

## Final Yearly Narrative

Mid-East RPO  
Annual Performance Report  
Fiscal Year 2016-2017

### Overview

The Lead Planning Agency, the Mid-East Commission, has utilized its staff, technology and resources to participate in a wide variety of planning efforts, facilitate local participation in the transportation decision-making process and support local officials with information, mapping and transportation expertise. We guided local professionals and elected officials through identifying new projects for submission in the Prioritization 5.0 Process. Staff also guided Martin County in the development of their Comprehensive Transportation Plan, as well as the initiation of the early planning stages of the upcoming Pitt County CTP.

### Project Number **1617-000**: **MERPO General Activities**

- RPO staff attended county transportation committees and reported on local projects, comprehensive transportation plans, and regional and state transportation issues.
- RPO staff attended meetings of regional organizations such as the Highway 17/64 Association and the Southern Albemarle Association and reported updates to the TAC/TCC.
- RPO staff responded to member requests for details on specific projects.
- RPO staff updated the Mid-East RPO website as needed.
- RPO staff participated in statewide RPO coordinators quarterly meetings.
- RPO staff hosted regular meetings of the TCC and TAC and prepared the necessary documents and arrangements for each meeting.
- RPO staff prepared all required documentation for quarterly reports and financial reimbursement.
- RPO staff participated in RPO evaluation process and RPO Coordinator evaluations.
- RPO Staff served as Executive Director of the Eastern NC MPO/RPO Coalition.
- RPO Staff served on NCARPO Bike and Pedestrian Committee.
- RPO Staff served on CTP 2.0 Committee.
- New RPO staff studied MERPO projects and RPO 101 manual and had training sessions with former RPO staff.

### Project Number **1617-002**: **PROJECT PRIORTIZATION**

- RPO staff analyzed projects to assign local input points using local methodology for P4.0.
- RPO staff meet with TAC/TCC for final adoption of regional tier input points and division tier input points for P4.0.

- RPO staff input approved Regional Tier Local Input Points and Division Tier Local Input Points into SPOT Online for P4.0.
- RPO staff held prioritization subcommittee meetings with TAC and TCC members for solicitation of projects that they felt would be regionally significant. In addition to determining new projects the subcommittees determined which holding tank projects should be resubmitted in P5.0.
- RPO staff attended alternate criteria meetings for Division 1/Region A and agreed on alternate criteria for the Regional and Division Tiers for P5.0.

**Project Number 1617-003: MERPO GIS Data**

- RPO Staff evaluated traffic counts and crash data for evaluation of P5.0 Projects.
- RPO staff downloaded updated AADT GIS layers and maps.
- RPO staff downloaded updated parcel and centerline GIS layers for each county.

**Project Number 1617-004: Develop CTP Vision**

- RPO staff attended the Pitt County CTP kickoff meeting.

**Project Number 1617-005: Analyze Alternatives and Develop Final Plan**

- RPO staff assisted NCDOT with the development of the Martin County Comprehensive Transportation Plan. RPO staff participated in CTP steering committee meetings, reviewed materials for TPB, collected survey responses, and made regular update reports to the Mid-East RPO TCC and TAC.
- RPO staff attended the Martin County CTP Open House.
- RPO staff reviewed draft CTP maps, draft CTP problem statements, draft presentations to local officials, and steering committee comments.
- RPO staff coordinated with County Manager, Division Planning Engineer, and Transportation Planning Branch on project description for US 64 Business, US 17 Business and the Airport Road connector project.

**Project Number 1617-006: RPO-Transit Workshop**

- RPO staff attended Beaufort Area Transit System quarterly board meetings.
- RPO staff communicated with Division 2 DPE and Beaufort Area Transit System on eligibility of projects in P4.0.
- RPO staff attended a public hearing for grant applications for Beaufort Area Transit System.

**Project Number 1617-008: Assist NCDOT with data Collection and Assessment for US 11/13 Study**

- No activity

**Project Number 1617-009: Assist NCDOT with data Collection and Assessment for US 64/I-44 Study**

- No activity

**Project Number 1617-010: GIS Layers for proposed Bike and Pedestrian Facilities**

- RPO Staff updated pedestrian maps for the City of Washington Pedestrian Plan following recommendations at a Planning Board meeting.
- RPO staff completed the Washington Pedestrian Plan document.
- RPO staff met with the Town of Winterville, Active Routes Coordinator and Division 2 to discuss potential projects.
- RPO staff met with Town of Williamston, Active Routes Coordinator and Division 1 staff to discuss potential projects.

**Project Number 1617-012: Community Outreach**

- RPO staff worked with Division 2 office on 15<sup>th</sup> Street project in Washington and met with Washington Council Member and Planning Director on project alternatives.

**Project Number 1617-013: Title VI**

- No activity

**Project Number 1617-014: Merger Process**

- No activity

**Project Number 1617-015: GIS Training**

- No activity

**Challenges and Shortcomings**

- **Public Participation.** More time needs to be dedicated to public outreach, but time required for prioritization and other tasks makes this difficult to achieve. Ideas include evening meetings for public input, a Facebook page for MERPO, and a monthly or quarterly newsletter.
- **Learning Curve.** As a new RPO Planner, questions sometimes come up that I don't know the answer to and I have to do research and get back to people.

Knowing where to look for information and who to ask about each subject is key. There is no one database you can go to for all answers.

### **Lessons Learned**

- Continued regular communication with NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch staff has helped maintain a more productive and positive working relationship.
- The success of the RPO is part staff commitment, part cooperation with NCDOT TPB, and part active/engaged TCC and TAC members. Having local government officials who are energetic and passionate about transportation and getting them appointed by their perspective Counties to serve on the RPO has made for a better experience and product for everyone involved.
- Continued promotion and education of RPO activities and member benefits to local governments is critical to the success of the RPO.
- Ask about workshops and meeting attendance being an allowable expense before registering or attending, unless they have been preapproved in the PWP.