



CAPE FEAR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Operations Center Dedicated

After over ten years of planning, design, engineering, land acquisition, permitting, funding securement, and construction, the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority dedicated the Wave Transit Operations Center on April 30, 2015. The project was funded by generous support from the Federal Transit Administration, the North Carolina Department of Transportation, the City of Wilmington and New Hanover County.

Located in an industrial area in the shadow of downtown Wilmington, the \$13.5 million, 36,000 square foot facility serves as a crowning achievement to the region's commitment to public transportation. The Operations Center houses over one hundred Authority and contract bus and van operators, and maintenance personnel.



The facility was designed to meet LEED Gold standards and includes a number of sustainable initiatives including: geothermal air conditioning; radiant floor heating; LED lighting; low flow fixtures; and a compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling station.

Amenities include: employee wellness and fitness center; physician office; training areas; automated bus wash; diesel and gasoline fueling facility; vehicle lifts; and enhanced employee parking. The Operations Center allowed the Wave Transit bus garage on Castle Street and the Paratransit operations center located on Division Drive to be housed in a single facility. Both facilities had exceeded their useful life and had become prohibitively expensive to maintain.

The facility dedication included keynote remarks from FTA Region IV Administrator Dr. Yvette Taylor. Other speakers included: Wilmington Mayor Bill Saffo; NHC Commission Chair Jonathan Barfield, Jr.; and NCDOT Public Transportation Division Director Debbie Collins.



Compressed Natural Gas Vehicles

Upon completion of a \$1.1 million compressed natural gas fueling (CNG) station, the Authority welcomed six new vehicles to its fleet in June. The CNG vehicles will reduce fuel costs while minimizing Wave's carbon footprint. Four additional buses are scheduled for delivery in February 2016. Funding for thirteen additional replacement CNG buses is being sought. The Authority is confident that CNG will provide years of reduced costs and emissions reductions.



The vehicles were funded with support from FTA, NCDOT and the City of Wilmington. The complete Compressed Natural Gas report is available at the following URL: http://www.wavetransit.com/Portals/0/documents/CNG_Fuel_Evaluation.pdf.

Authority Members

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New Hanover County Board of Commissioners

Honorable Kevin O'Grady
Wilmington City Council
Vice Chairman

Jeff Petroff, PE
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Don Betz
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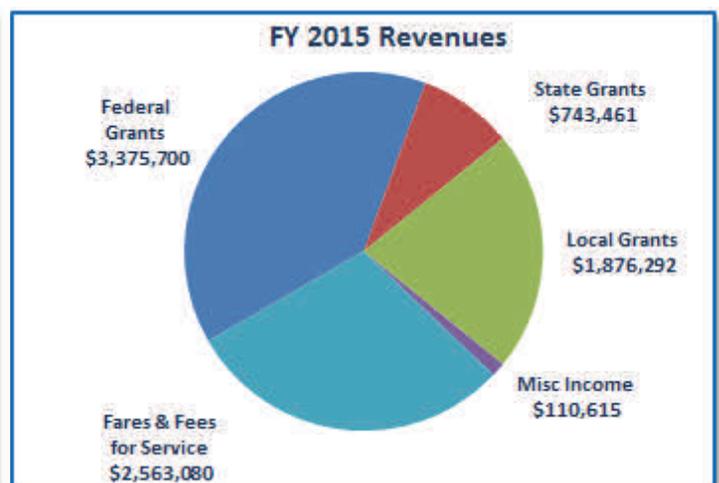
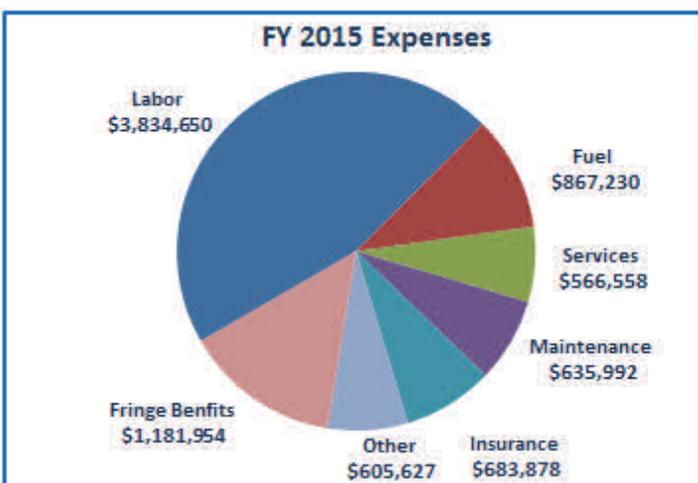
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Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Operating Revenues & Expenses

In FY 2015, actual charges for transportation services represented over 29.6% of all revenues. The Authority's annual audit report is available online at: http://www.wavetransit.com/Portals/0/documents/FY_15_Audit.pdf.



Wave Launches Regional Elderly & Disabled Program

Recent changes to US transportation law shifted federal elderly and disabled transportation program funding from the states to the local communities. This led to the Authority being named designated recipient for FTA §5310 programming in June 2015. A new requirement of the change required FTA approval of a *Program Management Plan* (http://www.wavetransit.com/Portals/0/documents/5310_PMP.pdf). The plan outlines the steps Wave Transit will take to program FTA §5310 funding in the region.

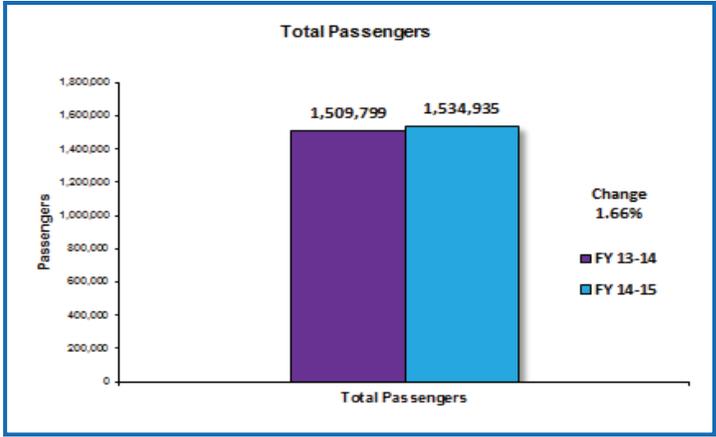
A key element of the approved *Program Management Plan* includes the engagement of a Mobility Manager to administer the elderly and disabled transportation program. This led to the hiring of the Authority's first Mobility Manager, Vanessa Lacer in December 2015. Ms. Lacer brings a wealth of experience and education to the position. Most recently she served as the Authority's NCDOT apprentice.

Community involvement is a key element of the elderly & disabled program. The new program will begin with an update of the *Local Coordinated Plan* which is developed with significant input from local stakeholders. Travel training, outreach, public relations and community involvement will be incorporated into the program as it evolves.



Fiscal Year 2015 Ridership

Overall ridership showed a 1.66% increase from FY 14 to FY 15. Ridership on the Seahawk Shuttle increased 5.30% which reflects a growing student population. Intercity transportation from Forden Station grew over 30% from FY 14 to FY 15. Revenue from intercity transportation reduces the Authority's reliance on subsidies.



Wave Transit Welcomes New Operations Director

In September 2015, the Authority announced the promotion of Michael Williams to serve in the role of Director of Operations. Mr. Williams most recently served as Wave Transit's Paratransit Manager. Mr. Williams started in the transit industry as a bus operator and worked in a variety of positions within transit operations in Blacksburg, VA and York, PA before coming to Wave Transit. Mr. Williams holds a Bachelor of Arts from Virginia Tech University and is a 2014 graduate of the Transportation Leadership Development Program through the NCSU Institute for Transportation Research and Education.



**SUPPORT THE MAKING WAVES FOUNDATION
DONATE ONLINE AT
WWW.WAVETRANSIT.COM/MAKINGWAVES**

In 2015 the Making Waves Foundation received donations totaling over \$8,060 and granted requests for reduced transportation services for 5,046 trips. The foundation continues to deliver upon its mission to provide assistance to members of the community in need who otherwise would not have access to transportation. Your tax deductible donation can make a difference in Southeastern NC.

Looking Ahead 2016

2016 Planning Efforts

Following adoption of Cape Fear Transportation 2040 by the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO), Wave Transit is preparing to begin its latest short range plan. The plan will set a course for public transportation initiatives, route structure and revenue programming for the next five years. The plan will also encompass a financial element to ensure that transit programs are compliant with FTA rules and regulations.



Under the direction of the Authority's Operations and Planning Committee made up of Board members, staff, WMPO planners, passengers, interested citizens, and professional transit planning consultants, the 12-18 month plan is an important tool in meeting the public transportation needs of the community. Marketing, public relations and community support for financing transit in Southeastern North Carolina will also be a focus of the plan. A key component of the plan will be extensive surveying to assess the needs of current and prospective passengers.

A separate initiative to analyze long term revenue stability of Wave Transit has also been proposed by the City of Wilmington. This effort is critical to the long term financial health of the Authority which currently has no source of dedicated funding.

Multimodal Transportation Center

Over twenty years in the making, the Downtown Wilmington Multimodal Transportation Center (WMMTC) is close to becoming a reality. As the North Carolina Department of Transportation nears completion land acquisition for the transit portion of the project, the Authority is ramping up planning and design efforts for its third multi million dollar facility project in five years.



Envisioned as a rail, intercity bus, local transit, and taxi complex, the transit portion of the project, consisting of an transfer hub with bike and pedestrian amenities, is being finalized. The WMMTC will dramatically improve pedestrian and transit passenger safety by moving the current transfer location off street. The project will also include upgraded passenger amenities including restrooms; indoor waiting areas; and customer service representatives.

The project will also enhance the recently constructed Third Street corridor through Downtown Wilmington while respecting the historic character by refurbishing the former Neuwirth building which was constructed in 1948. The phased project includes: demolition of the former U-Haul building; and stabilizing, repairing and renovating the former Neuwirth building to its original design.

Partial funding for the project has been secured and construction funding is in the final stages of approval. The WMMTC is expected to open within twenty-four months.