

ANNUAL REPORT

2014-2015

CONTINUING - COOPERATIVE - COMPREHENSIVE

Wilmington MPO



Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan
Planning Organization

2014-2015 TAC MEMBERS

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Members

The 2014-2015 TAC Members are: Hon. Laura Padgett (Chair), City of Wilmington; Hon. Pat Batleman (Vice-Chair), Town of Leland; Hon. Jonathan Barfield, New Hanover County; Hon. Joe Breault, Town of Belville; Hon. Gary Doetsch, Town of Carolina Beach; Hon. Dean Lambeth, Town of Kure Beach; Hon. John Lennon, North Carolina Board of Transportation; Hon. Hank Miller, Town of Wrightsville Beach; Hon. David Piepmeyer, Pender County; Hon. Earl Sheridan, City of Wilmington; Hon. Skip Watkins, New Hanover County; Hon. Frank Williams, Brunswick County; Hon. Eulis Willis, Town of Navassa.

The TAC serves as the policy-making board for the Wilmington MPO. The TAC is the federally recognized entity responsible for carrying out the urban transportation planning process specified by legislation.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

FY14-15 in review

The Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is responsible for conducting transportation planning in a continuous, cooperative and comprehensive manner. As the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's Executive Director and on behalf of the Transportation Advisory Committee I am pleased to present this 2015 Annual Report.

We are in exciting times and I am pleased with the progress made over the past year with collaboration from our partners to improve transportation in the region. I will take the opportunity to highlight some of these efforts.

As a leader in the transportation planning profession, the MPO recognizes the importance of integrating transportation and land use planning. In this vein, we have worked with our local partners to provide transportation-related development review services. This partnership has allowed the region to develop in a more responsible manner while facilitating investment in our communities.

” \$600 million in transportation funding for the Wilmington region over the next decade

The MPO also worked with the North Carolina Department of Transportation in their utilization of the Strategic Transportation Investment formula to determine transportation project priority throughout the state. A culmination of these efforts have resulted in the 2016-2025 State/Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program. This plan, adopted by the State and MPO, will result in \$600 million in transportation funding for the Wilmington region over the next decade.

Completed this past year, the Transportation Demand Management Plan includes a toolkit for employers and

local government agencies to implement strategies to provide attractive transportation options for the local commuting workforce.

” the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization has had a very successful year

Beginning later this year, Cape Fear Transportation 2040 will serve as the fiscally constrained metropolitan transportation plan for the Wilmington region. The plan details the multi-modal transportation needs and outlines the projects to be funded between 2015 and 2040. The plan was created by the MPO's Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) and reflects the desires of the region.

From working with our State and Federal partners to updating the region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization has had a very successful year. As the organization moves forward, we look to build upon these efforts to improve transportation in the community for years to come.

Mike Kozlosky



Executive Director

WMPO TECHNICAL SERVICES

FY14-15 Review

**BIKE/PED
COUNTS**

54

**TRAFFIC
COUNTS**

328

TIA REVIEWS

18

SITE REVIEWS

391

In October of 2012, the Wilmington MPO was designated a Transportation Management Area (TMA) by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This allowed the Technical Services unit to manage a new Direct Attributable program, project management for WMPO projects, development review, and the traffic count program.

■ The Traffic Count Program collected 328 traffic counts at regular locations, 71 special counts through requests by member jurisdictions, and 54 bicycle and pedestrian counts. This program also conducted truck counts, analyzed traffic accident data, and performed other data collection required for the federally mandated Congestion Management Process.

■ The Development Review Program reviewed site plans, special/conditional use permits, subdivision plans, rezoning requests, and traffic impact analyses for compliance with transportation plans and regulations.

■ The Direct Attributable Program advertised and assisted with the administration of the STP-DA and TAP-DA federal funding for the projects in the Wilmington region.

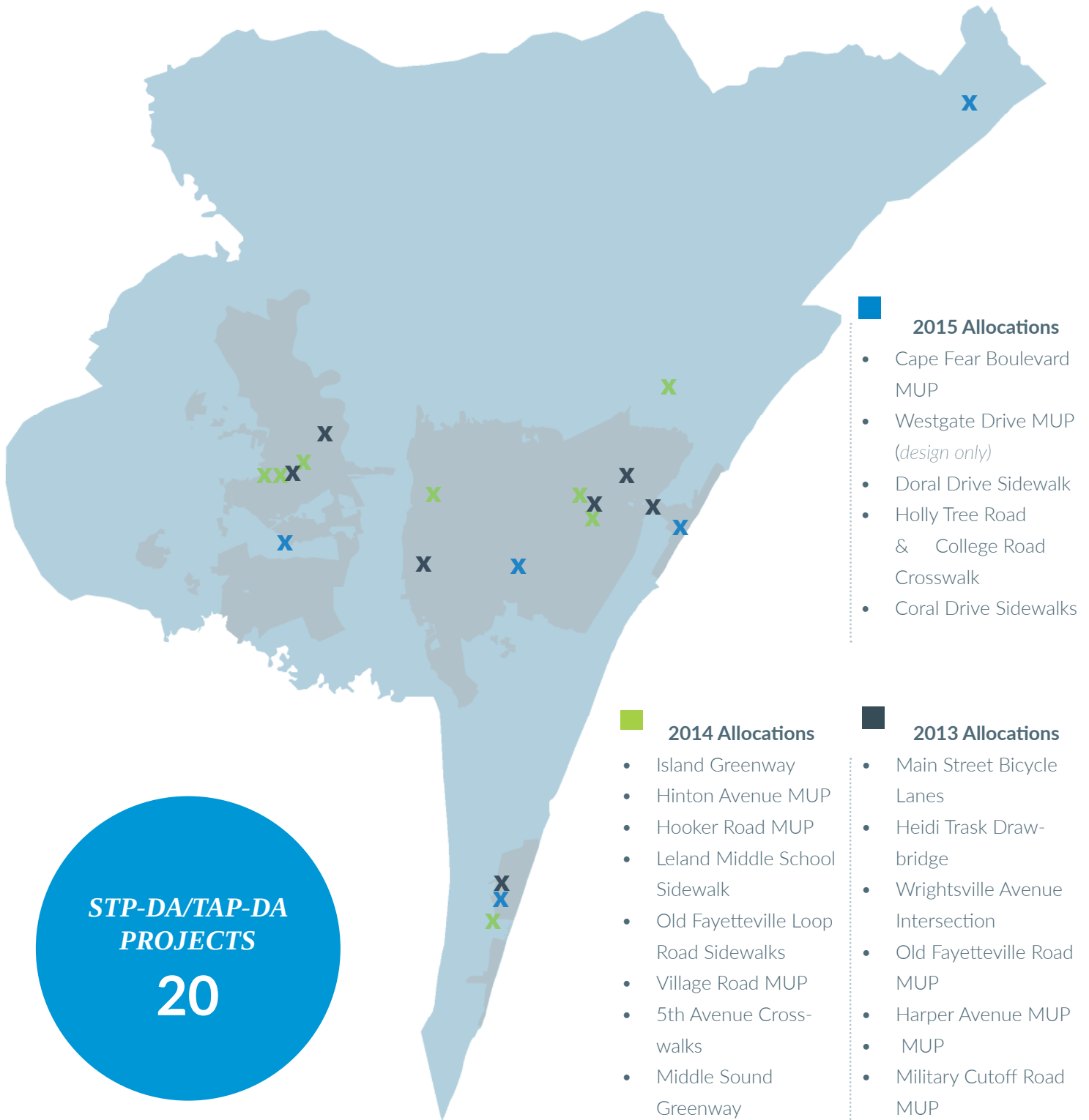
■ The Technical Services unit assisted with design, cost estimation, oversight of consultants, and oversight of contractors for WMPO projects.

DIRECT ATTRIBUTABLE FEDERAL FUNDS

One of the requirements of a TMA is the receipt and use of Direct Attributable (DA) funds through the federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) and the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The Wilmington MPO receives approximately \$2.7 million annually through its STP-DA and TAP-DA programs. The Transportation Advisory Committee determines how these funds are disbursed on an annual basis.

STP-DA/TAP-DA
PROJECTS

20



LONG-RANGE PLANNING SERVICES

01

TRAVEL DEMAND MODEL



Developing and utilizing the travel demand model in the transportation planning process

Transportation plans utilize a travel demand model to calibrate the siting and design of transportation facilities. The WMPO and NCDOT work cooperatively to develop a model for our region and NCDOT maintains the model. In FY14-15, the WMPO worked with local land use planners and utility experts to project where growth would occur as inputs to our travel demand model.

02

MAPPING/DATA MANAGEMENT/GRAPHICS

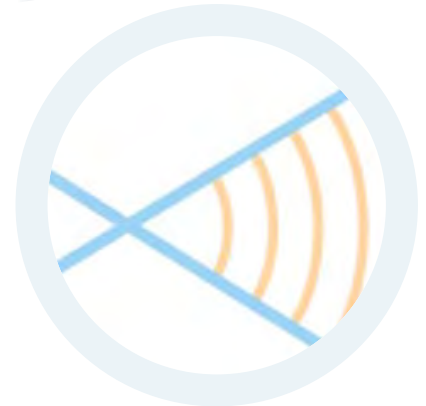


Assembling and communicating transportation realities through the production of graphics

Long range planning services also managed the MPO's geographic information systems and design software. The production of maps, posters, brochures, documents, etc. was a critical component in accomplishing the mission of the Wilmington MPO both in allowing for adequate data analysis and in ensuring robust communication with the public.

03

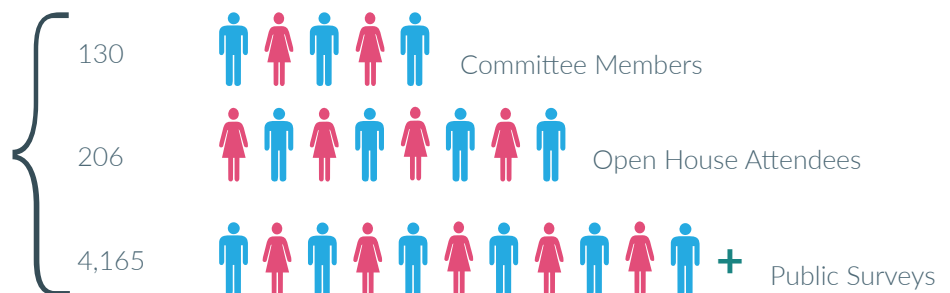
NCDOT PRIORITIZATION



Positioning regional projects for federal and state funding

NCDOT allows MPOs, Rural Planning Organizations and Division Engineers to submit projects for potential funding and programming into the State Transportation Improvement Program every 2 years. This process is called the NCDOT Prioritization Process and involves intensive local analysis and multiple submittals. Long range planning managed submittals needed for NCDOT's Prioritization 4.0 Process which kicked-off in June of 2015.

Public Outreach for Cape Fear Transportation 2040 (see page 8 for additional information)



Other plans (adopted or in-progress FY15)

The creation of long-range plans involved documenting the future vision for all modes of transportation within the WMPO boundaries. Long-range planning projects in FY14-15 involved working with committees of experts, conditions analysis, public outreach and the development and vetting of recommendations.



Transportation Demand Management Plan - ADOPTED

A Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan was adopted by the TAC on January 14, 2015. Following adoption the WMPO partnered with NCDOT to fund a full-time TDM coordinator. The TDM coordinator will utilize the outlined strategies in the plan to help reduce traffic congestion and increase the efficiency of our transportation network.



US17BUS Corridor Study

The City of Wilmington and the WMPO hired Parsons Brinkerhoff to conduct a feasibility study for the implementation of a road diet on US17BUS/Market Street. The term "road diet" is a technique in transportation planning that narrows or eliminates travel lanes and utilizes the space for other uses and travel modes. The traffic modeling has been completed and the plan is under development.



Pender County Collector Street Plan

Pender County and the WMPO contracted with Stantec Consulting Services to develop a collector street plan for the portion of Pender County within the WMPO boundaries. Results will guide future development as to the location and design of roadways to provide increased connectivity and accommodate all modes of travel. The plan is under development.



Congestion Management Process Biennial Report

The federally-mandated Congestion Management Process was adopted by the TAC on December 11, 2013. As part of this process, the WMPO collects data on an ongoing basis to analyze the impacts of congestion in our region. The WMPO has worked towards producing the first biennial report documenting the results of the analysis.

CAPE FEAR TRANSPORTATION 2040

updating the federally-required Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

In May of 2013, the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was appointed by the TAC to guide the development of Cape Fear Transportation 2040 which will serve as an update to the Wilmington MPO's metropolitan transportation plan (MTP). Federal law requires the update of MTPs every five years. Cape Fear Transportation 2040 details how multi-modal transportation needs will be addressed in the Wilmington MPO between 2015 and 2040. The CAC was charged with ensuring that Cape Fear Transportation 2040 reflected the needs and desires of the citizens of the Wilmington MPO. The anticipated adoption date is December 9, 2015.



**24 NEW PROJECTS
PROGRAMMED IN
2016-2025 STIP**

Balancing projected revenues and expenditures

A key federal requirement of MTPs is that they are fiscally constrained. This means that the cost for all projects through the horizon of the plan must be balanced by a projected revenue source. The MTP serves as a basis for the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and ensures each MTP project has a realistic chance of being funded.

The desires of the public are the basis of the plan

The CAC was appointed to ensure that *Cape Fear Transportation 2040* reflected the needs and desires of the community. As such, the CAC took great strides to ensure that project recommendations were made based on review of public input and that the recommendations in the plan were vetted by the public before finalization. The efforts of the CAC were realized through public open houses, advertisements, speaking tours, press releases (resulting in media coverage), a website, and a travel choice survey that received over 4,000 responses.

STATE/METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a workplan adopted by NCDOT on a biennial basis to define what federal and state transportation investments will be made over a 10-year basis. The current 2016-2025 STIP was adopted by the North Carolina Board of Transportation on June 4, 2015 and the Wilmington MPO on June 24, 2015.

2016-2025 STIP Highlights

Selected newly programmed highway projects:

- US17BUS Market St Access Management
- US17 Superstreet in Hampstead
- US74/MLK Pkwy and College Road Interchange
- US74/Eastwood Rd and Military Cutoff Rd Intersection Improvements
- Isabell Holmes Bridge Flyovers at US421
- US421/Carolina Beach Road Widening
- Monkey Junction Intersection Improvements
- US421TRUCK/Front St Widening
- Carolina Beach Road Upgrade
- College Road Upgrade
- NC133/Castle Hayne Road Widening
- Military Cutoff Road Extension
- Gordon Road Widening

2016-2025 STIP

TEN YEAR WORKPLAN

\$597, 943, 000



Who decides what is programmed in the STIP?

The STIP is programmed on a biennial basis through a process developed by NCDOT's Strategic Office of Prioritization called the "Prioritization Process". Only projects programmed in the MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) are eligible for funding.

The MTP is updated every 5 years and developed based on robust public outreach/input. Decisions on both the content of the MTP and submittals to Prioritization are made by the TAC.

NCDOT PROJECT PLANNING



feasibility studies, environmental review and design of projects

After the programming of projects, NCDOT works with the WMPO and other partners through the environmental permitting and design processes to ensure design is reflective of the needs and desires for the project. The WMPO supports the Complete Streets Policy which allows for the accommodation of bicyclists, pedestrians, public transportation and other users in the design of roadway projects. The MPO plays an important role in the planning and design of these projects.



NCDOT PROJECT PLANNING

Legacy Projects

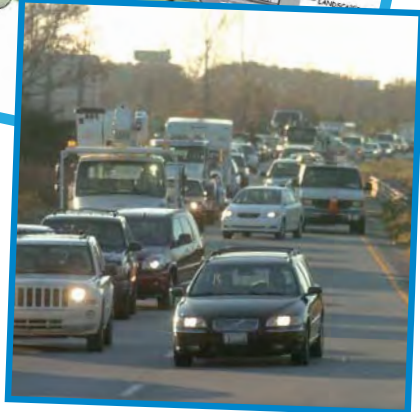
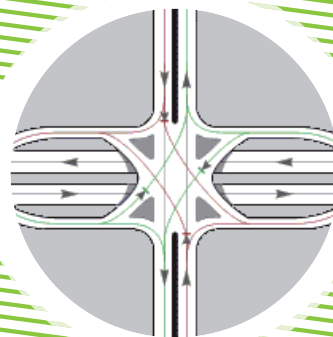


- Cape Fear Crossing
- Independence Boulevard Extension
- Hampstead Bypass
- US17BUS Market Street Access Management
- US17 Superstreet in Hampstead
- Gordon Road Widening
- Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center



NCDOT PROJECT PLANNING

New Projects



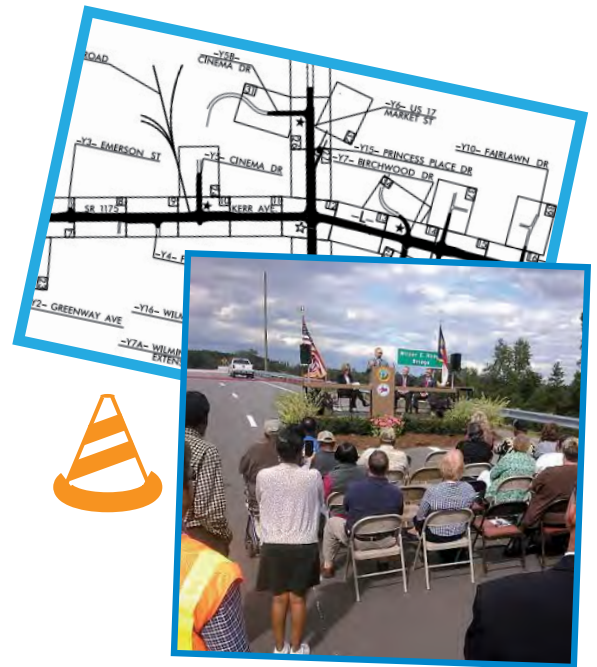
- College Road Upgrade
- Eastwood Road & Military Cutoff Road Intersection Improvements
- Carolina Beach Road & College Road Interchange
- Castle Hayne Road Widening
- South Front Street Widening
- Isabell Holmes Bridge Interchange
- Market Street Road Diet
- Carolina Beach Road Streetscape

NCDOT PROJECT PLANNING

Right of Way and Construction Projects



- Causeway Widening
- Wilmington Bypass
- Kerr Avenue Widening
- 3rd Street Bridge
- 17th Street Streetscape
- Military Cutoff Road Extension



WMPO LEGISLATIVE IMPACT

FY14-15 Review

The Wilmington MPO works closely with federal and state legislators to ensure the transportation needs and concerns of constituents are heard in the local, state and federal legislative arenas.

✓ WILMINGTON TRANSPORTATION BOND In

November of 2014 the citizens of the City of Wilmington passed a transportation bond referendum for \$55M for roadway, bike/pedestrian, and transit projects.

✓ RAIL CORRIDOR BILL SB174 provides an avenue for the

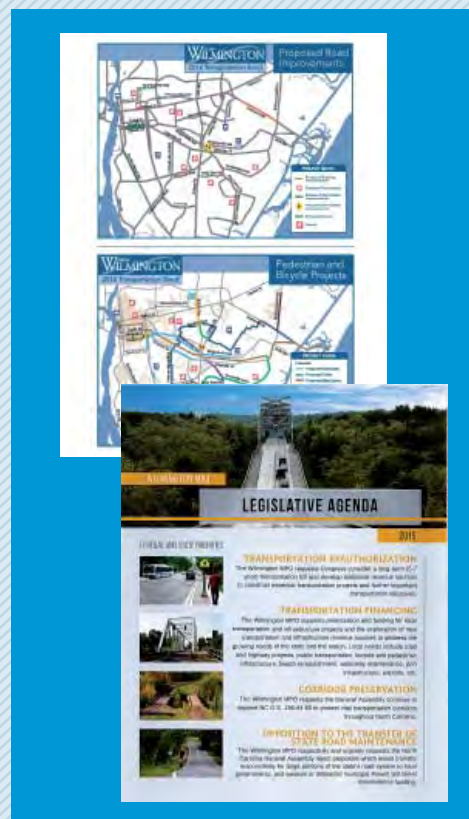
City of Wilmington to lease a former and unused rail corridor from the North Carolina Department of Transportation in an effort to construct a bicycle and pedestrian trail in the heart of downtown Wilmington.

✓ MAP ACT CLARIFICATION BILL SB654 clarifies the roles

and responsibilities of the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization with regard to the filing of a transportation corridor map.

✓ WILMINGTON MPO LEGISLATIVE AGENDA The

Wilmington MPO adopted a 2015 legislative agenda to encourage elected officials to legislate on behalf of identified federal and state priorities to include: Transportation Reauthorization, Transportation Financing, Corridor Preservation, and opposition to the transfer of state road maintenance.



THANKS TO OUR LOCAL DELEGATION

The success of the Transportation Advisory Committee in amplifying the voices of the Cape Fear Region could not be accomplished without the dedicated efforts of our local delegation to include (in alphabetical order): Hon. Rick Catlin, Hon. Ted Davis, Hon. Susi Hamilton, Hon. Frank Iler, Hon. Walter Jones, Hon. Michael Lee, Hon. Chris Millis, Hon. Bill Rabon, and Hon. David Rouzer.

IN REVIEW

2015

Conducted traffic counts, development review,
adoption of TDM plan and other planning efforts

Technical Services and Long-Range Planning Services

Developed draft fiscally-constrained Metropolitan
Transportation Plan for the region

Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Adopted 2016-2025 STIP that includes \$600
million in transportation funding for the region over
the next decade

Adoption of MTIP/STIP

Worked with delegation to achieve goals in
Washington and in Raleigh

Legislative Action

WMPO

P.O. Box 1810
Wilmington, NC 28402
Phone: (910) 341-3258
Fax: (910) 341-7801
Website: www.wmpo.org
eMail: wmpo@wmpo.org

Wilmington MPO Mission Statement

The mission of the Wilmington MPO is to develop and implement a comprehensive multi-modal transportation plan that supports the existing and future mobility needs and economic vitality of the Wilmington Urban Area. This shall be accomplished by protecting the environment, safeguarding the social equity, improving the quality of life for the citizens of the community, improving the local economy and providing for the safe and efficient mobility throughout the region. This is achieved through the long range transportation planning process which includes a comprehensive, continuous and cooperative approach from citizens and participating members.