Meeting Summary
A series of four public meetings were held on November 16 and 17, 2016 for the Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS) to initiate the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) update. The meetings were an open house format held in Shallotte, North Carolina; North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina (SC); Murrells Inlet, SC; and Carolina Forest, SC. In addition to the meetings, an online WikiMap was advertised for citizens to submit comments and identify locations in the GSATS for transportation improvements. This meeting summary documents the advertising, attendance, input received during the meetings, and press coverage.

Meeting Advertising
The meeting series was advertised multiple ways using a press release, posted meeting flyers at local governments, local government websites, social media, and emails to stakeholders. Meeting flyers were also posted on local Coast RTA buses.

Meeting Attendance
A total of 57 people attended the four public meetings over the two days: 16 at Shallotte, 11 at North Myrtle Beach, 15 at Murrells Inlet, and 15 at Carolina Forest.

Meeting Format
Each meeting was held in an open house format for a two-hour time period. Three stations were set for attendees. The first station included existing conditions maps. The second station allowed attendees to “vote” on various preferences for streetscape, access management, mobility, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian facilities. The third station included two computer workstations for providing input and comments on the online WikiMap.

Summary of Priority Spectrums Exercise
As part of the interactive content of the public meetings, various transportation priorities were communicated to participants through the use of spectrums on display boards. Priority areas presented were:

- **Streetscape** – The design quality of a street (e.g., lighting, landscaping, decorative elements, street furniture, etc.).
- **Mobility Choice** – The many ways that people can travel (e.g., driving a car, riding a bus, walking, bicycling, etc.).
- **Access Management** – Elements of the street that organize vehicle movements (e.g., strategic driveway placement, left-turn consolidation, property connectivity, etc.).

Each priority area had a spectrum ranging from low to high. Participants were given color-coded sticker dots to place on each spectrum to indicate their level of priority for each of the areas. Participants could choose to place their dot at either end, the middle, or somewhere in between on the spectrum based on their individual desires.
It was communicated to participants that trade-offs would be inevitable; when they prioritized one concern, they were also minimizing others. It was also made clear that the Project Team knows it cannot please everyone in every respect and that the exercise was not a binding “vote.” The goal was to use the priority spectrums as one of a number of tools to assist in understanding and balancing priorities as we seek to achieve a level of consensus regarding the future of transportation in the GSATS region. Figures 1 to 3 and Tables 1 to 3 present the results of the priority spectrums exercise.

**Figure 1: Streetscape Priority Spectrum Results**

![Streetscape Priority Spectrum](image)

**Table 1: Streetscape Priority Spectrum Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOW FOCUS</th>
<th>MODERATE FOCUS</th>
<th>HIGH FOCUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrow sidewalks directly behind curbs</td>
<td>Wide sidewalks directly behind curb</td>
<td>Wide sidewalks with landscape buffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No amenities at transit stops</td>
<td>Enhanced crosswalks</td>
<td>Patterned or textured crosswalks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No street trees or other landscaping</td>
<td>Benches at transit stops</td>
<td>Shelters, benches, and trash receptacles at transit stops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No pedestrian-scale lighting</td>
<td>Limited street trees and landscaping</td>
<td>Lots of street trees and landscaping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian-scale lighting</td>
<td>Pedestrian-scale lighting</td>
<td>Pedestrian-scale lighting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Low Respondents = 0% | Low to Moderate Respondents = 3% | Moderate Respondents = 34% | Moderate to High Respondents = 24% | High Respondents = 39% |
Figure 2: Mobility Choice Priority Spectrum Results

Balancing Priorities for Mobility Choice

There are many ways that people can travel - driving a car, riding a bus, walking, and bicycling to name a few. The type of transportation facilities we provide influence our mobility choices. Please place your yellow sticker dot below the Mobility Choice Spectrum to indicate your priority.

Table 2: Mobility Choice Priority Spectrum Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOW FOCUS</th>
<th>MODERATE FOCUS</th>
<th>HIGH FOCUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Sidewalks in urban areas</td>
<td>• Sidewalks on major streets</td>
<td>• Sidewalks on all streets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No bicycle facilities</td>
<td>• On-street bike lanes present on all major streets</td>
<td>• Buffered and/or separated bike lanes present on all major streets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No public transit facilities</td>
<td>• Bus transit service in urban areas</td>
<td>• Trails/greenways connect communities throughout the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Long block lengths designed for automobile travel</td>
<td>• Moderate block lengths that could be walked if absolutely necessary</td>
<td>• Bus transit service in urban areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Everyone drives personal vehicle to all destinations</td>
<td>• Some people carpool but most drive personal vehicle to all destinations</td>
<td>• Enhanced transit (e.g., bus rapid transit, light rail, commuter rail) connects communities throughout the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Short block lengths make walking easy</td>
<td>• Incentives to encourage people to carpool and vanpool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low Respondents = 0%
Low to Moderate Respondents = 0%
Moderate Respondents = 24%
Moderate to High Respondents = 38%
High Respondents = 38%
Figure 3: Access Management Priority Spectrum Results

Table 3: Access Management Priority Spectrum Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOW FOCUS</th>
<th>MODERATE FOCUS</th>
<th>HIGH FOCUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Unlimited driveways  
  • Left turns permitted wherever desired  
  • Higher potential for traffic congestion  
  • Higher potential for crashes  
  • Many conflicts between cars, bicyclists, and pedestrians | • Number of driveways are limited per property  
  • Left turns consolidated to serve multiple properties  
  • Reduced traffic congestion  
  • Reduced potential for crashes  
  • Reduced number of conflicts between cars, bicyclists, and pedestrians | • Multiple properties accessed by shared driveway  
  • Left turns limited to signalized intersections with connections back to individual properties  
  • Limited periods of traffic congestion  
  • Lower potential for crashes  
  • Few conflicts between cars, bicyclists, and pedestrians |

Low Respondents = 0%  
Low to Moderate Respondents = 3%  
Moderate Respondents = 18%  
Moderate to High Respondents = 63%  
High Respondents = 16%
Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Types Exercise

During the public meetings, bicycle and pedestrian facilities types were identified on display boards to receive input from participants on preferred facility types. Each participant was given two dots for each display board, bicycle facilities and pedestrian facilities, to communicate their vote on facility types they would like to see in the community. Participants were allowed to cast both votes for the same facility or different facilities based upon their preferences. The results show the percentage of total votes for each facility type. It can be assumed that number of participants is half the number of total votes based on each participant having two votes for each facility type display board. Figures 4 and 5 and Tables 4 and 5 present the results of the facility types exercise.

Figure 4: Bike Facility Types Results

![Figure 4: Bike Facility Types Results](image)

Table 4: Bike Facility Types Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACILITY TYPE</th>
<th>RESULTS (% TOTAL RESPONDENTS) *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared-Use Path</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side Path</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raised Cycle Track</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Lane</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffered Bike Lane</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-Side Bike Lane</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Street</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated Bike Lane</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Lane Marking</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contraflow Bike Lane</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*64 total responses.
**Figure 5: Pedestrian Facility Types Results**

![Pedestrian Facility Types Results](image)

**Table 5: Pedestrian Facility Types Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACILITY TYPE</th>
<th>RESULTS (% TOTAL RESPONDENTS) *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalk</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADA Compliant Crossing</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curb Extension</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading Pedestrian Interval</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid Flashing Beacon</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Refuge</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAWK Signal (High-intensity Activated crossWalk)</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raised Crosswalk</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Street</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Stop with Shelter</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*58 total responses.

**WikiMaps Summary**

Two WikiMap workstations were available at each public meeting. WikiMap is an easy-to-use, web-based interactive mapping platform tailored specifically to multimodal transportation planning initiatives. The map allows for “crowd-sourcing” of anecdotal data that provides an additional layer of insight and understanding to local concerns and desires. The WikiMap affords users the opportunity to view all data input by all users and to agree, disagree, and/or comment on individual items. Participants at the public meetings were able to provide experiment with the Wikimap tool and provide feedback. By providing an email address, participants are able to continue providing feedback after the meeting concluded from their personal computers or devices. User inputs include:
• Roadway needs improvement
• Route I currently bike/walk
• Route I’d like to bike/walk
• Barrier to walking/biking
• Destination
• Problem intersection
• Primary truck route
• Congested area
• New route needed
• Transit route needed

As of December 5, 2016, the Wikimap has a total of **245 comments** from **124 users**.

**Press Coverage**
The meetings received press coverage from four local television stations and three newspapers:

• TV Press Coverage: ABC 3 WWAY, NBC WMBF, ABC 15 WPDE, and CBS 13 WBTW
• Print Media Press Coverage: Brunswick Beacon, Myrtle Beach Sun News, Coastal Observer, The Sun News

Copies of the newspaper articles are included in the attachments.

**Attachments**
• Meeting Flyer
• Meeting Handout
• Meeting attendance breakdown
• Newspaper articles
YOU ARE INVITED!

GRAND STRAND AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN PUBLIC MEETINGS

SHALLOTTE
Wednesday, November 16, 2016
12:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Shallotte Town Hall
110 Cheers Street
Shallotte, NC 28470

NORTH MYRTLE BEACH
Wednesday, November 16, 2016
5:30 PM – 7:30 PM
North Myrtle Beach City Hall
1018 2nd Avenue South
North Myrtle Beach, SC 29582

MURRELLS INLET
Thursday, November 17, 2016
12:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Murrells Inlet Community Center
4462 Murrells Inlet Road
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576

CAROLINA FOREST
Thursday, November 17, 2016
5:30 PM – 7:30 PM
Carolina Forest Recreation Center
Horry County Parks and Recreation
2254 Carolina Forest Boulevard
Myrtle Beach, SC 29579

The Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has initiated the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) update, its long range transportation plan that identifies feasible projects, programs, and policies. The planning process is considering the mobility, safety, convenience, and comfort of all modes of transportation coupled with the desires of local communities throughout the region. To kick-off the planning process, GSATS and their consultant team are hosting a series of public meetings. Each meeting will be conducted in a drop-in, open house format, allowing participants to come and go at their leisure and convenience. Interactive activities will be available, allowing the public to provide input with regard to preferences, concerns, and issues with the transportation network.

Plan now to join us for one of the meetings shown above.

PARTICIPATE ONLINE: You can also participate online through the project WikiMap, an interactive mapping application that allows users to pinpoint areas of concern. Access it here: www.tinyurl.com/GSATSwikimap

For additional project information, please visit www.gsats.org
GSATS Regional Demographics Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horry County, SC</td>
<td>196,629</td>
<td>269,291</td>
<td>423,270</td>
<td>24.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgetown, SC</td>
<td>55,797</td>
<td>60,158</td>
<td>67,999</td>
<td>8.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunswick, NC</td>
<td>73,143</td>
<td>107,431</td>
<td>199,297</td>
<td>31.83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Horry and Georgetown Counties were in the top 50 fastest growing counties nationwide from 2010 - 2015

Key Transportation and Freight Facilities

- Railroads: CSX
- Airports: Grand Strand Airport, Myrtle Beach International Airport, Conway-Horry County Airport
- Bike Lanes: East Coast Greenway
- Transit: Coast RTA
- State Routes: SC 41, SC 51, SC 261, SC 554, SC 22, SC 90, SC 9, NC 130
- Port: Port of Georgetown

MTP Plan Focus Areas:

- **Roadways Improvements**: Including widening, aesthetic improvements, and safer intersections
- **Biking and Walking**: Including changes that make safer and better places, where visitors and residents want to live, work, walk, and ride
- **Public Transportation**: Reaching places for people with and without easy access to cars
- **Freight Mobility**: Freight and emergency personnel access to improve the economy and mobility when we need it the most

**PROJECT MILESTONES**

- Stakeholder Outreach/2 Series of Public Meetings
- Develop Goals, Objectives, & Performance Measures
- Inventory Facilities & Analyze Existing Conditions
- Analyze Future Conditions & Needs
- Identify Land Use, Cultural, & Environmental considerations
- Identify, prioritize, & rank projects to address identified needs
- Develop cost estimates and a financial plan

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

MARK HOOCHER, AICP
Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments
1230 Highmarket Street
Georgetown, SC 29440
843-436-6130 (Office) · 843-527-2302 (Fax)
www.gsatss.org

**FALL 2016 PUBLIC MEETINGS**

**Why do we plan for the region’s transportation needs?**

GSATS is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) responsible for carrying out the urban transportation planning process for the Grand Strand area. As the MPO, GSATS provides the forum for cooperative decision making in developing regional transportation plans and programs to meet changing needs. It is composed of elected and appointed officials representing local, state and federal governments or agencies having interest or responsibility in comprehensive transportation planning.

**What is a Metropolitan Planning Organization?**

GSATS 2040 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE GOALS

- Coordinated Land Use and Transportation
- Economic Competitiveness
- Mobility and System Accessibility
- Environmental Stewardship
- Modal Choices and Balanced System
- Safety and Security
- Infrastructure Preservation and Maintenance
- Congestion and Reliability

**November 16, 2016**

12:00PM to 2:00PM
Town of Shallotte City Hall
110 Cheers Street
South Brunswick, NC 28470

5:30PM to 7:30PM
North Myrtle City Hall
1018 2nd Avenue South
North Myrtle Beach, SC 29582

**November 17, 2016**

12:00PM to 2:00PM
Murrells Inlet Community Center
4462 Murrells Inlet Road
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576

5:30PM to 7:30PM
Carolina Forest Recreation Center
2254 Carolina Forest Blvd.
Myrtle Beach, SC 29579
## GSATS Fall 2016 Public Meetings – Meeting Attendance Breakdown

### November 16, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shallotte, NC</th>
<th>12:00PM – 2:00PM</th>
<th>North Myrtle Beach, SC</th>
<th>5:30PM – 7:30PM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Attendees</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td><strong>Total Number of Attendees</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Governments Represented:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Local Governments Represented:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holden Beach – 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>City of North Myrtle Beach – 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocean Isle Beach – 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunset Beach – 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>NCDOT – 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunswick County – 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Coast RTA – 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Shallotte – 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>North Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce – 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Carolina Shores – 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tidewater Community Association – 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Sunset Beach – 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Elliot Realty – 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Holden Beach – 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Undisclosed – 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Calabash – 2</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Media:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Myrtle Beach Sun – Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC General Assembly – 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>NBC WMBF – Television</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Media:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Brunswick Beacon – Paper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC 3 WWAY – Television</td>
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### November 17, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Murrells Inlet, SC</th>
<th>12:00 PM – 2:00 PM</th>
<th>Carolina Forest 5:30-7:30</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Attendees</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
<td><strong>Total Number of Attendees</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Governments Represented:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Local Governments Represented:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Myrtle Beach – 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>City of Myrtle Beach – 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Horry County – 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murrells Inlet 2020 – 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Other:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waccamaw Neck Council POA – 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Carolina Forest Civic Association – 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Rivers – 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Resident – 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Burgess Community Association – 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Undisclosed – 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawleys Island Lions Club – 1</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Media:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident – 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>CBS 13 WBTW – Television</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle Community – 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undisclosed – 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Media:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal Observer – Paper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC 15 WPDE – Television</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GSATS visits Shallotte for transportation study input, offer online participation

By Brian Slattery
Wednesday, November 23, 2016 at 12:48 pm

SHALLOTTE — The Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS) hosted an open house meeting on long-range transportation planning Nov. 16 at Shallotte Town Hall.

About 20 visitors dropped in at the town aldermen’s’ meeting room to share their interests.

While the number of participants wasn’t huge for a Wednesday lunchtime meeting, GSATS encourages participating online through the project WikiMap, an interactive mapping application that allows users to pinpoint areas to identify transportation issues at tinyurl.com/GSATSwikimap.

The information the group is gathering goes to the Myrtle Beach Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) update that identifies feasible projects, programs, and policies for mobility, safety, convenience, and comfort of all modes of transportation in the GSATS region, which includes Myrtle Beach and other portions of Horry County, S.C., Georgetown County, S.C., and Brunswick County.

Those who visited Wednesday’s drop-in to comment on vehicle traffic concerns supported a move away from street access that allows unlimited driveways on busy streets and left turns at any point along the road to reduce congestion, crashes or conflicts with bikes or pedestrians.

Participants endorsed multiple properties sharing one driveway and limiting left turns to signaled intersections that connect back to individual properties.

In questions about the public’s choice for ways to travel, whether by car, bus, walking or biking, they chose to promote upgrades from no sidewalks and a lack of bicycle facilities or public transportation.

Moderate improvements were by far the most popular options including adding some type of sidewalk on all major streets in the future as well as increasing bike lanes and buses.

They said they also want to see block lengths that aren’t so long that they couldn’t walk them, if necessary.

The commentators didn’t see people giving up their personal vehicle to carpool with others, even by 2040.

The GSATS group also sought more specific pedestrian and bicycle comments from visitors to the drop in.

The majority of the participants who interacted with the project endorsed more multi-use paths, separated from the roadway for use by bicycles, pedestrians and any non-motorized users to offer shortcuts or avoid high stress situations along the roadway.

A few other visitors promoted widening streets to allow for bike lanes marked off by street striping and signs.

For solely pedestrian traffic areas, all the participants, supported more sidewalks with a six-foot width considered the preferred size, with higher volume areas considered for eight-foot wide sidewalks.

A handful of the survey group also endorsed either a flashing beacon at roadway crosswalks to increase pedestrian visibility or a button-accessed beacon to flash while they cross the street.
PUBLIC WEIGHS IN ON REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

By: Kirsten Gutierrez  Submitted: 11/16/2016 - 6:18pm

Tags: Biking, Freight Mobility, Grand Strand Area Transportation Study, Public Transportation, Roadway Improvements, Walking

SHALLOTTE, NC (WWAY) — Residents of Brunswick County are getting a detailed look at how getting around town may change over the next few decades.

The Grand Strand Area Transportation Study has four main goals, roadway improvements, biking and walking areas, public transportation, and freight mobility.

“Well I think it's an excellent plan and it's well thought out and I think it looks as though it appears to cover all the bases. All the major bases I guess any way,” resident Roy Cundiff said.

The first of four public meetings was held in Shallotte Wednesday afternoon to get an idea of what people want in the area. Mark Hoeweler, Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments, says getting public input is crucial.

“We're looking for feedback. Input from the general public on the transportation system. What they like what they don't like, problems they see, gaps those sort of things,” Hoeweler said.

A few years ago the federal government lumped Brunswick County in with Myrtle Beach for transportation planning, and so far they say they have received a positive response.

“From a citizens point of view, Brunswick County is a large county and if we can make moving from one part of the county to another easier, it's going to save time and certainly ease frustration,” Shallotte Mayor, Walt Eccard said.

To get this plan up and running organizers need to overcome a few hurdles including environmental challenges, permits, and funding.
Brunswick County Commissioner, Randy Thompson says the plan is on the right track.

“We're on the right road, it's a matter of how well the road is traveled and how well the road is paved. So ya know it takes everybody being at the table to make it successful, and that's our hope,” Thompson said.

If you want to learn more about the transportation plans and areas it will affect click here.
Transportation: Online map lets residents become traffic engineers

By Charles Swenson
Coastal Observer

If you are among the hundreds of thousands of residents who didn’t show up to comment on a regional transportation plan at a series of meetings last week, take heart. An interactive map is available online where you can highlight traffic problems and propose a solution.

The Grand Strand Area Transportation Study is updating its plan through 2040. The study’s policy committee represents local governments in Georgetown County, Horry County and Brunswick County in North Carolina. It allocates state and federal funds to local projects.

An open house at the Murrells Inlet Community Center last week drew 15 people. They got a chance to select options for bicycle and pedestrian improvements, to recommend levels of access to major roads and to pick what the future streetscape should look like. It was one of four meetings. The largest turnout was about two dozen people.

Since then about 80 people have gone online to a WikiMap that allows them to highlight roads and intersections of concern and post comments.
Mark Hoeweler, senior staff member for the transportation study, was skeptical about the WikiMap concept. “I had to be sold on it,” he said. “It’s a great idea.”

Whitney Hills, president of Murrells Inlet 2020, which is developing a bike path plan and pedestrian crossings on Business 17, made her recommendations by placing stickers on charts at last week’s meeting. But she also got an introduction to the WikiMap. She said it was a great way to get input, one that her group might like to try.

Gary Weinreich, an inlet resident, told transportation planners at the meeting that he would like to see improvements to the streetscape along Business 17. He also looked at options for better separation between the bike lanes and car lanes.

Early users of the WikiMap have marked the Inlet to Intracoastal path Murrells Inlet 2020 is developing. They have also marked Business 17 for bike lane improvements. And there is a comment about congestion along Bypass 17 now extending beyond the tourist season.

Someone also drew a bike route around the Pawleys Island area that would loop onto the island itself via the causeways and run to Kings River Road. The last phase of the Bike the Neck route from Murrells Inlet to Georgetown is also shown.

The WikiMap allows people to comment on the various proposals. All of them will be collected as the transportation improvement plan moves forward with its long-range plan. “We’re a long way from anything being included in the 2040 TIP,” Hoeweler said. “We’ll take any kind of comment.

To view and comment on the WikiMap, go to gsats.org.