

**Information Packet for Concurrence Points 1-4
CAMPO Concurrence Process Meeting for
New Bern Avenue Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project
Friday, July 12, 2019 (1:00-2:30pm)
WSP – Hatteras and Currituck Conference Rooms (434 Fayetteville Street Suite
1500 Raleigh, NC)**

Agenda

- Introductions
- Explanation of CAMPO's Concurrence Process
 - Agency roles (Participating versus Cooperating)
- Project Background/Explanation
- Concurrence Point 1: Project Purpose and Need
- Concurrence Point 2: Identification of Alternatives to Study Further
- Concurrence Point 3: Screening of Alternatives/Elimination of Alternatives
- Concurrence Point 4: Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) Recommendation
- Next Steps

Concurrence Team Members:

Project Sponsor: City of Raleigh (with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as funding partner)

Cooperating Agencies to be Invited:

- Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
- North Carolina Department of Transportation
- North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

Participating Agencies to be Invited:

- Wake County
- GoTriangle
- Town of Garner
- Town of Cary
- Town of Knightdale

New Bern Avenue Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project **Supporting Information for CAMPO's Concurrence Process**

Explanation of CAMPO's Concurrence Process

Concurrence is a process in which Sponsors of major Wake Transit Capital Projects may, with respect to such Projects, verify compliance with: Laws, regulations, and policies enacted and/or enforced by agencies having regulatory authority over a resource or interest that may be substantially impacted by the project. The Concurrence Process arises at key project milestones throughout: (1) Project development and permitting and, if applicable to the project, (2) Final design, right-of-way/land acquisition, construction, or other subsequent phases. These milestones, or points, are known as Concurrence Points.

Concurrence Points are distinct to the nature and magnitude of impacts anticipated for each project. Specific sequential Concurrence Points are identified in a project-specific Concurrence Plan. Concurrence Points cumulatively build over the course of project development and subsequent phases such that Concurrence at prior milestones informs the trajectory of project implementation that leads to future milestones. It is anticipated that Project Sponsor actions, and project trajectories, will be informed and improved by the Concurrence Process. Concurrence Points 1-4 include:

- ***Concurrence Point 1: Project Purpose and Need***
 - Review of Purpose and Need
- ***Concurrence Point 2: Identification of Alternatives to Study Further***
 - Identification of alternative(s) which satisfy the Purpose and Need (Mode, alignment, and termini)
 - This may just be one alternative
- ***Concurrence Point 3: Screening of Alternatives/Elimination of Alternatives***
 - Based on effectiveness of alternative to satisfy Purpose and Need
 - Based on environmental avoidance or minimization associated with each alternative
 - If only one alternative is selected for further study at Concurrence Point 2, Concurrence Point 3 is not needed
- ***Concurrence Point 4: Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) Recommendation***
 - This is a recommendation of the City of Raleigh on LPA for which the City of Raleigh will seek concurrence from the Cooperating Agencies
 - The recommended LPA would then be considered by CAMPO's TCC and Executive Board
 - The LPA would need to be appropriately integrated with the 2045 MTP with an MTP amendment; however, the City of Raleigh can proceed with the concurrence process when the LPA adoption occurs
 - At this point in the process, the project alignment, mode, and termini must be established. Although not required, preliminary station area identification would be valuable to have. Runningway options do not yet need to be determined and should be determined by applying appropriate evaluations through the NEPA process. Station areas can be further refined through the NEPA process.

Figure 1: Sequential/Cumulative Nature of Concurrence Process



Concurrence signifies that an agency does not object to a Project Sponsor-proposed action or project implementation approach at a Concurrence Point. More particularly, it signifies that the agency does not object to the proposed action in light of impacts to resources or interests over which the agency has regulatory authority. Concurrence further signifies that the agencies will abide by their Concurrence unless there is a profound changed condition upon which the proposed action was based. Non-Concurrence signifies an objection based upon an agency's finding: (1) That the proposed action or approach to project implementation is in conflict with the laws, regulations, or policies under its jurisdiction; (2) That the proposed action or approach to project implementation has substantial negative impacts on a resource or interest over which the agency has regulatory authority; or (3) That information provided is not adequate for Concurrence.

The Concurrence Process does not establish a project-level steering committee or working group. It does not provide a platform for expression of opinions or positions. It does not authorize a project or an Implementation Element of a project. It does not authorize financing for a project. The Concurrence Process is an inter-agency verification of compliance process, involving only the agencies having regulatory responsibility as previously noted. Further, the Concurrence Process is not legally binding upon the agencies which are involved. For example, an environmental permitting agency may concur on a given matter, but that Concurrence does not bind the agency to ultimately issue a permit.

The Concurrence Process is a mechanism that streamlines and expedites the process of securing verification that proposed actions at key project milestones are consistent with the laws, policies and regulations of other agencies. Without the Concurrence Process, the Project Sponsor would be forced to coordinate with other agencies on an individual basis. It would accordingly be difficult to balance the various agencies' mandates, policies, laws, or regulations.

A major goal of the Concurrence Process is to bring order to what can easily be an unwieldy and excessively time-consuming process. Agencies having regulatory jurisdiction over an impacted resource or interest are much better positioned to provide guidance to a Project Sponsor if they have knowledge of and understand the nature of other agencies' interests in the project. Accordingly, the involved agencies may collaboratively react to proposed actions or approaches to project implementation at key project milestones so that compromise-based choices can be made (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Project Sponsor Verifying Compliance with Agencies as a Team



Agency roles (Participating versus Cooperating)

The group of agencies involved in the Concurrence Process for each applicable project is known as the Concurrence Team. The Concurrence Team is composed of a Project Sponsor, Cooperating Agencies, and Participating Agencies. The composition of agencies on each Concurrence Team will vary, depending on the project's geographic location and scope. The determination of the composition of a Concurrence Team and its progression through the Concurrence Process is facilitated and staffed by a Concurrence Administrator, in support of and in cooperation with the Project Sponsor. The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) will serve as the Concurrence Administrator for the Concurrence Process.

Each role on the Concurrence Team has a defined set of responsibilities in moving the Concurrence Process forward, and in satisfying National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) compliance requirements:

Concurrence Team Role	Responsibilities
Project Sponsor	Role assigned through adoption of <i>Wake Transit Work Plan</i>
	Initiates project and takes responsibility for its implementation
	Identifies Cooperating Agencies and Participating Agencies with Concurrence Administrator
	Identifies necessary project Concurrence Points with Concurrence Administrator and Cooperating Agencies
	Leads project through Concurrence Points and proposes project-level actions or implementation approaches at corresponding key milestones
Cooperating Agency	Federal, state, or local agency with legal jurisdiction over aspects of project implementation or with respect to resources the project can reasonably be anticipated to impact
	Develops information and/or prepares analyses related to verification of proposed actions' compliance or noncompliance with regulations, policies, or laws under its jurisdiction
	Has capability of voting on Concurrence or Non-Concurrence in response to proposed actions at key project milestones
Participating Agency	Is invited to Concurrence Meetings and may provide input throughout the Concurrence Process
	Does not have legal jurisdiction over aspects of project implementation or with respect to resources the project can reasonably be anticipated to impact
	Does not have capability of voting on Concurrence or Non-Concurrence in response to proposed actions at key project milestones

Project Background/Explanation

The City of Raleigh proposes implementing the New Bern Avenue Corridor BRT, approximately 5.1 miles, to connect the central business district with WakeMed Raleigh Campus (WakeMed) and New Hope Road (map attached). The project includes approximately 3.3 miles of new dedicated transit infrastructure improvements between the GoRaleigh Station, in downtown Raleigh, and Sunnybrook Road, including transit signal priority (TSP) at signalized intersections and up to twelve (12) weather-protected BRT stations. All BRT stations will be designed to include branding, off-board fare payment, level vehicle boarding, real-time bus arrival information, schedule and route information, and ADA accessibility. The project also includes approximately 1.8 miles of service in general traffic lanes, with potential TSP at signalized intersections, between Sunnybrook Road and New Hope Road. The terminus at New Hope Road includes a proposed Park and Ride and transfer facility that is a separately funded project.

Wake County residents passed a ballot measure to fund the Wake Transit Plan in November 2016. The Wake Transit Plan recommends 20 miles of BRT infrastructure to be implemented in four (4) corridors in Wake County, to provide frequent and reliable urban mobility. The four (4) corridors are:

- Wilmington Street/South Saunders Corridor

- New Bern Corridor
- Capital Boulevard Corridor
- Western Boulevard Corridor

The east corridor, New Bern Avenue, was selected as the first project for implementation. Included in the FY2019 Adopted Wake Transit Work Plan is \$1,360,000 (FY2018 funding) and \$2,955,545 (FY2019 funding) to initiate and complete BRT Small Starts Project Development (PD). This combined amount of \$4.3 million is sufficient to conduct 100 percent of the PD work to advance the project through National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements and final design. The Wake Transit Work Plan committed funding that will be available for the project in 2021, representing a 51 percent local match and the remaining 49 percent coming from federal sources. The Wake County Transit Planning Advisory Committee (TPAC) is charged with producing the Work Plan. The Work Plan guides the ongoing planning, funding, expansion, and construction of projects in the Wake Transit Plan, and includes the recommended Wake Transit operating and capital budgets and the multi-year operating and capital programs for FYs 2019-2027. On June 4, 2019, the Raleigh City Council recommended the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to CAMPO for its inclusion in the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Concurrence Point 1: Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of the New Bern Avenue Corridor BRT project is to improve transit service from east Downtown Raleigh to New Hope Road. This new transit investment would accommodate projected growth, create transit infrastructure that allows the BRT route, or approved transit service, to bypass major congestion points, and improve the attractiveness of the service to experience ridership growth. Project needs are summarized below:

- Address existing and projected future growth and travel demand
- Create infrastructure that allows the transit service to bypass major congestion points
- Facilitate ridership growth along the corridor
- Improve transit service and customer experience
- Support local planning efforts to preserve and enhance the quality of life along the corridor

Concurrence Point 2: Identification of Alternatives to Study Further

The *Wake Transit Plan* (2016) identified the New Bern Avenue as a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor. It showed the corridor running along New Bern Avenue between WakeMed Campus and Blount Street.

The *Wake Transit Plan Major Investment Study (MIS)* (2018) further refined this BRT alternative by identifying one alternative for New Bern Avenue. That one alternative consisted of three segments:

- New Bern Avenue between Blount Street and Poole Road
- Edenton Street between Blount and Poole Road
- New Bern Avenue between Poole Road and Sunnybrook Road

During the early stage of project development, the single New Bern Avenue alternative further identified routing through Downtown Raleigh and extending to New Hope Road. This alternative

also satisfied the Purpose and Need of the project. This alternative uses the existing road network to circle the GoRaleigh Station in Downtown Raleigh and continues east using the one-way pairs of Edenton Street (east bound) and New Bern Avenue (west bound) between Blount Street and Poole Road. The alternative continues along the two-way New Bern Avenue from Poole Road to New Hope Road.

Mode: Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Alignment: (See Map Attached)

Termini: Downtown Raleigh (GoRaleigh Station) to New Hope Road

There is no other alignment alternative that can provide direct access to the major origins and destinations along the corridor and serve the identified travel market. The alternative serves the existing Route 15, which is identified as one of the top performing routes in the system. The identified mode is the most cost-effective and least intrusive mode that can achieve the proposed purpose and need for the project. The BRT mode improves throughput capacity and transit service reliability to a level adequate to serve the travel market without introducing significant impacts to the corridor.

The preferred runningway and location of stations will be identified as preliminary plans are developed.

Concurrence Point 3: Screening of Alternatives/Elimination of Alternatives

Since there is only one alternative available as an option to move forward that satisfies that purpose and need for the project, the screening and elimination of other alternatives is not required.

Concurrence Point 4: Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) Recommendation

The alternative, as described in Concurrence Point 2, is recommended to be submitted as the LPA to CAMPO. This is consistent with the City of Raleigh, which on June 4, 2019, the Raleigh City Council recommended the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to CAMPO for its inclusion in the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Next Steps

30-Day Public Comment Period on LPA and Schedule CAMPO Executive Board Public Hearing	Comment period to open no later than July 22 nd
LPA Consideration of Recommendation to CAMPO Board by CAMPO TCC	August 1 st
LPA Consideration of Adoption by CAMPO Board	August 21 st
Concurrence Point 5: LEDPA	Early 2020
Concurrent Point 6: Agreement with Jurisdictions for Additional Concurrence Points	Spring 2020

Concurrence Point 5: Least Environmentally Damaging Preferred Alternative (LEDPA) Recommendation

- This is the NEPA preferred alternative. At this point, stations, preferred runningway solutions, termini, mode, alignment, ROW, pavement impacts, etc. should be known.
- At this point, environmental avoidance and minimization should be discussed relative to the refined project details to select a LEDPA.
- This is the point at which we optimize the design and benefits of the project while reducing environmental impacts to both the human and natural environment.

Concurrence Point 6: Agreement with Jurisdictions for Additional Concurrence Points

- Opportunity for the project sponsor and cooperating agencies to reassess whether any remaining proposed project-level decisions will impact their jurisdictions.
- If there are impacts, an agreement will be reached on future points for concurrence.