



## **TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**March 12, 2026**

**Jacksonville Station, Onslow Room**

**1300 N Marine Blvd**

**Jacksonville, NC 28540**

**Present,  
In Person:** Ms. Cindy Edwards (Chair), Mr. Paul Buchanan (Vice-Chair), Mr. Tim Foster, Ms. Mickey Smith, Mr. Bill Justice, Mr. Phil Misciagno, Ms. Alice Betts, Mr. Mark Barefoot, Mr. Kip Malcolm, Mr. Jeff Conaway, Mr. Danny Ferruci, Mr. Eric Ritzel, Mr. Doug Lafave, Mr. Patrick Wurzel, Mr. Anthony Prinz, Mr. Stephen Adams, Mr. Chris Coursey

**Present,  
Remote:** Mr. Maksym Bezruchko, Lt. Dale Silance, Mr. Russell Thompson

### **I. Call to Order**

Vice-Chair Buchanan called the TAC meeting to order at 2:32pm at Jacksonville Station.

### **II. Welcome and Introductions**

Vice-Chair Buchanan welcomed attendees and thanked those participating both in person and virtually. Attendees then introduced themselves.

### **III. Adoption of the Agenda**

Vice-Chair Buchanan called for a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Ms. Edwards made the motion, and Mr. Foster seconded. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

### **IV. Public Comment**

No requests were received, and no members of the public were present for comment.

### **Action Items**

### **V. Election of Officers**

In accordance with the bylaws, the officers of the TAC consist of a Chair and Vice-Chair. The Chair must be a representative of the Jacksonville City Council, and the Vice-Chair must be a representative of the Onslow County Board of Commissioners.

Vice-Chair Buchanan opened the floor for nominations for TAC Chair. Ms. Smith nominated Ms. Edwards, seconded by Vice-Chair Buchanan. The motion carried unanimously. Chair Edwards then opened the floor for nominations for TAC Vice-Chair. Mr. Foster nominated Vice-Chair Buchanan for reelection, seconded by Chair Edwards. The motion carried unanimously.

## **VI. Approval of December 11, 2025, Meeting Minutes**

Chair Edwards called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Foster made the motion, seconded by Ms. Smith. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

## **VII. Approval of the MPO Annual Self-Certification**

Chair Edwards explained that the MPO is required annually to complete a self-certification checklist for submission to NCDOT and the State. Members reviewed the checklist, and no questions were received.

Chair Edwards called for a motion to approve. Vice-Chair Buchanan made the motion, seconded by Mr. Foster. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

## **VIII. Adoption of the FY27 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

Mr. Adams presented the draft FY27 UPWP, outlining JUMPO's proposed planning activities and funding allocations. He reviewed FY26 PL104 and Section 5303 funding and noted an increase in available funding for FY27.

He highlighted a proposed special study to develop a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian plan for the MPO planning area. He noted that the previous plan was completed in 2018, prior to the expansion of the MPO boundary. The updated plan will include inventories and assessments of existing facilities, prioritized project sheets, and cost estimates to support future implementation and funding opportunities. He also outlined the anticipated Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process to select a consultant to conduct the study.

Mr. Adams emphasized coordination with local jurisdictions to incorporate existing pedestrian plans and locally identify priorities. He noted that a key consideration would be addressing long-term maintenance responsibilities, particularly in rural areas without county sidewalk maintenance services. Establishing maintenance agreements early in the process would help position projects for future implementation opportunities. The plan will also identify prioritized project lists and conceptual project sheets to allow the MPO and local jurisdictions to quickly pursue future funding opportunities, such as Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grants and other bicycle and pedestrian safety funding programs.

Members discussed prior projects submittals for TAP funding. Mr. Prinz noted that the increased MPO budget reflects positive progress and stated the bicycle and pedestrian plan will help better coordinate planning efforts across the region.

Chair Edwards called for questions on the UPWP draft; none were received. Ms. Smith made a motion to approve, seconded by Vice-Chair Buchanan. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

## **IX. Adoption of 2026-2035 MTIP Amendment 3**

Mr. Adams presented Amendment #3 to the 2026-2035 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan (MTIP), noting that Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved the 2026-2035 State Transportation Improvement Programs (STIP) in December.

He summarized the proposed amendments, which primarily involve modifications to funding allocations for public transit projects across the state, with funding adjustments being scheduled for FY26 through FY35. Mr. Adams noted the two projects affecting the JUMPO area. TN-6131 has an updated funding for electric vehicle purchases in Surf City. HS-2403BB has rescheduled installation of rumble strips along NC 24, from Piney Green Road to Swansboro.

Members discussed safety benefits of rumble strip installations, noting their effectiveness in reducing run-off road crashes as well as being a low cost approach of improving the safety of corridors.

Chair Edwards called for questions on the amendment; none were received. Ms. Smith made a motion to approve, seconded by Vice-Chair Buchanan. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

#### **X. Approval of 2026-2035 MTIP Administrative Modification 1**

Mr. Adams reminded members of the previous administrative modification that was completed in March 2025. He explained the current action similarly is requested to reallocate approximately \$287,000 in federal transit lapse funding to the JUMPO area. Funds will support construction of Jacksonville Station Phase II, including expanded bus parking, fueling infrastructure, and operational facilities on the property across from Jacksonville Station and the new downtown transfer station.

Mr. Prinz noted the importance of strong coordination with FTA and NCDOT to ensure effective use of available transit funds statewide and to support multiple transit systems, including Jacksonville Transit and Onslow United Transit. He explained that not all transit systems across North Carolina are fully effective in utilizing available resources and when there is unallocated or expiring funding, agencies often look to well-performing systems to obligate those funds before they are returned to the federal treasury.

Chair Edwards called for question on the amendment; none were received. Ms. Smith made a motion to approve, seconded by Vice-Chair Buchanan. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

#### **XI. NC 172 Road Abandonment onto MCB Camp Lejeune**

Mr. Adams provided an overview of coordination efforts between NCDOT and Camp Lejeune related to proposed changes along NC 172, which would abandon a portion of the corridor that routes from the Sneads Ferry Bridge onto Camp Lejeune. He referenced map exhibits showing the mile marker limits of the affected segment and noted that coordination is ongoing between Mr. Tim McCurry representing base agencies and Mr. Doug LaFave with NCDOT to finalize agreements that would transfer roadway maintenance responsibilities to Camp Lejeune.

Mr. LaFave explained the segment is being requested to be removed from the state-maintained system due to long-standing restricted access and base security requirements, which limit NCDOT's ability to perform maintenance. Maintenance has effectively been assumed by Camp Lejeune, and that the action formalizes existing conditions in the official records. He further noted that mileposts would remain unchanged for emergency response continuity and that no new state

route designations will be assigned. The roadway may continue to be identified as NC 172 in mapping systems, with updates occurring as systems are revised.

Mr. Prinz added that past efforts to open NC 172 to the public are unlikely to succeed due to post-9/11 security requirements. He also highlighted that, from an administrative standpoint, the action supports the agreement between Camp Lejeune and NCDOT and reflects broader coordination efforts between the agencies. He noted the recently executed intergovernmental service agreement (IGSA), which enables NCDOT support on-base maintenance and emergency response work.

Chair Edwards encouraged continued coordination between base partners, NCDOT, and the MPO, noting the public benefit of these efforts. She then called for questions regarding the resolution; none were received. Ms. Smith made a motion to approve, seconded by Vice-Chair Buchanan. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

## **XII. Resolution of TAC support for Swansboro Safety Projects and Initiatives**

Mr. Adams presented the resolution supporting Swansboro safety projects intended to bolster MPO advocacy and support and ensure continued consideration by NCDOT. He highlighted three primary projects which include installation of a HAWK signal at Front Street on NC 24, construction of a right-in/right-out driveway at the west entrance of Food Lion on NC 24, and a closed-loop traffic signal system consisting of multiple coordinated signal heads throughout the Swansboro corridor. Mr. Adams provided an overview each project, its location and associated safety and operational benefits.

Members discussed prior pedestrian traffic counts conducted at Front Street, which previously did not meet the threshold for a HAWK signal. Staff noted that coordination with Division Traffic would continue by assessing pedestrian activity and safety needs at the location during peak summer and weekend periods. Additional discussion included related pedestrian improvements at Phillips Loop Road and Norris Road, some of which are included in the MTIP, while others are advancing for future funding consideration.

Members also discussed operational concepts for the closed-loop signal system, including potential integration with the local traffic operations center which would improve signal coordination and incident response capabilities, and design alternatives for the right-in/right-out access at the Food Lion entrance, including possible median treatment.

Chair Edwards noted the resolution reflects the MPO's continued commitment to supporting local safety improvements and ensures that community-identified projects are advanced for future implementation.

Chair Edwards called for questions on the resolution; none were received. She then called for a motion to adopt the resolution. Ms. Smith made a motion to approve, seconded by Vice-Chair Buchanan. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

## **Discussion Items**

### **XIII. H191479 Gum Branch Road Project Design Modification**

Mr. Adams opened the discussion by noting the project parameters for H-191492 which is currently under evaluation by the NCDOT Feasibility Studies Unit. He updated members that the project remains unfunded and was not submitted during the P8 prioritization cycle; however, design alternatives and cost estimates are currently being evaluated in order for it to compete in the P9 cycle. Mr. Adams stated the goal is to position the project to score well by improving safety and operational efficiency while keeping in alignment with broader corridor planning efforts along Gum Branch Road.

Mr. Adams provided a brief overview of the three design alternatives noting that one primary consideration identified was balancing corridor consistency with Reduced Conflict Intersections (RCIs) while accommodating existing and planned development near the Western Boulevard and Gum Branch Road intersection. He referenced the traffic signal currently under construction at the Lowes Food entrance and Vineyards Avenue, which was required through the approved TIA for The Vineyards development. He also noted that staff worked with the Division 3 and the design team to refine a hybrid concept that would maintain a traditional signalized roadway between Western Boulevard and Maynard Boulevard to serve the commercial side before transitioning to an RCI design north of Maynard Boulevard.

Mr. Prinz pointed out that the signal is developer-funded and that significant time had already been spent coordinating agreements and obtaining permits, making removal of the signal infeasible from both a practical and political standpoint. He noted that the MPO worked with NCDOT and surrounding property owners to develop a cost-sharing approach so that no single property owner would bear the full expense of the signal installation. Mr. Prinz added that the collaborative effort helped make the project financially feasible and demonstrated the benefit of coordinated planning among multiple stakeholders.

## **Reports/Comments**

### **XIV. Report from the MPO Secretary**

Mr. Prinz provided an update on the Jacksonville Parkway Extension project, noting that the project extends from Gateway North behind the Commons with potential connections to Ramsey Road and US 17 or a new alignment to US 17. He reported that a recent merger meeting, held with participating agencies, resulted in selection of a preferred alternative alignment avoiding impacts to existing facilities, Fire Station 4 and One Place, and was generally supported at the public hearing.

Mr. Prinz explained that the project will proceed into the avoidance and minimization phase, to reduce environmental and property impacts. He noted the selected alignment was chosen due to its reduced residential impacts compared to an alternative which connected through Ramsey Road and US 17 requiring nearly 40 relocations and a costly stream crossing. Mr. Prinz added that the project also provides improved network connectivity between Henderson Drive, the Jacksonville Parkway corridor, and the Commons.

Ms. Smith asked about the residents being notified on the project. Mr. Prinz stated residents are typically not notified this far along in the process but additional public outreach would be beneficial and would occur through City communication channels and Council briefings. Chair Edwards noted the benefit of having the project end outside of commercial businesses and north of the city. Ms. Smith commented favorably on the ongoing work at the Western Boulevard and North Commons intersection, noting construction operations are being executed very well and with minimal disruption to surrounding traffic. It was noted that one of the main factors of this is that the project is nighttime work only.

Mr. Adams provided updates on several ongoing projects, noting that the Gum Branch Road Sidewalks project is finalizing its 100% design plans. He explained that staff is coordinating to combine Carbon Reduction Program funding and reallocate safety funding to support an expanded project scope which, includes improvements at the Nottingham Road signal, to create a more comprehensive corridor improvement. He also noted that the East Thompson Street and Carolina Forest projects were completed and awaiting pavement markings.

#### **XV. Report from NCDOT Division 3**

Mr. Ritzel noted that there are 29 projects currently under development across the area, none of which are scheduled for letting this year. He explained that two projects have entered the letting process, including improvements at Norris Road and Phillips Loop Road. He noted that these Highway Safety projects are administered through Traffic Services and follow a different delivery timeline than typical TIP projects, with materials often procured in advance to help control costs and streamline delivery. These projects are expected to take approximately one year from letting to completion, subject to conditions and procurement timelines.

Mr. Ritzel also highlighted TIP projects progressing toward letting in FY26, including U-5950 (Marine Boulevard and Henderson Drive), which is currently in right-of-way acquisition and scheduled for letting in August 2026. He noted that U-5728 (US 17 from Marine Boulevard to Bell Fork Road) is also in right-of-way acquisition with utility coordination underway and is anticipated to let in September 2026. He added that U-5791 (Jacksonville Parkway Extension) remains scheduled for 2029.

He reported six projects currently under construction, including Highway Safety on-call contracts. An RCI intersection improvement along US 17 from NC 172 to Old Folkstone Road, which let in October 2025, is conducting underground utility work. He also noted ongoing work at NC 53 near Jacksonville Parkway, where as previously noted, clearing and grubbing activities are underway in preparation for road widening. Mr. Ritzel concluded by noting that maintenance contracts have been slower due to seasonal conditions but remain active across multiple routes in the Division. He then encouraged members to visit the link provided in the packet to check back on further project updates.

#### **XVI. Report from NCDOT Transportation Planning Division**

Mr. Bezruchko provided updates on the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program, and also upcoming MPO deadlines. He directed members to the newsletter which provides links to online resources for additional information and updates.

## **XVII. Report from FHWA Field Officer**

No report was provided.

## **XVIII. Questions, Closing Comments**

Chair Edwards called for questions or comments. Vice-Chair Buchanan inquired about the US 258 and NC 53 interchange project (U-5716). Mr. Prinz provided background on the project, noting prior delays due to the prioritization of other STIP projects in the Wilmington area. He added that due its estimated cost exceeding \$400 million, the Wilmington City Council had recently approved a resolution opposing the project. He also noted that Senator Lazzara is currently working to have funds reallocated from that project to U-5716.

Mr. Prinz expressed hope that U-5716 can be advanced on the priority list, noting that the project is fully designed, with right-of-way partially acquired, and only the construction funding remains. He added that the intent is to advance the project in conjunction with U-5739, the adjacent project improving the corridor from the intersection to Pony Farm Road.

Chair Edwards thanked all attendees and encouraged continued involvement. She then called for a motion to adjourn. Vice-Chair Buchanan made the motion, seconded by Mr. Foster. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:34pm.

The next TAC meeting is scheduled for June 11, 2026.