

Highlights

Traffic Solutions Committee Dare County Transportation Task Force

The Traffic Solutions Committee of the Dare County Transportation Task Force met on February 10, 2006, at the Pitts Center, Southern Shores. The attendance list follows these highlights.

Mr. Classen gave an overview of the Committee's function and Commissioner Byrd gave an explanation of the Task Force, the ITRE report, the community forum and the reasons several committees were formed. The major question before the group was "Where do we go with all this?" The focus of the Traffic Solutions Committee is one of infrastructure – roads, intersections and such.

The Committee discussed how State and local transportation projects are developed, how they are prioritized and how they are funded. Mr. Jennings spoke about the NCDOT Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and how that system works. Mr. Classen spoke about the local transportation planning process (municipal roads) and through the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RPO), which is administered through the Albemarle Commission – a membership organization of 10 counties in northeastern North Carolina. One of the issues is how to work regionally - both in and amongst the Outer Banks towns and counties and through the northeast NC region – in order to build a good transportation network. The Committee talked about the strong representation the Outer Banks communities and the region has enjoyed in the past, how that strong representation has helped build the transportation network in place today, and how the communities will need to work together to continue maintaining and upgrading the transportation system.

The Committee discussed issues such as improving traffic flow for vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians and specifically how can visitor traffic flow be improved through better infrastructure, information/signage, and directions. The economic impact of the Outer Banks communities was discussed both on the local area, the region and the state.

The Committee discussed the use of medians to enhance traffic flow but also for stormwater management and beautification. The issue of business access was also discussed.

The Committee discussed how beautifying gateways to the Outer Banks enhances visitor experiences and community pride. The Committee compared the gateways on Roanoke Island and at Kitty Hawk/Southern Shores.

The Committee discussed how the State TIP is influenced and how much county/municipal participation occurs. The Committee discussed the need to work through the existing TIP process and organizational structure. There was extensive discussion that the community leaders – political and business – of the Outer Banks communities need to try and support a unified set of transportation recommendations as the needs of the area are so great and transportation is important to maintain/enhance the character of the various Outer Banks communities and to keep the local economy (which also substantially serves the region and State) strong.

The Committee seemed to reach a consensus that they would review the list of funded and unfunded (“out year”) transportation projects in the TIP and the local capital improvement plans. They would then look at each of these projects with an eye to towards each of the following issues (and this list is not exhaustive): Traffic flow; Access; Stormwater; Parking; Interconnectivity; Aesthetics; Parking; Bicyclists and Pedestrians; Affect on/from Other Projects; and Funding. During review of the TIP and local projects, the Committee will also consider other projects not presently in the TIP and equally review them. The intent of the discussion is to aid political and business leaders in the community in identifying the most critical transportation needs as they promote projects affecting Outer Banks communities and to influence the final shape of transportation projects in the TIP.

The Committee agreed to meet again on Friday, March 10, at 2:00 PM, in Southern Shores. The Committee asked that additional business owners be invited to participate, that a troop-level member of the Highway Patrol be invited to participate, and that each member of the Committee be emailed the 2005 ITRE report prepared for the Task Force plus links to the State TIP and any local improvement plans.

Mr. Classen asked the Committee to consider appointing a permanent chairman. The Committee declined to take any action.

Carl Classen
Interim Chairman

Attendance List

**Traffic Solutions Committee
Dare County Transportation Task Force**

February 10, 2006

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