: places where proven improvements can save the most lives.

View the HIN for drivers as well as pedestrians and bicyclists using the link on the next page:

ARCGIS MAP OF THE HIGH INJURY NETWORK



Get Involved

This section will reflect the survey and comment map links for English and Spanish versions as well as the events.

Round 1 Community Engagement

This section will have the completed engagement summary.

Round 2 Community Engagement

This section will have the completed engagement summary.

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

The project team will create one toolkit of information per round to be shared with the Steering Committee, WMPO SS4A Community Coalition, and Marketing and Engagement Outreach Team. One toolkit will include materials that will be applicable to all groups. The toolkit will include:

- Social media graphics and template information for social media posts
- Template information for newsletters and email blasts
- Printable one-page and quarter-page flyers
- Translation of announcement materials

The purpose of the toolkit is for the WMPO, the Steering Committee, and the WMPO SS4A Community Coalition to easily be able to share social media posts and print flyers as they see fit. WMPO staff will

review and provide comments/edits on the toolkit. All draft toolkit materials will be sent to WMPO staff one - two weeks prior to the start of the engagement round to allow time for edits, comments, and revisions. Final toolkit materials documents will be provided prior to the start of a community engagement period. The toolkit will be accessible through a link to a Google Drive folder sent by Kittelson. Everyone with the link will be able to access all materials.

Social Media

Social media will be used to share information on the community engagement opportunities. As part of the toolkit, social media graphics and draft caption/bio text will be created. Social media posts will push people to the website for more information, inform about opportunities to complete online input map and online survey, and inform about upcoming in person engagement events. The project team will not pay for social media advertising and rather rely on organic interactions, but jurisdictions may utilize that strategy if they would like. Alt text for all graphics will be provided. Examples are provided below:



Alt Text: Round 2 of engagement is now open and will run through January 2026 – February 2026.



Alt Text: Round 2 of engagement will focus on identifying project locations and the community's vision for transportation safety. Stay involved by visiting our website.



Alt Text: *Stay involved in the WMPO SS4A Safety Action Plan by visiting our website to complete the online survey, comment on the draft project locations map, and learn about Round 2 events.*

The project team will also work with the Marketing and Engagement Core team to develop a list of prioritized agencies or organizations with active social media to send content or posts to Facebook or Instagram direct messages (any direct messages will be in coordination with the WMPO PIO).

Newsletters/ Email Listserv

As a part of the toolkit, the consultant team will draft content for digital newsletters and email listservs:

- WMPO shares a monthly newsletter
- "Be A Looker" quarterly newsletter
- Belville Monthly Newsletter

Sample round 2 newsletter is provided below:

The Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) is pleased to launch Round 2 of community engagement for its Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan. Engagement will be open from January 2026 to February 2026.

The SS4A program is a federal initiative launched by the U.S. Department of Transportation to support efforts to eliminate serious injuries and fatalities on the transportation network, particularly for people walking, using a mobility device, biking, taking transit – not just those driving. The goal of the WMPO SS4A Safety Action Plan is to develop a holistic, well-defined multimodal strategy to prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries in the WMPO region.

We want to hear from you! The focus of Round 2 of community engagement is to collect feedback on draft safety project locations. We invite you to visit the WMPO SS4A Safety Action Plan website (<https://www.wmpo.org/safetyactionplan/>) to review project materials, complete the online survey and leave feedback on the draft project map, learn about Round 2 events, and sign up for project updates.

Thank you for your support of transportation safety in our communities!



We are also building an email list to send out round 2 information

- Collecting emails on the website
- Emails collected from survey #1 and online comment map
- General WMPO email list

Printable One-Page and Quarter-Page Flyers

The project team will create flyers pushing people to the website that can be printed by Steering Committee Members or Community Coalition members. Examples of the flyers are provided:



WMPO SS4A Safety Action Plan

The WMPO is developing a Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Action Plan to improve roadway safety and eliminate serious injuries and fatalities in our region. The plan follows a "Safe Systems" approach—focusing on safer people, roads, speeds, vehicles, and post-crash care. It will analyze crash data, engage the community, identify proven safety strategies, and prioritize projects to make walking, biking, driving, and transit safer for everyone.

Your Voice Matters

We want to hear from you! Visit our website to provide feedback and join us at one of our engagement through February 2026!



Visit our project website to take surveys, leave comments, and sign up for updates!



WMPO
Safe Streets for All

WMPO SS4A Safety Action Plan

The WMPO is developing a Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Action Plan to enhance roadway safety and eliminate serious injuries and fatalities in the region. A core principle of SS4A is supporting a "Safe Systems" approach, which includes safer people, safer roads, safer speeds, safer vehicles, and better post-crash care.



Visit our project website to take surveys, leave comments, and sign up for updates!

Round 2 of community engagement is open now through February 2026!

Translation

Translation will be provided to the survey and online comment map. Spanish translation will be added to captions of WMPO posts for Round 2 as needed, while the event announcements can be translated for partners to share in Spanish as needed.

PRESS RELEASES

The consultant team will draft a press release to be released in January once event list has been finalized. It will be sent to WMPO staff for review two weeks before it is released. WMPO staff will review, edit, and share with their press contacts. This may also be re-used/edited for February press release with remaining event dates.

ONLINE MAPS

The project team will create online maps during rounds 1 and 2. The maps will be created through the online Kittelson Maps platform and linked on the WMPO SS4A landing page. Online maps allow people to provide feedback outside of in-person events. They also provide an easy way for the project team to geocode information to use in project identification and prioritization processes. The Round 1 map will focus on collecting community challenges for safety and areas to enhance countermeasures. Round 2 will collect feedback on projects, identify any gaps, and collect feedback on priority locations. Spanish translation of directions to the map will be provided.

ONLINE SURVEYS

Surveys allow people to provide feedback outside of in-person events. The project team will create online surveys during Rounds 1 and 2. The survey platform will be Survey Monkey, links can be added to the WMPO SS4A landing page, and the link to the online map can be added to the end of the survey to

remind people of both feedback options. The Round 1 survey will focus on collecting community challenges for safety and areas to enhance countermeasures, perceptions of safety, and safety focus areas. Round 2 will collect feedback on projects and collect feedback on implementation priorities. Spanish translation of the survey will be provided.

EVENTS

Approximately 27 in-person events will be held across all rounds. The ideas presented in the table are for planning purposes and are subject to facilities availability. More details will be provided as events are set in 2026.

Pop-Up Event

A pop-up is a table with an interactive setup embedded within a larger event—such as a community dinner, community fair, or farmers market. The goal is to reach people where they already are, making it easier to raise awareness, gather input, or share information in an informal, approachable setting. Pop-ups will include specific strategies such as boards, WMPO 1 pager, paper comment cards, paper surveys, in-person activities, and a youth activity.

Open House

An open house is a community meeting format designed to share information and gather feedback in an informal, drop-in setting. Open houses allow attendees to arrive at their convenience, explore the stations at their own pace, and interact directly with the project team. Open houses will include specific strategies such as boards, paper comment cards, paper surveys, in-person activities, and a youth activity.

Example events across all rounds of engagement are documented:

Table 9. Engagement Events

Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belville Movie Night on August 15th from 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM • Open Air Market at the Grove on August 20th from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM • Northside Food Co-Op on August 28th from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM • Carolina Beach Farmers Market on August 30th from 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MLK Fun Day at MLK Community Center on January 17th from 11:00 AM–1:00 PM • Line Dancing at Navassa Community Center on January 26th from 6:00 PM–8:00 PM • WMPO SS4A Open House at Skyline Center on February 3rd from 5:00 PM–7:00 PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River to Sea Expo at Empie Park May 1st from 3:00 PM–7:00 PM • Northside Community Dinner at DREAMS of Wilmington May 14th from 6:00 PM–8:00 PM • Disaster Preparedness Expo at Skyline Center May 16th from 11:00 AM–2:00 PM

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNCW Market Day on September 10th from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM • New Hanover County open house at WMPO Office on September 11th from 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM • Brunswick County open house at Navassa Town Hall on September 17th from 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM • Pender County open house at Pender County Library (Hampstead Branch) on September 25th from 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cupcake & Conversation at UNCW on February 4th from 11:00 AM–1:00 PM • Cupids Court at Hampstead Kiwanis Park on February 7th from 10:00 AM–12:00 PM • Northside Community Dinner at DREAMS of Wilmington on February 12th from 6:00 PM–8:00 PM | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poplar Grove Farmers Market at Poplar Grove Plantation May 20th from 10:00 AM–12:00 PM • Summer Safety Saturday at Independence Mall May 30th from 10:00 AM–12:30 PM |
|--|--|---|

BRIEFINGS/MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

In addition to events and longer pop-up periods, the project team participated in briefings at existing meetings as well as provided announcements at various several set elected officials meetings. These activities were often paired with handing out project flyers. Example briefings/announcements are summarized:

Table 10. Briefings and Announcements

Round 2	Round 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latino Alliance Meeting at Government Center on January 20th from 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM • Pender Board of County Commissioners Meeting at Pender County Administration Building on January 20th from 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM • Belville Board of Commissioners at Highway Patrol Training Center on January 27th from 6:30PM – 7:30 PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pender Board of County Commissioners Meeting at Pender County Administration Building on May 4th from 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM • Brunswick County Commissioners Meeting at Brunswick County Government Center on May 18th from 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM • Belville Board of Commissioners at Highway Patrol Training Center on May 26th from 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Specific Tools

These tools will be used at in-person events to help maximize meaningful interactions with the community.

FOCUS GROUPS OR LISTENING SESSIONS

Focus groups are small, guided discussions with selected participants aimed at gathering detailed feedback, perspectives, or experiences on a specific topic throughout the project. Focus groups consisted of agency focus groups and elected officials from the WMPO Board. These sessions were completed in the Fall/Winter 2025. The following focus groups were completed:

Elected officials focus groups:

- Nov 7th, 10th, and 18th

Emergency services providers focus groups:

- Pender County - Nov 19th
- NHC (Pleasure Island) – Oct 27th
- Wave Transit – Oct 28th
- Brunswick County – Nov 24th
- NHC (remainder) – Nov 24th

The agency focus groups brought perspectives across experiences/ backgrounds, including Sheriff, Fire, Police, EMS, Emergency Management, Planning, Health, 911 Center, Engineering, Public Works. Meeting notes for each session were completed for internal review and documentation.

BOARDS

The project team will develop and print boards (24 in x 36 in) for each in-person pop-up or open house. They will summarize key information relevant to the project phase and support activities.

IPAD SURVEYS

iPads will be brought to each pop-up to encourage take the survey in person if needed if taking it online is not an option. Spanish translation of the paper surveys will be provided.

PAPER SURVEYS

Paper surveys will be provided at each in-person pop-up to allow people to take the survey in person if needed if taking it online is not an option. Spanish translation of the paper surveys will be provided.

PAPER COMMENT CARDS

The project team will provide paper comment cards at each in-person pop-up or open house to collect additional feedback.

IN-PERSON ACTIVITY

In-person interactive activities will be available during pop-ups and open houses such as mapping activities and voting exercises.

YOUTH ACTIVITY

A youth activity coloring sheet will be created. The project team will work with the Boys and Girls Club of Southeastern North Carolina to distribute coloring pages to their youth after school programs.

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

Analyzing community engagement for the SS4A will be approached from two different but integrated metrics: summarizing engagement outputs (tangible activities) and evaluating outcomes (long-term impacts). Outputs are immediate, measurable results like the number of events held, attendees reached, surveys completed, community comments collected, or partnerships formed. Outcomes, however, reflect deeper changes resulting from these efforts: shifts in community knowledge or perception (e.g., increased project awareness, corrected misconceptions, direct influences on policies or plans, or satisfaction with the overall engagement process).

Engagement Summary

The team will prepare a community-facing summary of engagement following each round documenting the materials presented, number of attendees, and feedback. Each round the consultant team will collect the following information:

- Number of events held (town halls, focus groups, pop-ups)
- Counting the number of people who engaged with the project content
 - Number of attendees at open house
 - Number of people who stopped by the table at a pop-up
- Surveys completed (online, paper, in-person)
- Geographic distribution of in-person participation and survey responses
- Community comments received (map comments, open responses in surveys emails, letters,))
- Number of project website hits
- Survey responses and themes
- Map comment themes

Benchmarks were developed and based off review of the Cape Fear Navigating Change 2050 Phase 1, Round 1 engagement results, as well as project team expectations, scaled to this project size and event numbers:

Engagement Round Benchmarks:

- 800 survey responses
- 800 map comments

- 100 meaningful conversations

Engagement Evaluation

A key component of any Community Engagement Plan is a method to evaluate the success of the community engagement methods and outreach strategies. Intended outcomes of community engagement for the Safety Action Plan include the following:

- Increased knowledge of the project/issue among residents
- Shifts in community perception (e.g., support for a policy after education campaigns)
- Misconceptions addressed (e.g., fewer concerns after Q&A sessions)
- Satisfaction with overall engagement
- If they see their ideas integrated or challenges addressed

A third and final survey will be sent to everyone who submitted a survey in rounds 1 and 2 for feedback on overall perceptions of safety and satisfaction with the project.

After the Safety Action Plan is adopted, the WMPO is encouraged to post the project materials onto their website where all recent plans are hosted. Pending availability of WMPO resources, a community-facing dashboard of safety project recommendations and implementation may be a helpful method to allow the community to see the progress of the SAP over time.