



## REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

ITEM NO. 8.

**DATE OF MEETING:** June 16, 2014

**REQUESTED BY:** Ashley Frank, Senior Planner, Planning & Community Development

**SHORT TITLE:** Resolution in Support of the Transportation Projects Under Consideration by the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Advisory Committee.

**BACKGROUND:** Pender County is one of twelve member organizations that coordinate local transportation projects with the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO). The WMPO, in conjunction with the NCDOT Strategic Transportation Investments program, has developed a new system for prioritizing and funding transportation projects under the new "Prioritization 3.0" system. An important part of the new Prioritization 3.0 evaluation system is demonstration of local support for projects by adoption of resolutions by the local governing body.

The WMPO Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) is conducting a local input process to prioritize a finalized list of projects that was forwarded to the NCDOT Strategic Prioritization Office (SPOT) for consideration under the new Prioritization 3.0 system.

Specifically, the Pender County Board of Commissioners wish to demonstrate support for the inclusion of five (5) projects located within Pender County, in the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP), currently under consideration by the TAC. These projects represent an ongoing effort to implement roadway improvements and new bike and pedestrian facilities in Pender County.

Planning staff solicited project ideas from citizens input meetings, along with researching projects that have been considered and adopted in other local land use and transportation plans. The compiled list of projects has been submitted to the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization for ranking and inclusion in to the STIP.

**SPECIFIC ACTION REQUESTED:** To consider a resolution in Support of the Transportation Projects under Consideration by the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Advisory Committee.

**COUNTY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION**

Respectfully recommend approval.

CBW  
Initial

**RESOLUTION**

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Pender County Board of Commissioners that:

the Board hereby approves a Resolution in Support of the Transportation Projects under Consideration by the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Advisory Committee. The Chairman/County Manager is authorized to execute any/all documents necessary to implement this resolution.

**AMENDMENTS:**

MOVED \_\_\_\_\_ SECONDED \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ DENIED \_\_\_\_\_ UNANIMOUS

YEA VOTES: Williams: \_\_\_\_\_ McCoy: \_\_\_\_\_ Brown: \_\_\_\_\_ Tate: \_\_\_\_\_ Ward: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
J. David Williams, Jr., Chairman      06/16/2014  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
ATTEST      06/16/2014  
Date



**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS UNDER  
CONSIDERATION BY THE WILMINGTON MPO TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE**

**WHEREAS**, Pender County is one of twelve member organizations that coordinate local transportation projects with the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO), and

**WHEREAS**, the WMPO, in conjunction with the NCDOT Strategic Transportation Investments program, has developed a new system for prioritizing and funding transportation projects under the new "Prioritization 3.0" system, and

**WHEREAS**, an important part of the new Prioritization 3.0 evaluation system is demonstration of local support for projects by adoption of resolutions by the local governing body, and

**WHEREAS**, the WMPO Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) is conducting a local input process to prioritize a finalized list of projects that was forwarded to the NCDOT Strategic Prioritization Office (SPOT) for consideration under the new Prioritization 3.0 system for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP), and

**WHEREAS**, the Pender County Board of Commissioners wishes to demonstrate support for the five (5) Pender County road improvement, and bicycle/pedestrian projects included on the list of projects under consideration by the TAC as part of ongoing efforts to implement transportation improvements and new facilities in Pender County.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

The Pender County Board of Commissioners hereby supports the following Pender County projects currently under consideration by the WMPO Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) to be forwarded to the NCDOT Strategic Prioritization Office.

Highway Projects:

**1. H090215- Hampstead Bypass (Porters Neck Road to Sloop Point Road)**

The US Highway 17 corridor is severely congested from Porters Neck Road in New Hanover County north through the Wilmington MPO boundary of the unincorporated communities in southeastern Pender County. US 17 is the only direct connection along the eastern coast of North Carolina between two of the largest metropolitan areas in the state; Jacksonville in Onslow County and Wilmington in New Hanover County. This section of US 17 is expected to be over capacity by 2035 with a Level of Service "F".

In 2008, this section of US 17 had a volume of 34,700 vehicles per day (vpd) and a capacity of 43,300 vpd, producing a Level of Service "B". By 2035, US 17 is expected to serve 74,300 vpd which will reduce it to a Level of Service "F". South of SR 1675 (Long Leaf Drive), the existing alignment of US 17 has no control of access and serves both local traffic (for growing

communities along the US 17 corridor) as well as a significant amount of traffic commuting between Jacksonville and Wilmington. There is a need for the facility along this alignment to provide both a low level of access control (to serve local traffic) and to provide full access control (to serve traffic commuting between New Hanover and Onslow Counties). The conflict between the two types of traffic on this facility is clear when examining crash rates. Between August 2005 and December 2010, 628 crashes were reported on this section of US 17 which is 16 percent higher than the statewide average on similar facilities. A separate facility on a new alignment is required to serve the dual nature of traffic and to reduce conflicts along this corridor.

## **2. H090261- SR 1644 Extension (NC 210 to SR 1569/Hoover Road)**

US 17 between NC 210 and SR 1569/Hoover Road is anticipated to be over capacity by 2035. Improvements are needed to accommodate projected traffic and to avoid obtaining a Level of Service "F".

This section of US 17 currently has a four-lane, 65-foot cross section with a two-way left turn lane and a capacity of 43,300 vehicles per day (vpd). In 2008, this section of US 17 had annual average daily traffic (AADT) of 34,700 vpd producing a Level of Service "B". By 2035, AADT is expected to reach 74,300 vpd reducing the Level of Service to "F". All trips between SR 1569 and NC 210 are currently routed through this section of US 17. Due to the residential nature of land uses along SR 1569/Holly Shelter Road, most of the traffic generated from SR 1569/Holly Shelter Road is commuting traffic. A large portion of the traffic from SR 1569/Holly Shelter Road uses this section of US 17 to go south to connect to NC 210. NC 210 ultimately connects to NC 133, a major north-south connector in Pender and New Hanover Counties. Crash data between August 2005 and December 2010 indicates 20 crashes at the intersection of US 17 and NC 210. The lack of a direct connection between NC 210 and SR 1569/Holly Shelter Road overburdens the 2,300 foot section of US 17 connecting these two facilities.

## **3. H0920803- US 17 Safety Improvements to Onslow County Line (Wilmington Bypass to Onslow County Line)**

US 17 has a high number of traffic accidents between Sloop Point Road in Pender County (within the Wilmington MPO Urban Area) and Shepards Road in Pender County. A traffic safety analysis found 34 crashes along this section of US 17 were reported between March 2008 and March 2011.

The US Highway 17 corridor is the only direct connection along the eastern coast of North Carolina between two of the largest metropolitan areas in the state, Jacksonville in Onslow County and Wilmington in New Hanover County. US 17 functions as a high-speed corridor but carries both local and commuting traffic which contributes to the high crash rates. Volumes are anticipated to increase along this section of US 17 due to the anticipated construction of the Hampstead Bypass (R-3300) and increased commuting traffic between the employment/residential centers in Jacksonville and Wilmington.

## **4. H140400-Blueberry Road Modernization (US421 to NC210)**

Improvements are needed on SR1114/Blueberry Road between US421 and NC210 to accommodate future automobile, bicycle and pedestrian traffic volumes and to improve traffic safety for all users. SR1114/Blueberry Road currently has an undivided cross section with two

nine-foot lanes and an existing capacity of 10,700 vehicles per day (vpd). In 2011, the vehicles per day (vpd) were recorded at 1,400 vpd. In 2035, traffic volumes are projected to double. The southern portion of the roadway had 45 crashes reported between 2007 and 2011. This is the 13th highest crash total for a road segment in Pender County over that period and the 2nd highest for a secondary road in the county. There is a need to reduce conflict points to mitigate safety issues on this facility. The draft Pender County Comprehensive Transportation Plan and the adopted Currie Small Area Plan both suggest providing bicycle facilities and upgrading the SR1114/Blueberry Road to meet current standards.

A population center and a popular park/historic landmark (Moores Creek National Battlefield) exists west of US421 on NC210 at Curry in Pender County. SR1114/Blueberry Road provides the southernmost access from US421 to this population center on NC210. Major population and employment centers are located south of Blueberry Road in Pender and New Hanover Counties. The location of these population and employment centers on either end of SR1114/Blueberry Road make the facility experience significant traffic volumes coupled with an existing cross-section that is in need of modernization. SR 1114/Blueberry Road is NC Bike Route 5 (Cape Fear Run), an on-road bike route which begins at US 1 in Wake County and continues southward through the Cape Fear River basin through Pender County and Wilmington then on to Ft. Fisher. SR 1114/Blueberry Rd is also an on-road segment of the East Coast Greenway, a 2,900-mile on-and off-road trail system from Main to Florida. The northern extent of the project intersects with the recently-announced Cape Fear Arch segment of the Mountain-to-Sea trail. SR 1114/Blueberry Road serves as a critical connector for residents of southwestern Pender County and a major on-road bicycle and pedestrian corridor, but its high crash rate, narrow lanes, and minimal shoulder that currently pose a safety hazard which would be mitigated by modernizing the roadway to current NCDOT standards.

This project was proposed by the Cape Fear RPO. This project has not been identified in a WMPO adopted plan.

#### **5. H141235- NC 210 and Island Creek Road Intersection Improvements**

The intersection of NC210 and SR1002/Island Creek Road has a crash rate of 0.74 crashes per million vehicles. The skewed alignment of this intersection may contribute to the high crash rate. Safety improvements are needed at this intersection to accommodate existing and projected traffic on the NC210 Corridor in Pender County. The intersection is currently an at-grade intersection. In 2008 volumes on NC210 were 5,800 vehicles per day (vpd) whereas the capacity was 23,100 vpd. On SR1002/Island Creek Road 2008 volumes were 7,500 vpd on a facility with a capacity of 23,100 vpd. In 2035, volumes on NC210 are projected to almost triple to 15,100 vpd and volumes on SR1002/Island Creek Road are projected to reach 11,300 vpd.

The US17/NC210 Corridor Study anticipates that growth will occur along NC210 west of Hampstead once the Hampstead Bypass has been constructed. Existing volumes and projected increases in commuting traffic necessitate the improvement of safety at this intersection

Adopted this the 16<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2014 by the Pender County Board of Commissioners.

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J. David Williams, Jr., Chairman      6/16/2014  
Date

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ATTEST      06/16/2014  
Date