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**TAC MEETING MINUTES**  
**January 25, 2024**

10 The New Bern Area Metropolitan Planning Organization held their regularly scheduled meeting  
11 on Thursday, January 25, 2024 at 11:00 am in the Development Services Conference Room,  
12 303 First Street, as well as via Zoom.

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**Members Present:** Mr. John Kirkland – Chairman, River Bend  
Ms. E.T. Mitchell – Vice-Chairman, Craven County  
Mr. Bob Brinson – City of New Bern  
Ms. Merrie Jo Alcock – NC Board of Transportation  
Mr. Dan Murphy – Town of Trent Woods  
Mr. Bill Marley – Federal Highway Administration (non-voting)  
Mr. Len White – NCDOT (non-voting)  
Mr. Roham Lahiji – NCDOT (non-voting)  
Ms. Amanda Killian – NCDOT (non-voting)  
Ms. Kelly Walker – CARTS (non-voting)

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**Members Absent:** Mr. Paul Tremblay – Town of Bridgeton  
Ms. Kim Nguyen – NCDOT (non-voting)  
Mr. Behshad Norowzi – NCDOT (non-voting)

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**Staff Present:** Ms. Deanna Trebil – New Bern Area MPO

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**Guests Present:** Ms. Becca Eversole – Down East RPO  
Ms. Heather Lane – NCDOT

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**1. Call to Order:** Chair Kirkland called the meeting to order at 11:02 AM.

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**2. Adoption of Agenda**

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**Motion: Ms. Mitchell made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.  
The motion was seconded by Mr. Brinson and passed unanimously.**

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**3. Public Comment**

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Mr. Edwin Vargas, 119 Randomwood Lane, addressed the Board to encourage member agencies to pursue the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program. He distributed information summarizing his suggestion to seek grants to connect River

42 Bend, Trent Woods and New Bern through the construction of sidewalks and trails. He  
43 mentioned that he had spoken with Mayor Kirkland about this grant and that the Town  
44 of River Bend is currently managing a significant number of other infrastructure grants  
45 and does not have time to add another one at this time.

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47 **4. Election of TAC Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

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49 **Motion: Mr. Brinson made a motion to re-elect Mr. Kirkland as Chairman.**  
50 **The motion was seconded by Ms. Mitchell and passed unanimously.**

51  
52 **Motion: Mr. Brinson made a motion to re-elect Ms. Mitchell as Vice-**  
53 **Chairman. The motion was seconded by Ms. Alcoke and passed unanimously.**

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55 **Consent Items**

- 56  
57 **5. November 16, 2023 Minutes**  
58 **6. 2024-2033 MTIP Amendment 4**  
59 **7. 2024-2033 MTIP Amendment 5**  
60 **8. FY 25 Annual Self Certification**  
61 **9. 2024 Safety Performance Measures**

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63 **Motion: Ms. Mitchell made a motion to approve the consent items as**  
64 **presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brinson and passed**  
65 **unanimously.**

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67 **10. FY 24 UPWP Amendment 1**

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69 The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) guides MPO planning activities for the fiscal  
70 year and identifies a program of work for reimbursement through annual planning grants  
71 received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transportation  
72 Administration (FTA). From time to time, amendments are required to add or remove  
73 funding and/or shift resources between work task codes.

74  
75 UPWP Amendment 1 is needed to reallocate funding to two new tasks to begin work on  
76 the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and to evaluate whether microtransit service  
77 is a feasible delivery option for CARTS. No increase in funding is being requested. The  
78 total PL 104 budget remains at \$244,475 and the budget for Section 5303 remains at  
79 \$60,080.

80  
81 In accordance with the Public Involvement Plan, there is a minimum of fourteen (14)  
82 days for the public to provide comments. Amendment 1 to the FY 24 UPWP was posted  
83 to the NBAMPO website on December 18, 2023 and public comment was received until  
84 January 18, 2024.

85  
86 **Motion: Ms. Alcoke a motion to approve the FY 24 UPWP Amendment 1 as**  
87 **presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brinson and passed**  
88 **unanimously.**

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## 11. FY 25 UPWP Draft

Each year the New Bern Area MPO produces a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to outline expenditures necessary to carry out planning activities by the MPO and its member agencies during the upcoming fiscal year. NCDOT requires the UPWP be adopted and submitted by March 29, 2024 for the coming fiscal year.

The draft FY 2025 UPWP is similar to the current year’s budget and is created to further the operational objectives identified by the TCC and TAC. The work program accounts for all direct operating expenses to include corridor studies, updating the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and more.

In accordance with the Public Involvement Plan, there is a minimum fourteen (14) days for the public to provide comments. The FY 25 UPWP was posted to the NBAMPO website on January 4, 2024 and public comment was received until January 18, 2024.

Ms. Trebil shared each member agency’s pro rata share percentage will change since it is based off the latest Census population count.

She also provided an overview of Microtransit and its characteristics.

Ms. Mitchell inquired if the MPO boundary expansion should be considered as part of the MTP update. Ms. Trebil responded in the affirmative as it would provide the necessary supporting documentation showing where growth is planned. The MPO could then use the following few years to develop relationships with the potential new member organizations to seek their interest and potential support. If they agree to be part of the MPO, an amended Memorandum of Understanding would be executed and in place before work begins on the 2055 MTP.

Ms. Trebil continued stating that if an MPO boundary is expanded, the MTP must reflect it as well identifying potential projects within that area. While the boundary may expand, no additional funding is allocated.

**Motion: Ms. Mitchell made a motion to begin exploring the possibility of expanding the MPO’s planning area boundary as part of the 2050 MTP. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brinson and passed unanimously.**

Ms. Trebil continued providing an update on the FY25 UPWP. She did state that Section 5303 funding for FY26 is uncertain at this time due to the de-urbanization status of the MPO. While no federal funding would be directly apportioned to the MPO, the State has the discretion to continue funding transit related activities allowed under Section 5303. Ms. Trebil stated that she is currently working with NCDOT to encourage them to continue this funding and requested TAC members to advocate for such. The loss of Section 5303 funding equates to the loss of one-fourth of the MPO’s operating budget.

135 Even with this loss, federal law still requires the MTP to include the evaluation of transit  
136 activities and projects.

137  
138 No motion was needed on the FY 2025 UPWP as it will be presented to the TAC at their  
139 March meeting for approval after NCDOT provides comments.

## 141 **12. Local Input Methodology**

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143 The Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) law (GS – 136 – 189.10 and .11), enacted  
144 in 2013, directs the NCDOT to select and fund major capital improvement projects using  
145 a data-driven prioritization process in combination with local input. NCDOT provided  
146 guidance for each MPO, RPO, and Division to develop and implement a local input point  
147 methodology that maintains criteria transparency, material availability, and process  
148 documentation while maximizing the opportunity for public review and input. This Local  
149 Input Methodology must use a minimum of two criteria. One criterion must be a  
150 qualitative criterion and one criterion may either be a qualitative or quantitative criterion.  
151 This document represents the NBAMPO’s efforts to follow the guidance and requirements  
152 of NCDOT.

153  
154 This draft Local Input Methodology is being presented to both Boards for review and  
155 discussion. It has also been posted on to the NBAMPO website on December 29, 2023  
156 seeking public comment until February 1, 2024. The final Local Input Methodology will  
157 be presented to the Technical Coordinating Committee on February 8, 2024 seeking a  
158 recommendation for approval by the Transportation Advisory Committee on March 28,  
159 2024. The approved Local Input Methodology must be submitted to NCDOT for their  
160 approval by May 1, 2024.

161  
162 Ms. Trebil stated that this P7 Local Input Methodology is different from the P6 one. The  
163 criteria and weights are now focused on four areas: Community Importance Assessment,  
164 Project Readiness, Transportation Performance Management, and the P7 Quantitative  
165 Score.

166  
167 Ms. Trebil stated that after review by both the TCC and the TAC, the methodology would  
168 be published on the MPO’s website for public comment. Once approved, the methodology  
169 would then be submitted to NCDOT.

170  
171 She further stated that there was much discussion on the new methodology by the TCC  
172 and they recommended the TAC approve the draft P7 Local Input Methodology.

173  
174 After some discussion, the TAC members approved the P7 Local Input Methodology and  
175 asked that it be sent to NCDOT for their review and approval.

## 176 177 **13. Carbon Reduction Funding**

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179 The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) codified the Carbon Reduction  
180 Program (CRP) in an effort to reduce transportation emissions. Federal funding is given  
181 to states to use statewide (CRP-Anywhere) as well as a direct apportionment to MPOs.

182 These funds can be used on a wide range of projects that reduce emissions such as  
183 traffic management, public transportation, congestion management, construction of  
184 sidewalks, and more. CRP funded projects are 80% federal funded with a 20% non-  
185 federal match for projects. However, NCDOT funds the local match for CRP-Anywhere  
186 projects. The CRP is a five-year federal funding stream that began in 2022.

187  
188 The MPO has been working with NCDOT to utilize the CRP-Anywhere funding to identify  
189 a project that meets this criteria. The intersection of Trent Blvd/Rhem Ave/Pollock  
190 Street/First Street has been previously identified as needing improvement. An express  
191 design had been completed for this project to convert the intersection to a roundabout  
192 at a cost of ± \$6.2M. The entire cost of this project would be funded by NCDOT and  
193 CRP-Anywhere funds if selected.

194  
195 Project applications may be submitted anytime to NCDOT who then reviews the  
196 projects and informs applicants if and when the project is selected. The MPO and  
197 NCDOT are currently working on completing the application. We are hopeful that this  
198 project will get selected since it has been identified as a high crash frequency  
199 intersection and NCDOT Division 2 supports this project.

200  
201 After some discussion, the Committee members mentioned that they had not heard  
202 concerns regarding this intersection, but rather the need for connectivity along other  
203 roads.

204  
205 It was the consensus of the Committee to identify potential projects where this funding  
206 could be used. Committee members asked MPO staff to send an email to both TAC and  
207 TCC members summarizing the grant and encouraged members to identify projects so  
208 that funding can be used within the MPO planning area.

## 209 **Updates**

### 210 **14. MPO: NBAMPO Staff**

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- 213 • NCDOT's Corridor Identification and Development Program recently was awarded
- 214 a federal grant on several corridors. While the Morehead City to Raleigh Corridor
- 215 was not one of them, NCDOT intends to start a study in the next year or so to
- 216 begin evaluating the feasibility of adding passenger rail.
- 217 • Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant allows for two possible options either a
- 218 planning/demonstration grant or implementation. Grant applications for
- 219 implementation does require a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan.
- 220 • Reminder that annual Ethics Statement Economic Interest and training must be
- 221 filed by April 17<sup>th</sup>.
- 222 • DERPO is offering NCDOT STIP/SPOT 101 training to elected officials on
- 223 February 13<sup>th</sup>. Those interested register with DERPO.
- 224 • NCDOT State Planning & Research (SPR) Grant is open. Applications can be
- 225 submitted for items such as corridor studies, roadway plans, intersection studies,
- 226 etc. It does require a local match of 20% and applications are due February 29<sup>th</sup>.
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**15. CARTS:** *Kelly Walker - Absent*

**16. EWN:** *Andy Shorter - Absent*

**17. NCDOT Transportation Planning Division (TPD):** *Amanda Killian*

- Ms. Killian stated the NC Rail division was recently awarded a \$1.1B grant for the S line from Raleigh to Richmond
- Steering committee meeting for Carteret CTP on February 7, 2024

**18. NCDOT Integrated Mobility Division (IMD):** *Kim Nguyen*

- Ms. Nguyen advised the Bicycle Helmet Initiative will open up in January
- IMD will be hosting a 5303 training for MPOs

**19. NCDOT Division 2:** *Len White*

- Mr. White presented the Construction Report
- The first roundabout at Grantham Rd opened last month and the second will be coming up soon on the other side of US 70
- There will be traffic shifts coming up as the Havelock Bypass is nearing completion

**20. Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:18 PM.

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Deanna Trebil  
MPO Administrator

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Kirkland, Chairman  
Transportation Advisory Committee