



JACKSONVILLE URBAN AREA
JUMPO
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

June 18, 2026

**Jacksonville Station, Operations Training Room
1300 N Marine Blvd
Jacksonville, NC 28540**

**Present,
In Person:** Ms. Cindy Edwards (Chair), Mr. Paul Buchanan (Vice-Chair), Ms. Mickey Smith, Mr. Mark Barefoot, Mr. Jeff Conaway, Mr. Nathan Rhue, Mr. Danny Ferruci, Mr. Trevor Carroll, Ms. Adrienne Cox, Mr. Royce Bennett, Mr. Anthony Prinz, Ms. Stephanie Kutz, Mr. Stephen Adams, Mr. Chris Coursey

**Present,
Remote:** Mr. Ronald Massey, Mr. Maksym Bezruchko, Ms. Nazia Sarder

I. Call to Order

Chair Edwards called the TAC meeting to order at 2:30pm at Jacksonville Station.

II. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Edwards welcomed attendees and noted that the meeting was rescheduled due to a lack of quorum at the originally scheduled meeting. She thanked those participating both in person and virtually. Attendees then introduced themselves.

III. Adoption of the Agenda

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

IV. Public Comment

No requests for public comments were received, and no members of the public were present to provide comments.

Mr. Conway shared that he had been contacted by several residents regarding a recent traffic signal outage in Swansboro. He noted that only one of the five traffic signals has reflective tape installed around the signal heads. According to a resident, the reflective tape significantly improved visibility and helped drivers identify the signal location while approaching the intersection during the outage. Mr. Conway requested that NCDOT consider installing reflective tape on the remaining traffic signals to enhance visibility during future signal outages.

Ms. Kutz noted the concern and stated that she would discuss the matter with NCDOT staff at the upcoming signal meeting scheduled for the following week.

Action Items

V. Approval of March 12, 2026, Meeting Minutes

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

VI. Adoption of 2026-2035 MTIP Amendment 4

Ms. Kutz presented Amendment #4 to the 2026-2035 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan (MTIP). She noted that many of the projects included in the amendment are statewide projects being added or modified and that MPO adoption is required to maintain consistency with the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). She then highlighted the projects within the JUMPO planning area included in the amendment.

Ms. Kutz explained that the funding previously approved through Administrative Modification #1 has now been incorporated into Project TD-4904 (Jacksonville Station Phase II). She also highlighted Project U-6082 (Bell Fork Road and Country Club Road Intersection Improvements), noting that right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation have been delayed allowing additional time for planning and design refinement. She informed members that MPO staff are scheduled to meet with NCDOT on June 29 to review the updated design, followed by a meeting with City management prior to presenting the revised concept to the public. Ms. Kutz also noted that Project U-5951 (US 17/Marine Boulevard Partial Interchange) is included in the amendment due to a significant increase in the project cost estimate exceeding the threshold requiring a formal STIP amendment. She further explained that Projects HS-2403F through HS-2403J are new Vulnerable Road User Program projects being added to the STIP. She noted that these projects are funded through NCDOT Highway Safety funds and are specifically intended to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Members discussed the Vulnerable Road User Program and the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). Ms. Kutz explained that MPO staff have been proactive in identifying candidate projects, conducting advance planning, and coordinating with NCDOT to facilitate project implementation. Mr. Prinz added that the MPO's proactive planning efforts have positioned the organization to efficiently leverage available funding opportunities and streamline project delivery. Mr. Carroll commended the MPO's efforts, noting its success in maximizing available funding through these programs.

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

VII. Removal of U-5787 Trade Street Extension from the STIP

Ms. Kutz presented the proposed removal of Project U-5787 (Trade Street Extension) from the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). She reminded members that staff have been coordinating with NCDOT regarding the project and that updated right-of-way cost estimates identified significant impacts associated with existing stormwater facilities along the proposed alignment.

Ms. Kutz explained that NCDOT is unable to acquire right-of-way associated with stormwater facilities, making those acquisitions the responsibility of the City of Jacksonville. She noted that the estimated local cost to acquire the necessary stormwater pond parcels is approximately \$9 million, a substantial increase from earlier estimates. Given the significant local financial commitment required, staff determined that the project's costs outweigh its anticipated transportation benefits.

Although the Trade Street Extension would improve connectivity and help relieve traffic congestion in the surrounding commercial area, Ms. Kutz stated that the project is no longer considered cost-effective. She emphasized that removing the project from the STIP would allow its programmed funds to be reallocated to other transportation projects within the Division Needs category, ensuring that the funding remains within the region rather than being lost to the MPO.

Mr. Prinz directed members' attention to the final "Further Resolved" clause of the resolution, which expresses the MPO's desire for funding made available through the removal of U-5787 to be reallocated to other underfunded transportation projects, specifically identifying Project U-5716 (US 258/NC 24 Interchange) as the MPO's highest priority. He explained that, while the resolution does not guarantee the funding will be redirected to U-5716, it clearly communicates the MPO's recommendation to NCDOT. Mr. Prinz noted that U-5716 is fully designed, with right-of-way acquisition already underway, leaving construction funding as the primary remaining need to advance the project.

Mr. Carroll expressed his support for prioritizing U-5716 and noted that the City of Jacksonville has already begun coordinating with NCDOT and utility providers regarding utility relocation in advance of construction. He stated that the NCDOT remains committed to working collaboratively with the City to develop a coordinated strategy for utility relocation and project implementation.

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

Discussion Items

VIII. NC Board Transportation Representation on the TAC

Ms. Kutz discussed the importance of having representation from the North Carolina Board of Transportation within the Jacksonville Urban Area, noting that the region has been without direct representation for approximately seven years. Mr. Prinz then explained that Board representation is important for advancing transportation priorities within the MPO and strengthening coordination with state transportation leadership.

Mr. Prinz emphasized that the discussion was not intended as a criticism of the current Board of Transportation member as Mr. Zimmer has been involved with many initiatives in Pender County but rather to highlight the strategic importance of the Jacksonville and Onslow County area, particularly given its significant military presence and growing transportation needs. He noted that local representation on the Board would better position the region to advocate for transportation funding and project delivery.

Mr. Prinz proposed preparing a letter from the TAC Chair to the local legislative delegation requesting that the Board of Transportation consider appointing a representative for the Jacksonville/Onslow County area. He stated that the letter would emphasize the benefits of regional representation without expressing criticism of the current Board membership.

Mr. Prinz asked members if there was a consensus to proceed with drafting the letter, circulating it amongst the TAC Members for review and comment, and have it signed by the Chair before being sent to the local legislative delegation. Members expressed their support, and no objections were received.

IX. Prioritization 8.0 (P8) Update

Mr. Adams provided an update on the Prioritization 8.0 (P8) process and noted that quantitative scores for statewide projects were released by the NCDOT SPOT Office. He reminded members that JUMPO submitted 13 highway projects, 13 bicycle and pedestrian projects, and 5 aviation projects for evaluation. He also noted that 4 highway projects carried over from the previous prioritization cycle, resulting in a total of 17 highway projects being evaluated during P8.

Mr. Adams reviewed the available funding for Division 3, noting that approximately \$150 million is available for Regional Impact projects and approximately \$31 million for Division Needs projects. He explained that these funding levels will be considered as the MPO develops Local Input Point (LIP) assignments later in the prioritization process. Mr. Adams also provided an update on the Transportation Project Importance Survey, which opened on June 3 as part of the MPO's adopted Local Input Point Methodology. He explained that the survey is intended to gather public input on transportation priorities before Local Input Points are assigned. The survey has been promoted through the City of Jacksonville's social media platforms, the MPO website, and partner agencies, including Onslow County and local municipalities.

Members discussed additional opportunities to share the survey through their respective organizations to encourage broader public participation. Mr. Adams noted that the survey QR code would be distributed to members for sharing through their respective jurisdictions and communication channels. Ms. Kutz added that, during previous public outreach efforts conducted as part of the prioritization process, staff received valuable feedback regarding transportation concerns beyond project prioritization, such as pavement markings and other operational issues. She noted that this information was shared with Division 3 for consideration, demonstrating the broader value of the survey in identifying community transportation needs.

Ms. Kutz also reported that no JUMPO projects were selected for funding through the Statewide Mobility category during this cycle. Ms. Cox noted that only two projects within Division 3 were selected, both involving aviation improvements at Wilmington International Airport, illustrating the highly competitive nature of the funding process.

Members discussed the continued success of recent improvements at the Albert J. Ellis Airport and noted that the recently completed runway extension demonstrates the value of long-term coordination among the Airport, Onslow County, JUMPO, NCDOT, and the Federal Aviation Administration. Vice-Chair Buchanan commented that recent state funding awarded for airport improvements reflects continued recognition of the airport's importance to the region and supports future economic development opportunities. Ms. Cox informed members that federal agencies

have been touring airports throughout North Carolina to better understand local airport needs but have not yet visited Albert J. Ellis Airport. Members agreed that the airport serves as a strong example of successful regional collaboration in advancing transportation infrastructure and supporting future economic growth.

X. TAC & TCC Meeting Schedule Changes

Mr. Adams reviewed the proposed revisions to the TAC and TCC meeting schedules to align with the updated P8 delivery schedule established by the SPOT Office. He explained that the upcoming Regional Impact Local Input Point assignment will involve 1,400 points to be distributed among eligible highway, bicycle and pedestrian, and aviation projects. Following that process, the MPO will assign an additional 1,400 points for Division Needs projects.

Mr. Adams noted that NCDOT revised the SPOT schedule after determining that many MPOs and RPOs do not meet during December. Although JUMPO traditionally holds a December TAC meeting, the revised schedule requires Local Input Point assignments to be completed in November to meet SPOT deadlines. To accommodate the revised timeline, staff proposed rescheduling the September TCC meeting to October 8 to develop the Division Needs Local Input Point recommendations, rescheduling the October TAC meeting to November 12 for adoption of the recommended points, and canceling the December TAC meeting. Staff also noted that the MPO's annual work program would be updated to reflect the revised meeting schedule and that updated meeting invitations would be sent following the meeting.

Mr. Adams requested a consensus from the TAC for the proposed meeting changes. Members expressed their support, and no objections were received.

Reports/Comments

XI. Report from the MPO Secretary

Ms. Kutz provided several updates on ongoing MPO projects and activities. She reported that construction continues on Project U-5789 (Jacksonville Parkway and Western Boulevard Improvements), with current work focused on drainage improvements. She noted that portions of the roadway may be temporarily closed during construction and that additional information would be distributed once closure dates are confirmed.

Ms. Kutz also reported that the pedestrian safety improvements at the intersection of Western Boulevard and Carolina Forest Boulevard have been completed. The project included the installation of pedestrian push buttons and upgraded crosswalk facilities. She informed members that the MPO will soon begin work on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. A consultant has been selected, and the project is expected to kick off in the next few weeks.

She further reported that design work is nearing completion for the Gum Branch Road Sidewalk Project. The project includes approximately 1,600 feet of new sidewalk between Plaza Drive and Onsville Drive, as well as pedestrian improvements at the Nottingham Road and Dewitt Street intersections. She noted that the project will significantly enhance pedestrian connectivity and safety along the corridor and that construction is anticipated to be funded entirely through NCDOT Highway Safety Program funds.

Ms. Smith asked whether road closures would be required during construction. Staff responded that NCDOT typically would not close Gum Branch Road and construction would more likely occur during nighttime hours to minimize impacts to traffic along heavily traveled corridors.

Mr. Prinz recognized NCDOT staff for their work on active construction projects, commenting that sites have been well maintained and operated in a safe and professional manner. He noted that strong partnerships between the MPO, Onslow County, and NCDOT prove to be successful in advancing transportation improvements, highlighting the Stoney Creek Rail Project, as another example of successful coordination. He explained that the County is exploring federal rail funding opportunities that could support construction of a rail spur for future economic development and the existing agreements between Camp Lejeune and Norfolk Southern Railway may provide access to the rail corridor if funding is secured. Members further discussed how resolutions of support adopted by the TAC and townships demonstrate a shared regional commitment.

Mr. Prinz discussed ongoing coordination regarding transportation improvements associated with the Camp Davis Industrial Park in Holly Ridge. He noted that the previously approved signal at Drag Strip Road and US 17 was later rescinded as additional project considerations were evaluated, creating uncertainty for the Town and surrounding development plans. He noted that Drag Strip Road serves as a critical link throughout the future phases of the industrial park and continued coordination with NCDOT will be important in identifying a path forward and stated that staff's goal is to provide greater clarity regarding long-term improvements, particularly the anticipated signalization of the corridor, so that future development planning can move forward. He emphasized that the MPO has invested significant resources in corridor planning and Traffic Impact Analyses and noted that Senator Lazzara has secured funding to support construction of the signal. Mr. Prinz proposed preparing a letter from the TAC expressing support for signalization of the intersection and highlighting its importance as a key connection supporting future phases of the development, continued growth in the Holly Ridge Community, and regional economic development.

Mr. Carroll confirmed that the previous approval for the signal had been rescinded and clarified that recent development changes were not the sole factor in that decision. He explained that NCDOT must evaluate whether signal warrants continue to be met and consider the overall impacts of proposed improvements before recommending significant changes to a corridor. He noted the importance of having a better understanding of the changes in impacts and future transportation needs as part of that evaluation process.

Mr. Prinz acknowledged that the MPO understands the need for NCDOT to reevaluate signal warrants and noted that a letter of support recognizing the evaluation process while also emphasizing the overall benefits of the project would be important. Members discussed previous funding for Traffic Impact Analyses, and it was confirmed that the MPO previously funded studies for the corridor while the Town is currently funding additional analyses. Members expressed support for preparing a letter to NCDOT, and no objections were received.

XII. Report from NCDOT Division 3

Ms. Cox provided an overview of the NCDOT Division 3 project update packet and highlighted several active and upcoming projects within the MPO planning area. She first noted Project U-5716 (US 258/NC 24/NC 53 Interchange Improvements) and provided an update on the project's

advancement toward construction. She also reviewed Project U-5951 (Marine Boulevard and Henderson Drive Improvements), noting that the project will include intersection improvements, additional turn lanes, and pedestrian enhancements. She explained that utility relocation and right-of-way acquisition activities are currently underway, with construction anticipated to begin following completion of those activities.

Ms. Cox noted that Project U-5789 (Jacksonville Parkway and Western Boulevard Improvements) remains approximately 20 percent complete and is one of the larger active construction projects in the area. She noted that the combined value of current active construction projects within the area represents a significant investment in local transportation infrastructure. Ms. Cox also discussed the importance of the NCDOT five-year maintenance and resurfacing program, noting that the program is separate from the STIP and provides approximately \$18 million in planned investment for maintaining existing infrastructure within the Division. She encouraged members to share these resources with their constituents to help communicate upcoming maintenance activities and transportation improvements.

Ms. Cox also highlighted NCDOT's project information resources, including a new online mapping tool called Projects Near Me that allow users to view current and upcoming transportation projects. She noted that these tools provide a valuable resource for local agencies and the public to better understand project locations, schedules, and construction impacts. She encouraged members to provide feedback and utilize these resources when communicating transportation updates within their communities.

XIII. Report from NCDOT Transportation Planning Division

Mr. Bezruchko directed members to the newsletter which provides links to general NCDOT updates and information. He also noted that he plans to attend the next TAC meeting in person.

XIV. Report from FHWA Field Officer

No report was provided.

XV. Questions, Closing Comments

Chair Edwards called for final questions or comments.

Mr. Bennett inquired about the status of the County's Orphan Road Program and whether NCDOT had reviewed the submitted roadway deficiency reports. He expressed concern about addressing needed roadway improvements before the end of the current budget year. Mr. Carroll acknowledged the concern and stated that he would follow up with an update regarding the status of the reports.

Vice-Chair Buchanan inquired about the multi-use path along NC 210. He noted the County's Planning Director brought forward discussion on whether the commissioners were interested in funding maintenance for a multiuse path. He noted they said they would be interested in considering it. Mr. Adams explained that the discussion relates to incorporating a multi-use path into STIP Project U-5949 (NC 210 Widening). He noted that the MPO previously met with the East Coast Greenway Alliance, which is coordinating with Onslow County Planning and NCDOT to evaluate the feasibility of including the path as part of the project.

Ms. Kutz noted that one challenge staff identified was determining a future maintenance entity, as the path would be located outside municipal boundaries. She added that no specific design has been presented and NCDOT still needed to incorporate the path into the project plans. She further noted that additional factors, including right-of-way impacts on Camp Lejeune property, as well as environmental and wildlife considerations, would need to be evaluated as part of the project development process. Vice-Chair Buchanan stated that before the County could commit to maintaining the facility, it would need a better understanding of the anticipated maintenance costs, particularly since the County does not currently own the equipment necessary to maintain a multi-use path. Members noted that the current estimated cost of Project U-5949 is approximately \$164 million and that maintenance of a future multi-use path would likely be provided through a contracted service. They added that a final design and associated maintenance requirements would need to be reviewed before any commitment is made.

Chair Edwards thanked all attendees and then called for a motion to adjourn. Vice-Chair Buchanan made the motion, seconded by Ms. Smith. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:43pm.

The next TAC meeting is scheduled for August 13, 2026.