

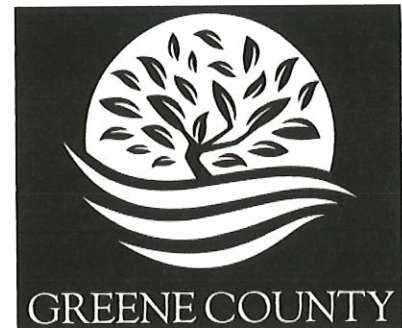


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February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021

## ECRPO News and Updates

We are happy to welcome the Greene County Transportation Committee who began work this January. The committee will be working hard over the next couple of months to get off the ground, and the ECRPO is currently working with NCDOT's Transportation Planning Division and the Committee to start an update to the Greene County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) which was last updated in 2013. The committee will be meeting monthly until they are more established, at which time meetings will return to an every-other-month basis.



Lenoir County Public Works is applying for a BUILD Grant (formerly known as TIGER Grants). These grant opportunities provide access to funding to improve infrastructure in our communities and can be a phenomenal asset to the region. In order to increase their chances of selection, we have been asked to amend the Lenoir County CTP to add four new projects; a rail

crossing at CF Harvey Parkway, a pedestrian bridge at the Neuse Riverwalk, a fixed transit route, and improvements to Heritage Street. The RPO is working with NCDOT TPD to determine how to move forward with the amendment process.

The next ECRPO TCC/TAC meeting will be held at 9:30am on Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> 2021, and will be discussing these updates, determining next steps, and conducting other business.

Thank you,

Micajah Anderson  
ECRPO Staff, Transportation Planner



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## ECRPO News and Updates

### Legislative Updates:

The following bills have been presented to the NC House for consideration:

**H130** - A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE ADDITION OF THE EAST COAST GREENWAY IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA TO THE STATE PARKS SYSTEM

**H165** - A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT TO MAKE CHANGES TO LAWS, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**H184** - A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT TO CLARIFY THAT THE INCLUSION OF REAL PROPERTY ON A COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN IS NOT A REQUIRED DISCLOSURE OR A MATERIAL FACT FOR THE PURPOSES OF DISCLOSURE FOR REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS.

### CF Harvey Parkway Ahead of Schedule

The extension of CF Harvey Parkway was initially delayed due to inclement weather at the beginning of 2021. The project was restarted and opened on Monday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, which is 6 months ahead of schedule. Please see the news report from WITN below:

<https://www.witn.com/2021/02/26/cf-harvey-parkway-extension-to-open-6-months-ahead-of-schedule/>

Thank you,

Micajah Anderson  
ECRPO Staff, Transportation Planner





Eastern Carolina Rural Planning Organization

## March, 2021 Newsletter

March is kicking off a busy season for RPOs and DOT throughout the state. NCDOT has kicked off its annual anti-littering campaign, with a cosponsor from Luke Combs which can be found here;



<https://www.facebook.com/NCDOT/posts/594449801890976>

2. Additional information can be found on NCDOT's website.

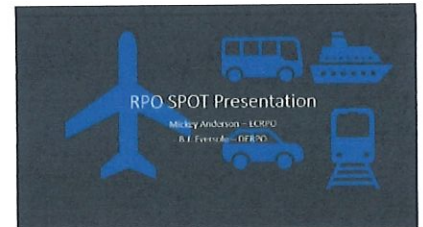
Additionally, the Prioritization 6.0 process is ongoing, and we are beginning to move into the Local Impact Point (LIP) assignment window. This is the portion of the process where members of the community can give their opinions on submitted projects and help make the decision on where our priorities lie. At our March TCC meeting the ECRPO created a SPOT Subcommittee who will be tasked with generating the LIP Methodology, a formal document laying down the process and schedule for assignment priority and a forum for public input.

Another topic of discussion at our previous TCC/TAC meeting a discussion was held regarding the location of our upcoming RPO meetings. The Greene County Transportation Committee has been meeting at the Greene County Wellness Center in Snow Hill. The facility is large enough to house the boards and remain socially distant, there are sanitization stations present and a temperature check at the entrance. TCC/TAC members from Greene County have offered to host the ECRPO meetings at this location. After a short discussion the TCC agreed to continue meeting online for our May meeting, at which time we will take a vote to move the forum back to in-person. The ECRPO TCC and TAC will meet on Thursday, May 20<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am via Zoom.

The two RPOs housed within the ECC gave a presentation discussing the primary functions of an RPO, as well as some insights into the financial situations with NCDOT. Highlights from that presentation include; how North Carolina uses RPOs and MPOs to develop the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP), what the content and purpose of a Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) is, how local CTPs and LIPs work together to provide data and input for the STIP, and general functions of the RPO. Additionally, there was a discussion regarding the impacts of COVID-19 on NCDOT's budget, as well as MAP Act payouts, hurricane relief, and the 2019 Audit report.

To keep it short, NCDOT's financials were heavily and

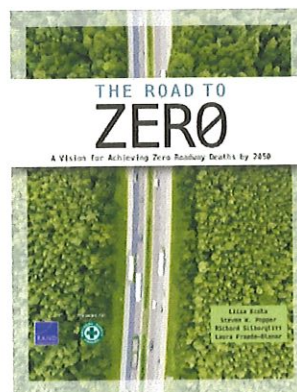
negatively impacted by these factors, thus delaying the release of the STIP and potential for future funding. As 2020 came to a close and we continue to move forward in the STIP development process, the financial situation is getting better, but still not fully recovered to pre-pandemic numbers. The State Transportation Committee is scheduled to meet in late July/early August to determine how to move forward with the STIP.



The National Safety Council has published a report titled *Road to Zero*, a vision to reduce roadway fatalities to 0 by the year 2050. The strategy can be broken down to three broad

categories; double down on what works, accelerate advanced technology, prioritize safety. The ECC is developing a strategy and presentation to incorporate the Road to Zero vision into our practices within the RPOs. For more information on Road to Zero, visit

<https://www.nsc.org/road-safety/get-involved/road-to-zero>.



**William Taylor**  
TAC Chair

**Katrina Marshall**  
TCC Chair



**Down East Rural Planning Organization**

**Brandi Robertson**  
TAC Vice-Chair

**Kate Allen**  
TCC Vice-Chair

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## **DERPO March 2021 Newsletter**

### **Spring Litter Sweep – April 10-24, 2021**

The 2021 Spring Litter Sweep will launch on April 10 and run through April 24.

Traditionally scheduled for the last two weeks of April and September, Litter Sweep is the N.C. Department of Transportation's biannual statewide roadside litter removal initiative. Residents throughout the state participate in local efforts to help clean up North Carolina's roadways.

In addition to volunteers, NCDOT maintenance crews devote one week of their time to pick up litter and collect orange bags placed on the roadsides by volunteer pickups.

Volunteers are provided cleanup supplies, such as reversible orange/blue trash bags, gloves, and orange safety vests, from their local NCDOT County Maintenance Yard office.

To participate in Litter Sweep, contact a local NCDOT litter program coordinator at <https://www.ncdot.gov/initiatives-policies/environmental/adoptahighway/Pages/coordinators.aspx>.

### **Craven Area Rural Transit System (CARTS) Fares Temporarily Suspended**

The Craven County Board of Commissioners approved a temporary suspension of Craven Area Rural Transit System (CARTS) fares from January 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021. Fares will resume July 1, 2021. CARTS is the public transit system covering the rural counties of Craven, Jones, and Pamlico as well as the New Bern urbanized area.

For more information visit the Craven County CARTS website at: <https://www.cravencountync.gov/165/Transportation-CARTS> or call (252) 636-4917.

### **Jacksonville Urban Area MPO (JUMPO) Expansion:**

The JUMPO TCC and TAC approved, at their November 2020 meetings, the boundary expansion to JUMPO that will take the remainder of Onslow County out of DERPO. The expansion has also been approved by Onslow County and the Towns of Swansboro, Richlands, Holly Ridge, and North Topsail Beach. JUMPO then submitted the boundary expansion to NCDOT for formal approval in February. The exit of Onslow County from DERPO will require



updates to key DERPO documents (Memorandum of Understanding, TCC and TAC By-Laws, etc.) in 2021, on which we are currently working on an update. More details will be forthcoming.

**Tentative TCC Schedule for Remainder of 2021:**

To be held @ 10:00 AM online via Zoom for now; in-person meetings will be held ECC 3rd Floor Conference Room, New Bern:

Tuesday, March 23rd, 2021  
Tuesday, May 18th, 2021  
Tuesday, July 20th, 2021  
Tuesday, September 21st, 2021  
Tuesday, November 23rd, 2021

**Tentative TAC Schedule for Remainder of 2021:**

To be held @ 10:00 AM online via Zoom for now; in-person meetings will be held ECC 3rd Floor Conference Room, New Bern:

Tuesday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Tuesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Tuesday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Tuesday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Tuesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**Comprehensive Transportation Plan Updates:**

Carteret County CTP: DERPO is working with Carteret County and NCDOT Transportation Planning Division to verify data for a Traffic Demand Model (TDM) for Carteret County. The TDM will play a key role in identifying the county's long-term transportation needs.

Craven County CTP: The document and maps for the Craven County CTP are complete and were first presented to the public in Havelock before the beginning of the COVID-19 quarantine, but further public meetings and final approval have been postponed until conditions allow for public meetings.

**STIP Project Updates:**

**All Central Let STIP projects (DDRL, Raleigh Let, DB) through FY'25 (June 30, 2025) are approved to move forward with PE. In addition, Division Let STIP projects through FY'23 (June 30, 2023) are approved to move forward.**

B-5938/B-5939 (Upgrades to Atlantic Beach and Emerald Isle Bridges): Work currently at 89.75% complete.

R-1015 (US 70 Havelock Bypass): Construction progress at 22.11% currently. Completion is tentatively scheduled for May 2024.

R-5777A/R-5777B/U-5713 (US 70 James City Improvements to east of Thurman Rd.): Construction progress at 13.68% currently. Completion tentatively scheduled for September 2023.

U-5319 (Improvements to Intersection of SR 1308 (Gum Branch Rd.) And NC 53 (Western Blvd.). Construction progress at 68.55% currently.

B-4863 (Harkers Island Bridge Replacement): The project proposes to replace Bridges No. 73 and 96 in Carteret County. Let date in FY 2022.

R-5777C (US 70 Improvements from east of Thurman Rd. to Havelock Bypass): Currently in development. Let date scheduled for Winter 2022; completion of project in FY 2025.

U-5876 (Widening of US 70 between 4<sup>th</sup> St. in Morehead City and Radio Island; replacement of Newport River Bridge): Currently in development. Let date delayed to FY 2027.

R-3403B/R-2513A (Widening of US 17 from SR 1433 (Antioch Rd.) in Bridgeton to SR 1438 (Spruill Town Rd.) in Vanceboro): Let date of FY 2028.

### **Highway Safety Improvement Program:**

Improved pavement markings will be installed along US 70 between Havelock and Morehead City, and NC 55 between Bridgetown and Bayboro.

Two pedestrian crossings along NC 58 in Atlantic Beach (at E. Bogue Sound Dr. and Brooks St.) will receive Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs).

In Beaufort, the existing traffic signal at SR 1493 (Live Oak Street) at Campen Rd. will be improved by installing a pedestrian crossing with signal heads and a short section of sidewalk on each side of SR 1493 to tie into existing sidewalk on the west side and to tie into the Town of Beaufort sidewalk project on the east side.

In Swansboro, the pedestrian signal at NC 24 and SR 1512 (Old Hammocks Rd.) will be upgraded to an audible pedestrian signal.

In Morehead City, the signals at US 70 (Arendell St.) and Hestron Dr./Crystal Coast Plaza, and Arendell St. and SR 1237 (Harris Rd.)/Shopping Center will be improved with metal poles, mast arms, and dual red indication on Arendell St.

Along NC 24, new pavement markings and rumble strips will be installed between Taylor Notion Rd. in Cape Carteret and US 70 in Morehead City.

A roundabout will be created at the intersection of SR 1400 (River Rd.) and SR 1450 (Nelson Rd.) in Craven County.

New rumble strips will be installed from New Hanover/Pender County line to MM 19.30 in Onslow County.

**William Taylor**  
TAC Chair

**Katrina Marshall**  
TCC Chair



**Brandi Robertson**  
TAC Vice-Chair

**Kate Allen**  
TCC Vice-Chair

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## **DERPO May 2021 Newsletter**

### **From the East Coast Greenway Alliance: NC ECG Modifications**

Hello again North Carolina East Coast Greenway Partners,

The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is out early, and the program has been rebranded again. TIGER, which turned into BUILD, is now RAISE (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity). \$1B in funding is available.

<https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants>

RAISE applications are due July 12, 2021.

NOFO: <https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2021-04/FY%202021%20RAISE%20grants%20NOFO%20%28Final%29.pdf>

Again, if anyone is planning on applying or reapplying for a RAISE grant along any section of the ECG in North Carolina, please let me know. Thank you to those who have already been in touch! See my original email for information on the resources the East Coast Greenway Alliance can provide.

### **From NCDOT: Applications Open for Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grants**

RALEIGH – The N.C. Department of Transportation is accepting applications from communities for the 2021 Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Initiative. The program provides funding for municipalities across the state to develop comprehensive bicycle or pedestrian plans. All North Carolina municipalities are eligible to apply for a standard bike or pedestrian plan. Additionally, the following options are available:

- Counties with populations of less than 50,000 may apply for a bicycle or pedestrian plan.
- Smaller municipalities with populations of less than 10,000 can also apply to develop combined bicycle and pedestrian plans.
- Municipalities with a population of less than 5,000 may apply for a Project Acceleration Plan – an abbreviated plan primarily focusing on priority project identification and implementation.

- Municipalities (and counties with populations of less than 50,000) with a bicycle or pedestrian plan may also apply to update their plan if it is at least five years old.

The deadline for applications, to be submitted electronically, is June 30 at 5 p.m. Award recipients will be notified by September 2021.

This program is sponsored by the department's Integrated Mobility Division and the Transportation Planning Division. Since 2004, approximately \$7 million have been awarded through this program to 226 municipalities and 6 counties statewide.

Proposals are divided and judged in geographical groups to help establish equitable distribution of funding across the state. Selected awardees commonly include a diverse mix of municipalities from large cities to small towns.

Plans funded are not for one specific project but represent a comprehensive strategy for expanding bicycle and pedestrian opportunities within a given municipality. The plans may address facilities, programs, policies, and design guidelines that encourage safe walking and bicycling.

A short webinar is scheduled for May 12, 2021 to describe the grant program and respond to any questions from potential applicants.

For more information on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Initiative, contact Bryan Lopez at 919-707-2606 or [balopez@ncdot.gov](mailto:balopez@ncdot.gov).

### **Craven Area Rural Transit System (CARTS) Fares Temporarily Suspended**

The Craven County Board of Commissioners approved a temporary suspension of Craven Area Rural Transit System (CARTS) fares from January 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021. Fares will resume July 1, 2021. CARTS is the public transit system covering the rural counties of Craven, Jones, and Pamlico as well as the New Bern urbanized area.

For more information visit the Craven County CARTS website at: <https://www.cravencountync.gov/165/Transportation-CARTS> or call (252) 636-4917.

### **Jacksonville Urban Area MPO (JUMPO) Expansion:**

The formal boundary expansion of JUMPO to include all of Onslow County will go into effect by May 7, 2021.

This will mean about 50,000 residents of rural Onslow County living in towns such as Swansboro, Richlands, Holly Ridge, and North Topsail Beach will no longer be a part of the Down East RPO.

The exit of Onslow County from DERPO will require updates to key DERPO documents (Memorandum of Understanding, TCC and TAC By-Laws, etc.), on which we are currently working on draft updates. More details will be forthcoming.



### **Tentative TCC Schedule for Remainder of 2021:**

To be held @ 10:00 AM online via Zoom for now; in-person meetings will eventually be held ECC 3rd Floor Conference Room, New Bern:

Tuesday, May 18th, 2021 (may be postponed until June)

Tuesday, July 20th, 2021

Tuesday, September 21st, 2021

Tuesday, November 23rd, 2021

### **Tentative TAC Schedule for Remainder of 2021:**

To be held @ 10:00 AM at the ECC 3rd Floor Conference Room, New Bern:

Tuesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (may be postponed until June)

Tuesday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Tuesday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Tuesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021

### **Comprehensive Transportation Plan Updates:**

Carteret County CTP: DERPO is working with Carteret County and NCDOT Transportation Planning Division to verify data for a Traffic Demand Model (TDM) for Carteret County. The TDM will play a key role in identifying the county's long-term transportation needs. TPD expects to complete the TDM by Fall 2021. Afterwards, work will begin on the CTP proper.

Craven County CTP: The document and maps for the Craven County CTP are complete and were first presented to the public in Havelock before the beginning of the COVID-19 quarantine, but further public meetings have been postponed until conditions allow for public meetings. The CTP will be presented to the Craven County Board of Commissioners on May 17, 2021.

### **SPOT 6.0 Update:**

The SPOT Office is currently scoring all projects; the scores should be released at the end of July. The August meeting of the SPOT Workgroup will determine the SPOT schedule beyond August 2021. Regional and Division projects will require the addition of local input points (LIPs), and our methodology to determine LIPs will also be due at the end of July. A SPOT Subcommittee has been set up to determine what would be the best methodology to use for LIPs and will subsequently propose which projects will receive points. The subcommittee will first meet on May 10, 2021 at the ECC Offices to discuss methodology.

### **STIP Project Updates:**

All Central Let STIP projects (DDRL, Raleigh Let, DB) through FY'25 (June 30, 2025) are approved to move forward with PE. In addition, Division Let STIP projects through FY'23 (June 30, 2023) are approved to move forward.

B-5938/B-5939 (Upgrades to Atlantic Beach and Emerald Isle Bridges): Work currently at 91.59% complete.

R-1015 (US 70 Havelock Bypass): Construction progress at 26.15% currently. Completion is tentatively scheduled for May 2024.

R-5777A/R-5777B/U-5713 (US 70 James City Improvements to east of Thurman Rd.): Construction progress at 16.62% currently. Completion tentatively scheduled for December 2023.

B-4863 (Harkers Island Bridge Replacement): The project proposes to replace Bridges No. 73 and 96 in Carteret County. Let date in FY 2022.

U-3431 (Miller Blvd. Widening in Havelock): Project development is no longer on hold. Right of Way (ROW) Date in February 2027; let date in September 2028.

R-5777C (US 70 Improvements from east of Thurman Rd. to Havelock Bypass): Currently in development. Let date scheduled for Winter 2022; completion of project in FY 2025.

U-5876 (Widening of US 70 between 4<sup>th</sup> St. in Morehead City and Radio Island; replacement of Newport River Bridge): Currently in development; project no longer on hold. Let date delayed to FY 2027.

R-3403B/R-2513A (Widening of US 17 from SR 1433 (Antioch Rd.) in Bridgeton to SR 1438 (Spruill Town Rd.) in Vanceboro): Let date of FY 2028.

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Two pedestrian crossings along NC 58 in Atlantic Beach (at E. Bogue Sound Dr. and Brooks St.) will receive Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs).

In Beaufort, the existing traffic signal at SR 1493 (Live Oak Street) at Campen Rd. will be improved by installing a pedestrian crossing with signal heads and a short section of sidewalk on each side of SR 1493 to tie into existing sidewalk on the west side and to tie into the Town of Beaufort sidewalk project on the east side.

In Morehead City, the signals at US 70 (Arendell St.) and Hestron Dr./Crystal Coast Plaza, and Arendell St. and SR 1237 (Harris Rd.)/Shopping Center will be improved with metal poles, mast arms, and dual red indication on Arendell St.

Along NC 24, new pavement markings and rumble strips will be installed between Taylor Notion Rd. in Cape Carteret and US 70 in Morehead City.

A roundabout will be created at the intersection of SR 1400 (River Rd.) and SR 1450 (Nelson Rd.) in Craven County.

# NCDOT TPD NEWS



NCDOT TPD Down East RPO & New Bern Area MPO Newsletter

May 2021

## Drone Bridge Inspection:

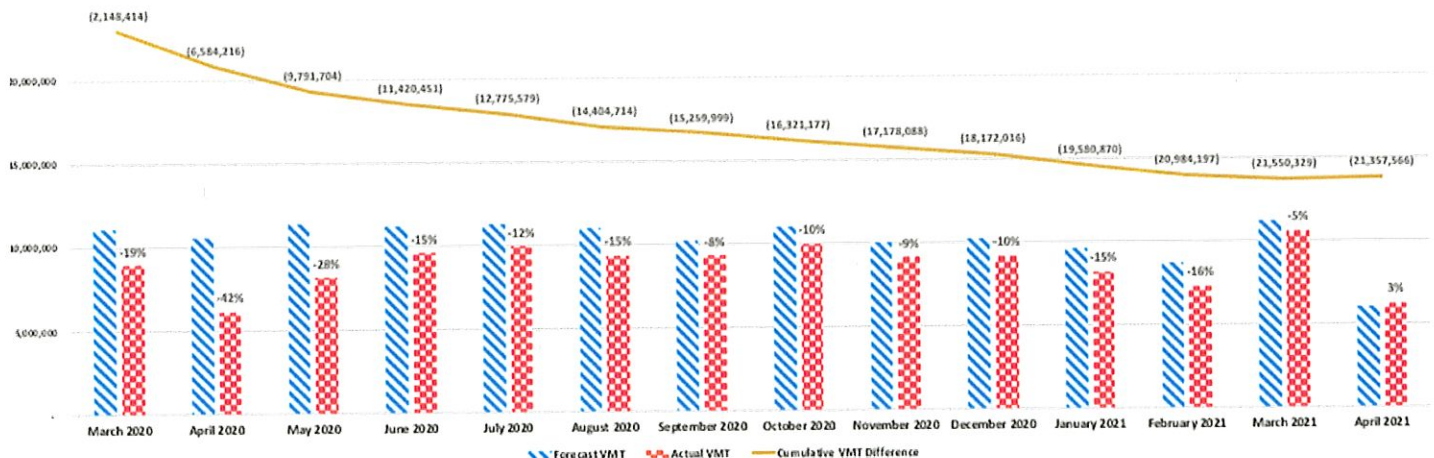
NCDOT has another new tool to help make our roadways safer – drones. Recently, the Marc Basnight Bridge over Oregon Inlet became the first bridge in the state where a drone was used as part of the structure's biennial inspection. Using drones to help conduct bridge inspections means they can be completed faster than a traditional visual inspection, saving money, and reduce the need for lane closures. While drones will not replace a traditional visual inspection in most instances, they will be used to supplement traditional inspections and add great benefit by being able to inspect areas of the bridge that are difficult to reach during a traditional inspection.

*"Connecting people, products and places safely and efficiently with customer focus, accountability and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy and vitality of North Carolina...."*

*- NCDOT Mission Statement*

## Travel Trends in NC During Covid-19

COVID19 Change in Travel in NC - Monthly VMT (1000s)  
As of 04/17/21





## Craven County CTP:

Craven County CTP will be presented to Craven County Board of Commissioners at the May 17th. The second public involvement session will be held at a future date.

## Carteret County Model:

The Base Year Model calibration was completed in March. Down East RPO is currently working on future population and employment growth projections in the county. Once that has been finalized, Future Year model validation can begin.

## Contact Us

Chris Connolly

NCDOT TPD

1 S. Wilmington Street  
Raleigh, NC

(919) 707-0958

cmconnolly@ncdot.gov

Visit us on the web

[www.ncdot.gov](http://www.ncdot.gov)

## State Giving Children in Need Record Number of Lifesaving Bike Helmets:

A record number of children, 11,850 total, across NC will be receiving lifesaving bicycle helmets through the NCDOT Bicycle Helmet Initiative. NCDOT uses funds from the sale of "Share the Road" specialty license plates to pay for bike helmets that are distributed at bicycle safety events for underprivileged children by government and non-government agencies. A record 163 organizations applied to participate in the program this year. Helmets will be delivered by April 30. Helmets can reduce the risk of severe brain injuries by nearly 90 percent.

## FHWA Releases Resources to Support Bikeway Selection :

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released two resources about bikeway selection. "Traffic Analysis and Intersection Considerations to Inform Bikeway Selection" examines bikeway selection trade-offs as they relate to intersections, including spatial needs, safety, equity, and traffic operations. "On-Street Motor Vehicle Parking and Bikeway Selection Process" discusses on-street parking considerations around bikeways, including strategies for various curb use and parking considerations. Both reports supplement the FHWA "Bikeway Selection Guide." [https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped\\_bike/tools\\_solve/](https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/tools_solve/)

Upcoming	Date
3rd Quarter invoice and work summary	May 10, 2021
TPD approves FY 22 UPWP and Indirect Cost Allocation Plan	June 29, 2021



January 29, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

American Heart Month, February 2021

(NEW Bern, N.C.) – In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson issued the first proclamation nine years after he had a heart attack. Since then, the president has annually declared February American Heart Month. The federally designated event reinforces the importance of heart health and the need for more research, with a reminder to get families, friends, and communities involved. It is a tradition that is over half a century strong.

With organizations such as the American Heart Association and others working together, millions of people are enjoying longer and healthier lives. But despite all the progress heart disease remains the single largest health threat to Americans.

Cardiovascular disease (heart disease and stroke combined) kills about \$2,300 a day. American Heart Association urges people to take care of their hearts year-round. Consider the facts:

- Heart disease kills more people than all forms of cancer combined.
- Heart attacks affect more people every year than the population of Dallas, Texas.
- 83% believe that heart attacks can be prevented but are not motivated to do anything.
- 72% of Americans do not consider themselves at risk for heart disease.
- 58% put no effort into improving their heart health.

The good news is that heart disease is preventable in most cases with healthy choices, which include not smoking, maintaining a healthy weight, controlling blood sugar and cholesterol, treating high blood pressure, getting at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity a week, and getting regular checkups.

The first Friday of the month, February 5<sup>th</sup>, is National Wear Red Day. Coast to coast, landmarks, news anchors, and neighborhoods will go red to raise awareness and support for heart disease. For more information visit [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org).

Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging is here to provide you with local resources for Living Healthy classes and support groups.

**End date of releases:** February 26, 2021

**Contact:** Carly Francis, Aging Program Consultant  
Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging  
252-638-3185 ext. 3015, [cfrancis@eccog.org](mailto:cfrancis@eccog.org)

###





**February**

**Is**

**American Heart Month**

Cardiovascular disease (heart disease and stroke combined) kills about 2,300 people a day. Consider the facts

- ❖ Heart disease kills more people than all forms of cancer combined.
- ❖ Heart attacks affect more people every year than the population of Dallas, Texas.
- ❖ 83% believe that heart attacks can be prevented but are not motivated to do anything.
- ❖ 72% of Americans do not consider themselves at risk for heart disease.
- ❖ 58% put no effort into improving their heart health.

The good news is that heart disease is preventable in most cases with healthy choices.

**February 5<sup>th</sup> is National Wear Red Day.** Go **Red** to raise awareness and support for heart disease.

For local information and resources contact:



**Eastern Carolina Council**

Area Agency on Aging

**Carly Francis**  
**Aging Program Consultant**  
**252-638-3185 ext. 3015**







February 26, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **National Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Month, March 2021**

(NEW BERN, N.C.)-Every March, for more than three decades, Brain Injury Awareness Month has been led by the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The goal is to educate the public about the incidence of brain injury and the needs of people with brain injuries and their families to:

- De-stigmatize brain injury through outreach within the brain injury community.
- Empower those who have survived brain injury and their caregivers.
- Promote the many types of support that are available to people living with brain injury.

Traumatic Brain Injuries in senior citizens are a growing concern, and far more common than you may think. In fact, among the leading reason behind TBIs is falls-which we all know are also one of several leading causes of serious injury in older adults. With nearly 775,000 current senior TBI survivors, it is necessary to take the appropriate steps now to ensure your loved ones remain safe from falls. These preventative measures can help:

- Assess the home environment and remove any fall hazards such as throw rugs, extension cords, and clutter or furniture blocking walking paths, and inadequate lighting.
- Make sure that older adults always take advantage of a cane or walker when advised by the doctor, to compensate for any muscular or balance deficits.
- Consult with a doctor about any potential medication side effects that may lead to dizziness or drowsiness, both of which boost fall risk.
- Make sure the senior you love receives an annual eye exam and that corrective lenses are always worn when prescribed.

Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging can provide you with local resources including Matter of Balance classes and support groups.

**End date of release:** March 31, 2021

**Contact:** Carly Francis, Aging Program Consultant  
Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging  
252-638-3185 ext. 3015, [cfrancis@eccog.org](mailto:cfrancis@eccog.org)

###

MARCH



MARCH



**March is**

## **National Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Month**

The Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) and the Centers for Disease Control Prevention (CDC) has made it their goal every March to educate the public about the incidence of brain injury and the needs of people with brain injuries and their families to:

- De-stigmatize brain injury through outreach within the brain injury community.
- Empower those who have survived brain injury and their caregivers.
- Promote the many types of support that are available to people living with brain injury.

Traumatic Brain Injuries in senior citizens are a growing concern. The leading reason behind TBIs is falls. Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging would like to remind you to take the appropriate steps now to ensure your loved ones remain safe from falls. These preventative measures can help:

- ❖ Assess the home environment and remove any fall hazards such as throw rugs, extension cords, and clutter or furniture blocking walking paths, and inadequate lighting.
- ❖ Make sure that older adults always take advantage of a cane or walker when advised by the doctor, to compensate for any muscular or balance deficits.
- ❖ Consult with a doctor about any potential medication side effects that may lead to dizziness or drowsiness, both of which boost fall risk.
- ❖ Make sure the senior you love receives an annual eye exam and that corrective lenses are always worn when prescribed.

For local information and resources contact:



**Carly Francis**  
**Aging Program Consultant**

**252-638-3185 ext. 3015**



February 26,2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **National Nutrition Month, March 2021**

(NEW BERN, N.C.) – National Nutrition Month was initiated in March 1973 by members of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics as a way to deliver nutrition education messages to the public. What makes seniors' nutrition such an important topic? Your food choices can have big impacts on your well-being. For instance, healthy eating habits can improve your energy levels, boost your immune system, and make you feel great inside and out. For some older adults, they can even help restore feelings of youthfulness. Simply put, good nutrition is essential for your physical health.

As people age, it is common for their metabolism and digestive systems to slow down. They also tend to become a little less active. Those are some of the main reasons why it is so important to get exercise and eat foods that are healthy. Nutrition for seniors is such a vital topic because knowing what and how much to eat can help you maximize your well-being. Depending on your activity level, it is generally recommended that men over the age of 50 should consume 2,000 to 2,800 calories per day. Women over the age of 50 should consume 1,600 to 2,200 calories per day. Eating right does not have to be complicated. Start with these recommendations for the **Dietary Guidelines for Americans:**

- Eat fruits and vegetables. They can be fresh, frozen, or canned. Eat more dark green vegetables such as leafy greens or broccoli, and orange vegetables such as carrots and sweet potatoes.
- Vary protein choices with more fish, beans, and peas.
- Eat at least three ounces of whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta every day. Choose whole grains whenever possible.
- Have three servings of low-fat or fat-free dairy (milk, yogurt, or cheese) that are fortified with vitamin D to help keep your bones healthy.
- Make the fats you eat polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats. Switch from solid fats to oils when preparing food.

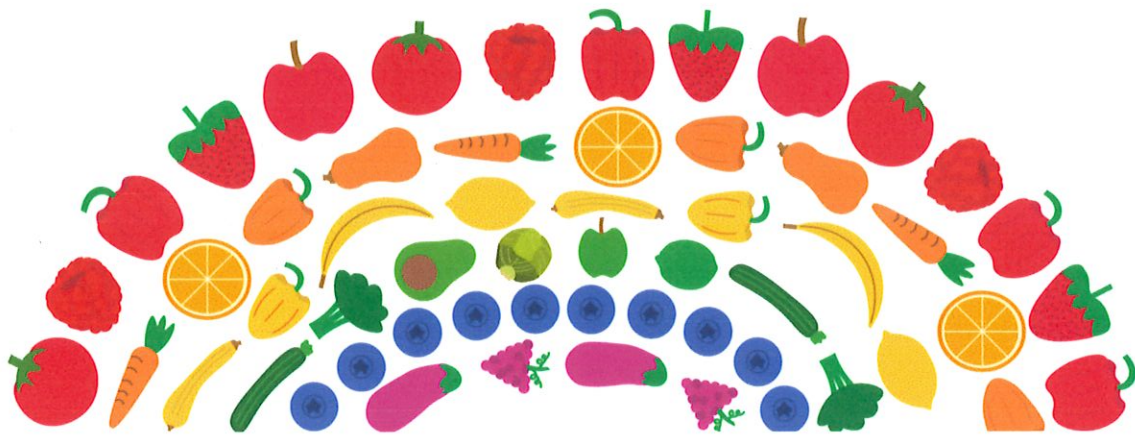
**Add Physical Activity:** Balancing physical activity and healthful diet are the best recipe for health and fitness. Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging is here to provide you with local resources for Living Healthy classes and support groups.

**End date of release:** March 31,2021

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###





**March**

### **is National Nutrition Month**

Food choices can have big impacts on your well-being. Healthy eating habits can improve your energy levels, boost your immune system, and make you feel great inside and out.

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**Eastern Carolina Council**  
Area Agency on Aging

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**252-638-3185 ext. 3015**



March 31, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **National Volunteer Month April 2021**

(NEW BERN, N.C.) National Volunteer Week debuted in the United States in 1974 and has continued to grow every year since. In his proclamation declaring National Volunteer Week, President Richard Nixon urged all Americans to observe the week by seeking out a volunteer opportunity. Since then, individuals, offices, schools, and teams volunteer their time to make their communities better.

In 2021, celebrating National Volunteer Week and Month will be different considering the COVID-19 pandemic that is keeping us all inside. For many of us, the most difficult challenge that COVID-19 presents are not social distancing or staying home, but rather sitting on the sidelines as we watch or read about the pain and suffering that the virus is causing throughout the world. Finding a way to help healthcare workers, working parents whose children are home from school, or the elderly can help ease anxiety and give you a positive way to channel those feelings. Research has confirmed what most of us know in our gut: Volunteering and helping others does not just help the people that you are giving your time and energy to; it can help you feel better, too. Volunteering can decrease feelings of depression, increase life satisfaction, and improve overall well-being.

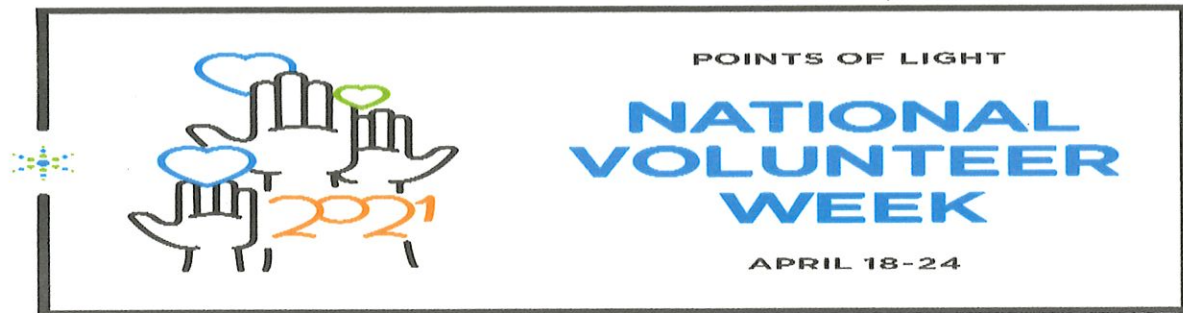
Our older population is especially vulnerable during this time. They may have trouble accessing food and services. They are also facing mental health challenges due to loneliness and isolation. Listed below are a few ideas to help senior citizens in your community:

- ❖ Delivering groceries or meals.
- ❖ Help at a food bank.
- ❖ Partner with a senior to help them with chores.
- ❖ Help with technology so they can stay connected.

Social media is a way to let people know you are willing to help. If you can shop and deliver groceries or run other errands, let your friends know or post on your neighborhood or community Facebook page. The AAA team at Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging is a great point of contact to help you find what is needed in your community.

End date of release: April 30, 2021

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Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging



**April**  
**Is**  
**National Volunteer Month**

Celebrating National Volunteer Month will be different considering the COVID-19 Pandemic that is keeping us all inside.

Our older population is especially vulnerable during this time. They may have trouble accessing food and services. They are also facing mental health challenges due to loneliness and isolation. Here are a few ideas to help senior citizens in your community.

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Social media is a way to let people know you are available to help. Let your friends know or post on your neighborhood or community Facebook page.

At the ECC we have volunteer opportunities available as a Community Advisor Committee (CAC) member with the Ombudsman Program.

For local information and resources contact:



**Angelia Pridgen**  
Lean Regional Ombudsman  
252-638-3185 ext. 3007

**Colby Smith**  
Regional Ombudsman  
252-638-3185 ext. 3010





March 31, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **April is National Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month**

(NEW BERN, N.C.) In 1817 James Parkinson published the first detailed description in an essay on the Shaking Palsy. Public awareness campaigns include World Parkinson's Day (on the birthday of James Parkinson, April 11) and the use of a red tulip as the symbol of the disease. People who have increased the public's awareness of the condition include the boxer Muhammad Ali, actor Michael J. Fox, Olympic cyclist Davis Phinney, and actor Alan Alda.

Parkinson's disease (PD) is a long-term degenerative disorder of the central nervous system that mainly affects the motor system. The cause remains largely unknown, but several factors appear to play a role, including: **Genes.** Researchers have identified specific genetic mutations that can cause Parkinson's disease. But these are uncommon except in rare cases with many family members affected by Parkinson's disease. **Environmental triggers.** Exposure to certain toxins or environmental factors may increase the risk of later Parkinson's disease.

Parkinson's disease typically occurs in people over the age of 60, of whom about one percent are affected. Males are more often affected than females. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention rated complications from PD as the 14<sup>th</sup> cause of death in the United States. Parkinson's disease signs and symptoms can be different for everyone, they may include:

- ❖ Tremor
- ❖ Slowed movement
- ❖ Rigid muscles
- ❖ Impaired posture and balance
- ❖ Speech changes
- ❖ Writing changes

Because the cause of Parkinson's is unknown, proven ways to prevent the disease also remain a mystery. Some research has shown that regular aerobic exercise might reduce the risk of PD.

If you or someone you know is suffering with Parkinson's disease, Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging can provide you with the resources and support groups in your area.

End date of release: April 30, 2021

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## **April is National Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month**

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurological disorder. This means symptoms continue and worsen over time. There are no cures-only treatment options to manage the symptoms.

One million Americans have PD. About 60,000 people are diagnosed with PD each year. Men are 1 ½ times more likely to have Parkinson's than women. The average age of PD onset is 60 years old. Signs and symptoms can be different for everyone, they may include:

- Tremor
- Slowed movement
- Rigid muscles
- Impaired posture and balance
- Speech changes
- Writing changes

The cause of Parkinson's is unknown, ways to prevent the disease also remain unknown. Some research has shown that regular aerobic exercise might reduce the risk of PD.

**Brought to you by:**



**252-638-3185**



April 30, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## May is Older Americans Month

(NEW BERN, N.C.) in 1963 President John F. Kennedy and members of the National Council of Senior Citizens met over concerns that a third of older Americans lived in poverty, and there were few programs to meet their needs. This led to designating May as "Senior Citizens Month," the prelude to "Older Americans Month."

Every May, the Administration for Community Living leads our nation's observance of Older Americans Month. The theme for 2021 is "**Communities of Strength**". Older adults have built resilience and strength over their lives through successes, failures, joys, and difficulties. Their stories and contributions help to support and inspire others. This Older Americans Month, we will celebrate the strength of older adults and the Aging Network, with special emphasis on the power of connection and engagement in building strong communities.

This year, Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging will celebrate Older Americans Month by encouraging community members to share their experiences. Together, we can find strength, and create a stronger future.

Here are some ways to share and connect:

- ❖ **Look for joy in the everyday:** Celebrate small moments and ordinary pleasures by taking time to recognize them. Start a gratitude journal and share it with others via social media or call a friend or family member to share a happy moment or to say thank you.
- ❖ **Reach out to neighbors:** Even if you cannot get together in person right now, you can still connect with your neighbors. Leave a small gift on their doorstep, offer to help with outdoor chores, or deliver a home cooked meal.
- ❖ **Build new skills:** Learning something new allows us to practice overcoming challenges. Take an art course online or try a socially distanced outdoor movement class to enjoy learning with others in your community.
- ❖ **Share your story:** There is a reason storytelling is a time-honored activity. Hearing how others experience the world helps us grow. Interviewing family, friends, and neighbors can open new conversations and strengthen our connections.

When people of different ages, backgrounds, abilities, and talents share experiences through action, story, or service we help build strong communities. And that is something to celebrate. Please join Eastern Carolina Council AAA in strengthening our community.

End date of Release: May 31, 2021

Contact: Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging  
252-638-3185





April 30, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**May 9<sup>th</sup> to June 20<sup>th</sup> is World Elder Abuse Awareness Month**

(NEW BERN, N.C.) On **June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006 World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD)** was launched by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and the World Health Organization at the United Nations to unite communities around the world in raising awareness about elder abuse. WEAAD serves as a call-to-action for our communities to raise awareness about abuse, neglect, and exploitation of elders, and reaffirm our country's commitment to the principle of justice for all.

When we come together, we can prevent elder abuse from happening. We can put support services in place, and direct community resources toward addressing elder abuse.

Elder abuse is widespread. Every year an estimated 1 in 10 older Americans are victims of elder abuse, neglect, or exploitation. And that's only part of the picture: Experts believe that elder abuse is significantly under-reported, in part because so many of our communities lack the social supports that would make it easier for those who experience abuse to report it. Research suggests that as few as 1 in 14 cases of elder abuse come to the attention of authorities.

The good news is that we can prevent and address the issue of elder abuse. There are many ways to strengthen our social supports through policies, services, and programs that keep us integrated in our communities as we age.

- ❖ We can design and equip community centers to work as intergenerational spaces that allow older people to build relationships and participate in the work, play, and life of our neighborhoods.
- ❖ We can think about the role of transportation in reducing social isolation and adjust systems so that we can all continue to move throughout our communities as we age.
- ❖ We can figure out new and better ways to arrange and coordinate the teams, agencies, and programs that work specifically with older people.
- ❖ We can develop programs to educate families and professionals who work with older adults to understand the importance of preventing isolation, how to spot the warning signs of abuse, and what to do to address abuse or neglect.

By doing all that we can to strengthen the social support structure, we can reduce social isolation, protect communities and families against elder abuse, and build a nation that lives up to our promise of justice for all.

End date of release: June 30, 2021

Contact: Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging  
252-638-3185

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## June is National Safety Awareness Month

Seniors and their loved ones should consider taking this month to review their daily habits and see what needs to be improved. From a slip and fall at home to a natural disaster, anything can happen at any time.

This June, **Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging** would like to provide you with safety tips to make you home safer, and to start preparing for hurricane season.

### Make Your Home Safer

- ❖ Clear your floor: Remove clutter, small furniture, pet gear, and electrical cords. Throw rugs and anything else that might cause someone to trip.
- ❖ Arrange or remove furniture so there is plenty of room for walking.
- ❖ Put essential items where they are easy to reach.
- ❖ Add grab bars inside and outside of your bathtub or shower and next to the toilet.
- ❖ Put railings on both sides of the stairs, and make sure stairs and hallways have good lighting.
- ❖ Make sure outdoor areas are well lit and walkways are smooth and free of puddles and ice.
- ❖ Use a cane or walker if necessary.

### Preparing for Hurricane Season

- ❖ Create a contact list: Make a list of people and places you can turn to for support in an emergency.
- ❖ Prep for power outages: Ask your health care providers how to prepare for power outages, especially if you depend on medical devices that use electricity.
- ❖ Make a list of all medications and medical supplies: Include dosages and allergies. Keep extra eyeglasses, hearing-aid batteries and at least a week's supply of all prescription medicines in your emergency kit.
- ❖ Plan for transportation: Have a plan in case you need to evacuate.
- ❖ Plan for pets and service animals: Include food, medications, and other supplies your pets may need in your emergency kit.
- ❖ Pack the essentials: in addition to your medical information and needs, do not forget essentials such as non-perishable food, water, a weather radio, a flashlight, extra batteries, blankets, cash, clothing. Keep your emergency kit in an easy-to-access location.