

The Wilmington Urban Area Multi-Modal Transportation Center Feasibility Study



Aerial photograph of the Atlantic Coast Line RR Shops and Office Complex, circa 1950.
Courtesy of the Wilmington Rail Road Museum Foundation, INC.

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Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wilmington Area Multi-Modal Transportation Center Feasibility Study has two overarching goals, to identify the need for a multi-modal facility in the Wilmington Urban Area and to identify the best location for a facility if it is determined to be needed and feasible. Based on the contribution of companion studies of parking needs in downtown Wilmington and rail passenger service between Charlotte and Wilmington and Raleigh and Wilmington the study determined the community would benefit from combining the transportation terminal facilities for a variety of local and inter-city transportation modes.

The transportation modes that would benefit most from the center are the Wilmington Transit Authority (WTA), intercity rail passenger service, intercity bus service and other modes such as tourist transportation and taxi service. Section 2, *Origin of the Multi-modal Transportation Center Concept*, noted that the current interest in intermodal facilities was stimulated by the two major transportation bills enacted by the US Congress in the 90s, the ISTEA act of 1990 and TEA 21 act adopted in 1998. The legislation represented a coordinated effort to find effective transportation strategies to attack growing congestion and continuing air quality problems. The multi-modal center was seen as a means of improving the effectiveness of various transit systems and, thus, making them more attractive to both the discretionary and dependent traveler.

In developing the site selection study for the Multi-modal center, land use, downtown and transportation plans were reviewed to identify public commitments that could help determine the best site for the facility's location.

Because the Multi-modal facility would represent a significant public investment, a committee of community leaders was appointed to guide the planning process. As discussed in Section 3, *Process to Further Define the Multi-modal Transportation Center Concept*, the Steering Committee contained a variety of private citizens and governmental officials who reviewed the results of the Consultant's work efforts and provided guidance leading to a recommendation suited to the needs of a majority of the area's citizens. The committee had six meetings over a twelve-month period plus another two additional meetings where the City's project manager and the consultant conducted a public open house and also a special meeting with the Cape Fear Community College.

In Section 4 of this report, *Findings*, a series of benefits of the multi-modal Center are defined including increased convenience and opportunity for the public to transfer between modes, improved comfort of the public and an increased opportunity to develop a combined facility for several modes that is more economical than separate facilities. The results of a survey of transportation operators were also reported. The survey was directed toward defining the requirements of the operators for a jointly developed multi-modal center. Questions delved into the type of building space needed to support their operations, the number of vehicles that would use the facility and other characteristics such as the number of parking spaces. Altogether about 14,500 square feet of building space would be required for transportation purposes along with parking for about 220 vehicles. The primary transportation modes to be served are buses operated by the WTA and an intercity line plus future passenger trains.

A site recommended in the *Wilmington Downtown Plan: Vision 2020*, was identified as one of the alternative locations for the facility. The site is located north of Red Cross Street and between two buildings on the campus of the Cape Fear Community College is also across Nutt Street from the Wilmington Railroad Museum. Due to the proximity of the two neighbors, the space study for the transportation center included estimates of floor space and facilities for the expansion of the College and Museum.

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Joining the site on Red Cross Street were three additional alternative sites as optional locations for the center. The three additional sites were located in Navassa, Brunswick County; on a tract near the Airport in New Hanover County and on property owned by the Carroll Carolina Company at the south end of the downtown. A series of 14 criteria were defined to evaluate the potential effectiveness of the four competing locations. The consultant studied the sites and developed an evaluation matrix that showed the performance of the four sites compared to the criteria. The Steering Committee reviewed the matrix and determined the Red Cross Street site performed best in meeting the criteria. The preferred site was adjacent to the core of the downtown, the largest concentration of trip attractors in the region. The Carroll Carolina site was eliminated due to additional travel time and potential community impacts. The Navassa site may serve as a flag stop on a future intercity rail line but was too far removed from the service core to serve as an effective bus transfer center. Similarly, the Airport site was found to have significant cost disadvantages as a bus transfer site for WTA.

During the Steering Committee's discussion of the alternative sites it was determined that the study process should consider another alternative to the site on Red Cross Street. The Cape Fear Community College urged the consideration of a site located between 3rd and 4th Streets along the route of the former railroad tracks and adjacent to the Red Cross Street site.

Conceptual site plans and comparative cost estimates were prepared for the two adjoining sites. The sites were also compared to the fourteen site location criteria and an evaluation matrix was prepared. The preliminary cost estimates (based on concept plans) indicate that the Police Headquarters site may be somewhat less expensive than the other site to develop as a multi-modal transportation center. The costs for the Police Headquarters site, however, includes an integrated multi-use complex as shown in the concept plans. The cost of the transportation facilities portion of the \$22 million complex may fall in the range of \$8.9 million. If the transportation facilities were built as a stand-alone center, its costs would change. The degree of the change was not determined in the study. The alternative site on 3rd to 4th Streets would cost in the range of \$10.8 million. Due to the site's location and lack of opportunity for joint development with College or Museum space, the cost estimates reflect only the transportation facilities.

After reviewing the information the Steering Committee recommended that the Red Cross Street site, also referred to as the Police Headquarters site, be selected as the location for the Multi-modal Transportation Center. Their recommendation was based on the following points:

- It is feasible to accommodate passenger rail service, inter- and inner-city bus service, in combination with expansion space for the Cape Fear Community College and a new home for the Wilmington Railroad Museum,
- This site is the historic location for rail service in Wilmington,
- A multi-modal center on this site is in an adopted Downtown Plan,
- The center's chances of success at this location are greater because of its being a focal point and a gateway transitioning into the downtown area of Wilmington, and
- The Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center has the potential to be one of the premier transportation centers in America based on the collection of uses proposed for the selected Police Headquarters site.

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Therefore, it is the conclusion of this report that the most feasible site for a multi-modal transportation center in the Wilmington Urban Area is the site where the current Wilmington Police Headquarters is located.

As documented in the introduction to the Wilmington Urban Area Transportation Plan 1999-2025 (adopted in 1999), once this study is adopted by the Wilmington Urban Area MPO Transportation Advisory Committee, it will become incorporated into the Wilmington Urban Area Transportation Plan 1999-2025 by reference.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the study is to determine the feasibility of placing a multi-modal transportation center within one of the member jurisdictions of the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization. At the same time that this study was being performed, studies were also underway for Wilmington's downtown parking needs and for passenger rail service between Charlotte and Wilmington and Raleigh and Wilmington. Multi-modal transportation centers usually provide a means of enhancing transit ridership and operations efficiency by providing a high traffic bus transfer center.

This study has determined that it is feasible and more efficient to coordinate a Wilmington Transit Authority (WTA) transfer facility with other public transportation modes (rail and inter-city bus). Had the earlier phases of the study determined that an integrated rail and WTA transfer facility was not feasible or desirable, then this study would have identified separate sites for a multimodal transportation center, (to include passenger rail, intercity bus, some WTA services and other modes) and a main WTA transfer center.

Some of the key objectives addressed in this study are:

- Provide facilities for future intercity passenger rail service.
- Improve transfer facilities for Wilmington Transit Authority (WTA) users.
- Connect transportation modes with the Downtown core, particularly for pedestrians.
- Address needs of tourists and the tourism industry in Wilmington.
- Coordinate transit facilities with the assessment of parking needs and location of parking facilities.
- Assess tradeoffs among the various functions and locations.
- Identify a preferred location for further implementation and analysis.

In defining an approach to develop the plan's study process, a scope of services was outlined. As in many planning efforts the scope was revised during the course of the work effort to reflect unanticipated results. The revised approach included the following tasks. Task 1 called for the review of transit data from the Wilmington Transit Authority and the assessment of interest and need of other transportation providers for a multi-modal center. Task 2 required an assessment of the inter-modal facility's needs for both space and function. In Task 3 the alternative sites were identified and evaluated as locations competing for the center. An open house was conducted in Task 4 to receive comments from the public regarding the function and location decision. In subsequent tasks the study team evaluated an additional site recommended by the Cape Fear Community College prior to making final recommendations. The final recommendations in this report are, therefore, the results of an open planning process that has considered a variety of transportation functions and locations for the multi-modal transportation center.

2. ORIGIN OF THE MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION CENTER CONCEPT

In the 50 years since the end of World War II, a revolution of how people travel, live and work has reshaped the nation's economic, social and physical structure. Once separate, compact cities have spread over the countryside as economic prosperity, cheap fuels and the ubiquitous automobile permitted the public to travel greater distances in maintaining functional regional economies. The cycle of spreading land use patterns, highway construction and use of the automobile for virtually every out-of-home trip have had the effect of increasing congestion, slowing travel and increasing unhealthy air pollution.

The US Congress recognized the dire consequences of the national transportation trends and passed the transportation act of 1990 that began the redirection of transportation policy from a fixation on highway construction for the automobile to a more balanced approach that included greater emphasis on alternative travel modes. In the subsequent transportation act of 1998 Congress reinforced the new transportation policy that encourages a balanced strategy of providing options to the privately operated vehicle. Optional travel modes include urban transit (bus and train), increased occupancy in private vehicles, and improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities. At a larger scale, rail travel between cities has also received attention especially at the state level in North Carolina. The active planning and implementation of rail service connecting the major urban centers in North Carolina is ahead of most of its peer states in the Southeast.

The development of multi-modal transportation centers have been one of the key tools used by many local, regional and state governments to assist the patrons of the alternative travel modes. By improving connectivity of the modes, both the public consumer and the mode operators have benefited; the user by improved convenience and the operator by controlled costs with shared facilities.

While moderate sized communities like Wilmington have been spared the excesses of sprawl, congestion and pollution affecting larger metropolitan centers, the Cape Fear region, none the less, faces transportation issues of equal local importance that are in scale with the region. City, county and regional governments have addressed the issues with the planning and implementation tools at their disposal.

Land use plans and regional transportation plans in the Wilmington Urban Area recommend the development of intermodal transportation programs and some specifically include provisions for a multi-modal transportation center. A comprehensive review of the adopted plans for the Wilmington Urban Area revealed that there is support for a multi-modal transportation center in the community.

- Wilmington Downtown Plan: Vision 2020 (October 1997): This plan lists as a primary goal the creation and development of an Intermodal Transportation Terminal in coordination with the development of the Cape Fear Community College (CFCC). The Intermodal Transportation Terminal is depicted in the plan at the intersection of Front and Red Cross Streets. The proposed facility would serve as a terminus for an inter-city rail line, a turnabout for shuttle bus and regular bus services, and a multi-level parking structure (containing 600-750 parking spaces).
- Wilmington Urban Area Transportation Plan (1999): The plan supplements the 1996 Urban Area Thoroughfare Plan with a long range bicycle and pedestrian, transit, and travel demand management plan components. The location of the Wilmington Multi-modal Transportation Center is referenced as being determined by this current study and that it will be incorporated into the Wilmington Urban Area transportation plan under separate cover. The plan also emphasizes the importance of travel demand management strategies, expanding transit service, and recommends transit supportive land use planning. All these components are consistent with the need for a multi-modal transportation center.
- NCDOT Intercity Passenger Rail Studies (1999): A master planning program directed by the North Carolina Rail Council and the Rail Sub-Committee of the state Board of Transportation. The goal of the planning process is to expand the rail passenger service to an eventual intrastate network, will be the high profile backbone for the statewide, public transportation system. The master plan shows rail service that will eventually include the City of Wilmington. A study has been initiated to develop

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proposals for service to eastern North Carolina that would be integrated with the state's Intrastate Rail Passenger Service Plan.

- Wilmington – New Hanover County Draft Comprehensive Plan 1997- 2010 (November 1998): This plan encourages intermodalism and development of travel modes that are alternatives to automotive travel. The economic development portion promotes increased rail transportation. This plan does not specifically address the need for or the location of a Multi-modal Transportation Center.
- Thoroughfare Plan for the Wilmington Urban Area (1996): While this plan does have a Multi-modal Recommendations section, it does not specifically address the need for or location of a Multi-modal Transportation Center. However, the plan does call for further study of some transit alternatives that were recommended at the public meetings.
- Downtown Parking Facilities Plan (January 1999): This plan makes specific recommendations on the location of new parking structures and lots in the downtown area. It also makes recommendations on the reconstruction of existing parking structures and the management (to include funding) of the city's parking program. This plan does not specifically address the need for or location of a Multi-modal Transportation Center.

3. PROCESS TO FURTHER DEFINE THE MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION CENTER CONCEPT

The process to further define the location of a multi-modal transportation center in the Wilmington Urban Area took almost a year and consisted of six Steering Committee meetings, an open house presentation to the public, and a special presentation to the Planning Committee of the Cape Fear Community College. The goal of the Group Participation Plan was to provide a framework within which the consultant was able to secure advice and input regarding the study process and its findings. To the extent practical, the study also developed broad-based policy support or buy-in for study recommendations.

3.1 GROUP PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT (STEERING COMMITTEE) PROCESS

This planning study to define the character and location of multi-modal transportation center called for the multi-disciplinary team approach. The policy ramifications of the center's planning decisions on local and regional transportation management necessitated participation by senior representatives of a variety of organizations with clearly defined roles in a collaborative decision-making process. This type of decision-making is most effectively and efficiently secured through a "Steering Committee" process that guides the consultant.

The Steering Committee for this planning study adhered to the following guidelines:

- Review and act on recommendations of the consultant;
- Provide credibility to study (for acceptance by Wilmington MPO Transportation Advisory Council);
- Assist in promoting policy and other changes needed for implementation of recommendations;
- Provide insight into how the public and decision-makers perceive problems and issues;
- Provide insight into how the public and decision-makers may respond to different sites;
- Assist in identifying critical issues and potential obstacles associated with any particular site;
- Assist in dealing with study process issues that could affect the study's outcome or schedule; and
- Promote regional cooperation.

3.2 COMPOSITION OF STEERING COMMITTEE

The steering committee was comprised of representatives from the following agencies and organizations:

- Wilmington Planning and Engineering Departments
- Wilmington Railroad Museum Foundation
- Wilmington Transit Authority
- Wilmington Chamber of Commerce
- Wilmington Passenger Rail Committee
- New Hanover County Transportation Services
- New Hanover County Planning Department
- NC DOT Public Transportation
- NC DOT Rail Division
- Greyhound/Trailways
- Port City Taxi
- Cape Fear Coastal Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Downtown Convention Center
- Leland Town Council
- DARE (Downtown Revitalization)
- Cape Fear Community College

3.3 STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The approach to achieve the study's objectives included the regular participation of the Steering Committee. Meetings were structured so that the technical conclusions of each phase became a decision point for guiding the subsequent phases of the study. The Steering Committee met at key decision-making

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milestones throughout the Study. At the meetings, the committee discussed the information previously sent to them for review and approved or revised recommendations based on the information and their own understanding of relevant issues.

Meetings were held in April, June, August, October (Open House), November (CFCC presentation), and December of 1999, and then in March and once more in April of 2000. Meeting notes for each meeting are included in Appendix A to this report.

The meetings were structured so that the decisions were made and the following critical information was clearly understood by the steering committee:

1. Facility Needs Assessment – The first meeting of the committee (in April 1999) addressed the need for the multi-modal center and identified likely transportation participants in the facility. Alternative sites were also discussed as the original intent of the study to investigate downtown sites was broadened to look at regional optional locations. The consultant helped identify the advantages, disadvantages and issues regarding a multimodal transportation facility for the Wilmington Urban Area.
2. Facility Feasibility and Site Identification – At the second meeting (in June 1999), the consultant outlined the functions that could be accommodated in the multimodal center. Space and associated needs for each transportation mode were estimated, and location requirements identified. Alternative sites to be evaluated for the center were also discussed and agreed upon. Because one of the alternative sites recommended in the Downtown Plan, the Police Headquarters site, was adjacent to the Cape Fear Community College, an assessment of the college's needs were included in a draft of the space report. The need to consider the college's needs was heightened since the Downtown Plan identified the site to be jointly developed by the college and the multi-modal center. Also included in the draft report was another community-related facility near the police headquarters site, the Wilmington Railroad Museum. Needs for the museum's relocation was identified as well.
3. Refined Facility Needs and Site Evaluation – In the third meeting (in August 1999) the Steering Committee reviewed the revised space report and discussed the consultant's evaluation of the four alternative sites. The committee subsequently reviewed the information and selected preliminarily the Police Headquarters site. A public review of both the process and the preferred site was set for an open house to be held in October 1999.
4. Open House – The open house was held on October 13, 1999 at the Coastline Convention Center. Information provided at the session described the four sites considered for the multi-modal center. The evaluation of the sites was provided along with the rationale of why the Selection Committee favored the Police Headquarters site.
5. Meeting With the Cape Fear Community College Planning Committee – At a meeting in November 1999, representatives of the college outlined their fears of developing the Police Headquarters site as the Multi-modal Transportation Center. Their concerns focused on the center blocking the college's ability to connect the two halves of the campus located to the north and south of the path of the former railroad tracks. Additional concerns dealt with the fear of high levels of noise, increased street congestion, exacerbation of pedestrian safety and loss of parking. The college pointed out the connection of the two halves of their campus had been a fixture of their plans for years. It was also discussed that the Downtown Plan envisioned the college and the center sharing the site with each entity achieving their stated function.
6. Review of the Committee's Previous Support for the Police Headquarters Site – The fourth meeting of the Steering Committee (in December 1999) focused on the committee's previous decision and the college's opposition to the Police Headquarters Site. The discussion identified the following points:
 7. The downtown as the best place for the multi-modal center;
 8. The Downtown Plan identified the Police Headquarters Site to be jointly developed for the college and the multi-modal center; and

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9. This study should consider an alternative site promoted by the college located on the former coastline tracks between 3rd and 4th Streets.
10. Additional Discussion – The fifth meeting of the Steering Committee in March 2000 addressed the consultant’s comparative analysis of the Police Headquarters Site and the alternative site between 3rd and 4th Streets. Included in the meeting were presentations by representatives of the college and the owner of one of the alternative sites previously rejected by the Selection Committee. The committee directed the consultant to prepare the draft final report for the final meeting of the Committee set for April 2000.
11. Final Committee Meeting, Final Recommendation – (To be added after the April 11, 2000 meeting.)

4. FINDINGS

4.1 BENEFITS OF A MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION CENTER

The multi-modal center forms the point of convergence for various transportation modes. Depending on the transportation modes it can accomplish some or all of the following functions:

- Increased convenience for transferring passengers (decreased transfer times and walking distances) by the integration of several transportation modes and/or routes into one facility. This improves mobility for captive riders, and may encourage riders with a choice to use transit.
- Increased opportunities to transfer between or within modes that may not be feasible without the terminal (for example, between local transit and intercity services). This can also lead to an increase in ridership.
- Improved comfort for boarding passengers by providing protection from weather and other passenger amenities. Again, an increase in choice ridership can result.
- Elimination or alleviation of many of the problems associated with on-street bus operations, such as traffic congestion, sidewalk congestion, insufficient curb space, illegal parking or standing at bus stops and exhaust emissions.
- The integration of several modes into one facility can offer improved amenities for all modes and their users which otherwise would not be economically feasible in separate facilities. More intensive use and activity over more hours (particularly after dark) also provide improved security for passengers.
- By aggregating or concentrating services into a single location, a larger facility is required. In addition to the size, there may be the opportunity to incorporate highly visible and attractive architectural features. The facility can therefore serve as a focal point and provide an improved image for public transportation. It can also make a statement about the commitment to a high-quality public transportation service.
- A larger, attractive terminal can also act as a focal point for other activities, improving the opportunity for incorporating private and public uses and activities into the facility. Joint development can help offset the cost of the terminal, and the increased activity can increase passenger security.
- As a land use planning strategy to influence local land use decisions. One example of this is the transit terminal acting as a catalyst for development in economically distressed areas. Another example would be to commit a terminal as a nucleus for a transit-oriented development in which commercial developers would be required to locate and design buildings to provide convenient access to the transit center. The latter more typically applies to the planning of major suburban activity centers.

4.2 TRANSPORTATION FUNCTIONS AND SITE REQUIREMENTS

The transportation uses in the multi-modal center would be composed of internal and external space. Depending upon the final site chosen and the final number of transportation modes involved in the center, the total maximum site space requirements may be reduced by combining common areas such as lobby space, hallways and restrooms.

Areas outside the building would be required for rail platforms, tracks, bus loading operations, car parking (long and short term), express package vehicle parking, bicycle parking, taxi parking, and vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian circulation. Some of the outside area must also be allocated for landscaping depending upon the layout of the site. This report excludes the amount of area needed for the circulation of vehicles and pedestrians, as they are often a function of the building's design and its relationship to the public rights-of-

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way. Stacking transportation facilities at different levels or floors in the structure may also reduce the actual land space required. This is particularly relevant for sites such as the Police Headquarters site that has substantial changes in elevations between the adjoining streets and the path of the former tracks.

Finally, other non-transportation functions may be appropriate for co-locating with the multi-modal transportation center. These could include office, retail and public uses. No matter what conceptual plans are developed for a multi-modal transportation center at this time, they should be made with provisions for accommodating growth in service by each transportation mode and in public services specific to the Wilmington Urban Area.

This report assumes that rail is the primary transportation mode around which other transportation modes and non-transportation uses will be analyzed to determine the feasibility of combining some or all in one facility. Intracity rail service is bound to use of railroad tracks that have very clear limits for their location and connection to the rail network linking Wilmington to the rest of North Carolina. The bus mode, on the other hand, has a considerable degree of flexibility in their circulation paths being bound to the street network of adequate size to accommodate the vehicles.

Therefore, the siting of the multi-modal transportation center will be heavily dependent upon the location impacts to the ridership for each mode, especially rail. This is because a transportation facility's feasibility and therefore funding is dependent upon the ridership/usage forecasts for the proposed facility.

4.2.1 Transportation Functions

A Multi-modal Transportation Center is, as the name implies, a focal point at which many modes of transportation converge to provide economical and efficient service to popular destinations. For this report as many of the possible transportation modes available to the Wilmington Urban Area are presented with rail being the primary mode for analysis due to its fixed routing. It should also be noted that ridership for transit and rail is dependent upon the location of the bus terminal and rail station

Passenger Rail

All rail station requirements assume that the initial Wilmington rail travel patterns will be similar to that projected for the downtown Durham, NC Intrastate Rail Scenario (from a minimum of 177,000 passengers to approximately 312,000 passengers boarding and alighting per year). The Durham Intrastate Rail Scenario is taken from *Railroad Station Study, Piedmont High Speed Corridor*, Appendix – Space Requirements for PHSC Stations, Final Report for NC DOT – Rail Division, February 26, 1997. There are no similar rail passenger forecasts for suburban or rural rail stations in the study.

NCDOT recommends a minimum of a 3,000 square foot lobby for 200 to 300 people. A common waiting area with other tenants has also been requested. NCDOT recommends that the ticketing office be approximately 16 feet by 30 feet (480 sq. ft) and that the three ticket windows be built with removable bulletproof glass. The total is 3,480 square feet.

NCDOT Rail Division requires a baggage/express package room that is at least 20 feet by 30 feet (600 sq. ft). This room should have roll-up doors and access to the platform. The room will also house a "golf cart" type vehicle for moving baggage. A first class mail lock-up should be provided next to the baggage room with a window. The lock-up room should be 16 feet by 20 feet (320 sq. ft) and can be a fenced-in area within the larger space. This requires a total of 920 square feet.

NCDOT Rail Division requires an office for the lead agent that is 16 feet by 16 feet (256 sq. ft). A break room that is 16 feet by 20 feet (320 sq. ft) should also be provided. The break room will have enough space for 20 lockers and can also be used as a conference room. Operations space includes 100 sq. ft per employee with four employees projected (400 sq. ft). This is a total of 976 square feet.

The desired minimum width for passenger platforms is 20 feet. The single platform (for two tracks) is desirably 800 feet in length for a total of 16,000 square feet (estimate does not include track or right-of-way width requirements). The platform should be covered to protect the passengers from the elements.

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NCDOT recommends that there be 175 parking spaces for vehicles. Of these, 75 are assigned as long-term parking and 75 for short-term parking with the remainder (25) for rail staff and operations vehicles. Long term passenger parking spaces should be located within a three to four minute (or approximately 800 foot) walk from the rail platform.

Trailways/Greyhound Intercity Bus Services

The bus station requirements are from the Trailways staff. They anticipate enough ridership to necessitate four bus loading “tracks” for their future downtown Wilmington operations.

It is estimated that 736 square feet be provided for the intercity bus passenger waiting area. It has also been recommended that 30 seats be provided in that area. Trailways prefers to share its waiting space with other tenants. It is estimated that 180 square feet will be sufficient to accommodate intercity bus ticketing operations. This provides for two passenger ticket windows with two sell positions and one express package window. The ticket office should have a good visual connection with the passenger lobby and the intercity bus parking area. Total is 916 square feet.

It is estimated that 286 square feet will be needed for baggage and package handling and storage. This area requires direct access (as the packages can weight up to 100 pounds) to two parking spaces specifically reserved for package express vehicles. Trailways also requires that there be 72 square feet of secured storage. Total storage is 358 square feet.

It is estimated that one, 9 foot by 12 foot (or 108 sq. ft.), office will be sufficient for intercity bus operations with a 6 foot by 11 foot (66 sq. ft) drivers room located in the rear of the baggage room. No separate staff restroom requirement is anticipated. Total office space then is 174 square feet.

Trailways has indicated that four bus loading bays (14 ft. x 45 ft.) will be sufficient. Three additional bus parking spaces are needed for bus parking/layovers for a total of seven bus parking spaces. The bays should be adjacent to the intercity bus passenger waiting area and readily accessible from the baggage storage area. If located outside, they should have a canopy to provide shelter for passengers embarking and disembarking.

Trailways has indicated that 20 short-term vehicle parking spaces are needed for customers. They also require four spaces for employees and two spaces for express package handling and delivery near the baggage room area for a total of 26 vehicle parking spaces.

Wilmington Transit Authority (WTA)/New Hanover County Transportation Services

These systems are in the initial planning stages to merge into one transit system. One of the operational strategies for service provision being considered at this time by the WTA that will impact the space requirements of a proposed Multi-modal Transportation Center is modifying their service structure to a “mini-hub” transit system. A “mini-hub” system in one in which there are multiple transfer centers located at various key transit route junctions in the greater urban area. The City of Wilmington is considering the “mini-hub” system because the WTA is planning service expansion to areas being annexed.

Anticipated future bus station requirements are provided by WTA staff. They anticipate that their future downtown ridership will require approximately 10 bus loading “bays” for downtown bus transfer operations. Bus station requirements for the New Hanover County Transportation Services paratransit system is much harder to estimate due to it being a demand response system.

WTA staff estimates that 1,050 square feet will need to be provided for the local bus passenger waiting area. They also estimate that 100 square feet should be sufficient for their ticketing operations. WTA staff also anticipates that the peak passenger demand lobby space would need to accommodate, at a maximum, 50 to 60 people. It is estimated that WTA will require one (15 ft. x 15 ft.) office for staff and storage at 225 square feet.

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The number of local bus bays is a function of the number of bus routes that will converge on the center during peak periods. At this time WTA estimates that ten bus bays should be sufficient to accommodate WTA buses during peak periods. The platforms should be covered to protect the passengers.

Bus station requirements from the New Hanover County Transportation Services staff indicate that they will need to have approximately 1,600 square feet of office space for at least three full-time employees. No separate staff restroom requirement is anticipated.

New Hanover County Transportation Services staff have estimated that five paratransit vans should be sufficient upon the opening of the Center. This assumes having a maintenance facility for the overnight parking of the remainder of their fleet elsewhere and also having other "mini-hub" stations and transfer center with which to operate their service. Five parking spaces will be sufficient for employees for both WTA and the New Hanover County Transportation Service.

Pedestrians, Bicycles, Taxis, Hotel Courtesy Vans, and Trolleys

The anticipated traffic by these modes of travel will be heavily dependent upon the nature and type of existing and future development in the vicinity of the multi-modal center. The types of planned development that will generate significant amounts of this type of traffic include; downtown convention centers, restaurants, tourist attractions and hotels. The amount of internal space required by these modes of travel can be accommodated by the design of the transportation center.

A minimum of six reserved taxi parking spaces that are clearly visible to arriving intercity bus and rail passengers should be as per Port City Taxi staff. A "curb loading lane" should be provided to accommodate courtesy van and trolley service per the chair of the Cape Fear Coastal Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Bicycle lockers should be provided on site. The number of bike lockers should be determined in consultation with city staff and neighborhood organizations. A minimum of six bike lockers and a single bike rack should be provided initially, with an area for more lockers and racks to be added as demand indicates expansion requirements. The lockers and racks should be located in a covered and highly visible area. Depending upon the popularity of bicycle transportation and recreation in Wilmington at the time the final design is being developed for the Wilmington Multi-modal Center, it may be that a "bike station" area should be programmed into the Center's space functions. A bike station can provide "valet service" to bike commuters and would also provide bicycle rentals for tourists.

Security

One office (81 sq. ft) for on-site security personnel should be sufficient. The security personnel office will also house video-monitoring equipment.

Restrooms

Public restrooms (1,670 sq. ft.) should be provided for all users of the Multi-modal Transportation Center. There should be 12 stalls provided for women and five stalls for men with an additional seven urinals. Total restroom square footage is 3,220.

NCDOT Rail Division requests that separate employee restrooms be provided. The location of these restrooms should be behind the passenger rail ticketing counter. NCDOT Rail Division requests 1,000 square feet for a women's restroom and 550 square feet for a men's restroom, for a total of 1,550 square feet of separate employee restrooms.

Miscellaneous

A bank of telephones (the actual number to be determined by the phone company) should be included in the design. Vending machines should be provided regardless of whether or not other food services are present. Lockers and an automatic teller machine should also be included in the waiting area.

Space Summary

The combination of the space calculations is presented in Tables 1, 2 and 3. This data represents an initial estimate of needs based on statements of the transportation operators. The design process that combines

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the indoor space in one or more buildings and the outdoor space on the site may result in a different quantity of space. The exterior land space may be met with less area due to the layering of floors in a multi level design. Similarly, the land footprint for interior space can be reduced with the sharing of common areas by the transportation modes and by multi-level buildings.

Table 1. Multi-modal, Multi-use Transportation Center Building Space Requirements*

Use	Internal Area	External Area	Total Area
Passenger Rail	5,376	77,250	82,626
Trailways\Greyhound	1,448	13,510	14,958
WTA\New Hanover TS	2,975	TBD	2,975
Ped, Bike, Taxi, Trolleys, etc.	N/A	TBD	TBD
Restrooms & Security	4,851	N/A	4,851
Cumulative TOTAL	14,650	90,760	105,410

*Square footage includes the information listed in Tables 2 and 3

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Table 2. Car Parking Requirements

Use	Taxi	WTA	Trailways/ Greyhound	Rail	Total
Short Term Parking	6	0	20	75	101
Long Term Parking	0	0	0	75	75
Loading/ Employee	0	5	6	25	42
Total Vehicles	6	5	26	175	218
Total Square Feet*	2,100	1,750	9,100	61,250	74,200

*Assumes 350 sq. ft per parking space.

Table 3. Number of Vehicles (by Type) to be Accommodated On-Site

Type of Vehicle	Trolley	Taxi	WTA	New Hanover	Trailways\ Greyhound	Rail
Number of Vehicles (square feet)	2 * (1,080)	6 cabs (2,100)	10 bus (5,400)	5 Vans (2,250)	7 bus (4,410)	2 trains (16,000)

*Estimate to be confirmed.

Total estimated space needed for transportation vehicles is 30,610.

4.2.2 Related Functions

Because the initial site investigated in this study, the Police Headquarters site contained in the Downtown Plan, is adjacent to the Community College and the Railroad Museum, the potential needs of those neighbors were investigated. The Community College has need for additional space and the Museum has a desire to relocate in the immediate vicinity of its current home on Nutt Street. A summary of conversations with the two neighbors is reported in the following sections.

Cape Fear Community College (CFCC)

By the year 2019, the college expects to more than double its current enrollment and will need the space and facilities for 10, 829 students. Due to the location of the North Campus (from Walnut Street to north of Brunswick Street) it will have to acquire additional property downtown for classroom and office space. CFCC staff estimates that it will need an additional 100,000 square feet of classroom and laboratories and another 800 parking spaces to accommodate its growth at the North Campus.

It is estimated that the CFCC will need to construct about 50,000 square feet of new classrooms, laboratories, and offices. CFCC staff also estimates that it will need a parking deck for 500 cars or more in the northern downtown area¹.

Wilmington Railroad Museum

The museum, located at the corner of Nutt and Water Streets, is operated by the Wilmington Railroad Museum Foundation, Inc. The foundation expects that the lease for their current building will expire without the option of renewal in about five years. They are interested in finding a new location; especially one that is related to rail transportation and is located downtown. The museum provides a significant repository for

¹ From page 43, Cape Fear Community College, Strategic Plan, 1999-2019, Catching Up and Keeping Up, Fourth Edition, May 11, 1999

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historical information and artifacts related to the Atlantic Coast Line (ACL) Railroad. The foundation is interested in relocating to the current Police Headquarters Building (located at Red Cross and Front Streets); a historic building that was once an office annex for the ACL Railroad.

Museum staff estimates the need for approximately 12,000 square feet of internal space. This is based upon existing space and projected future requirements for usage, storage, exhibit assembly area, etc. Museum staff also estimates the need for 500 feet of track, (which can also be accommodated by two parallel tracks of 250 feet each, or three tracks of 165 feet, etc) for rolling stock exhibits. Total outdoor exhibit square feet is 10,000.

Staff estimates that the museum will need 10 short-term parking spaces for visitors, 10 employee/volunteer parking spaces and 2 bus (1,080 square feet) parking spaces for tours. Total external parking space needed is 8,080 square feet.

Eligibility for TEA 21 Transportation Enhancement (TE) Funding for the Railroad Museum

Transportation Museums established using TE funds must meet the following definition of a museum. The facility must; (1) be a legally organized not-for-profit institution or part of a not-for-profit institution or government-entity; (2) be essentially educational in nature; (3) have a formally stated mission; (4) have one full-time paid professional staff member who has museum knowledge and experience and is delegated authority and allocated financial resources sufficient to operate the museum effectively; (5) present regularly scheduled programs and exhibits that use and interpret objects for the public according to accepted standards; (6) have a formal and appropriate program of documentation, care, and use of collections and /or tangible objects; and (7) have a formal and appropriate program of presentations and maintenance of exhibits.

Establishment of transportation museums is interpreted to mean funding of capital improvements. The funds are not intended to reconstruct, refurbish, or rehabilitate existing museums, nor portions of museums, that are not for transportation purposes. It does not cover operations or maintenance of the facility. The museum must be related to surface transportation. Establishment of transportation museums is interpreted to include the costs of the structure and the purchase of artifacts necessary for the creation and operation of the facility. Displays, segments of buildings, or objects not directly related to transportation should not be funded with TE funds. TE funds may be used to build a new facility, add on a transportation wing to an existing facility, or convert an existing building for use as a transportation museum.

The museum must be open to the public and run by a public, non-profit or not-for-profit organization meeting the definition of museums stated above in this section. If entrance fees are charged for the museum a portion of the fee should be provided for the long term maintenance and operation of the facility.

The legislation governing the TE program specifically refers to TE activities "relating to surface transportation." Therefore, TE funds are not to be used to preserve aircraft or create an airport or air museum. Objects or structures related to aviation are not normally eligible for TE funds. Landscaping and other eligible TE activities may be appropriate for consideration for the road leading to an aviation facility.

SOURCE: FHWA INTERIM GUIDANCE TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITIES 23 U.S.C. AND TEA-21, June 17, 1999

4.3 ALTERNATIVE SITES, ROUND 1

4.3.1 Introduction

This section describes the evaluation criteria and the alternative sites that were evaluated in the first site evaluation meeting. The alternative sites were presented and discussed at two steering committee

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meetings. The results of the evaluation and the committee meetings were subsequently presented during an October 1999 Open House meeting.

4.3.2 Selection Criteria

The selection of a suitable site is critical to the success of the multi-modal transportation center. Major factors that were considered in the selection and evaluation of alternative sites included the following:

Site can accommodate Space Report functions: Is the potential site large enough to handle the functions, both transportation and land use, that the Steering Committee would like to see in the Wilmington Multi-modal Center? This criterion can be summarized as either the site does or does not.

Impact on Rail ridership: Concern has been expressed by NCDOT Rail Division staff and others that rail ridership will be adversely impacted by locating a station more than 2,000 feet from downtown destinations like the proposed convention center and the existing Cotton Exchange. Therefore the closer a potential site is to downtown attractions, the better for rail ridership.

Impact on Greyhound/Trailways: Similarly, concern has been expressed by Trailways staff and others that intercity bus ridership will be adversely impacted by locating a station too far from downtown destinations like the proposed convention center and the existing Cotton Exchange. Therefore the closer a potential site is to downtown attractions the better for intercity bus ridership.

Impact on New Hanover County Transportation System: This evaluation criteria consists of how central a site is located in regards to serving their clients in regards to access to other forms of public transportation, especially WTA, and access to destinations of their clients, primarily to elderly and disabled services. Therefore the closer a potential site is to downtown attractions the better for their clients.

Vehicular Access & Traffic Impacts: Will the multi-modal center be readily accessible by vehicle? And what will be the projected impacts on existing traffic of the new transportation center? Clearly, proximity to major thoroughfares is a consideration as is the existing traffic congestion. Therefore, the closer to the major thoroughfares the better and the lower the existing traffic congestion within the vicinity of the proposed site the better.

Impact on Pedestrian and Bike Access & Safety: Where people live, work and shop in proximity to the multi-modal transportation center will clearly have a significant impact on the bicycle and pedestrian access. Therefore, the closer to major employment, shopping and residential areas the better and the lower the existing traffic congestion within the vicinity of the proposed site the better for bicycle and pedestrian interaction with vehicular traffic.

Impact on WTA Operations & Rider Convenience: The proximity of the proposed site should be as close as possible to existing and proposed WTA bus routes. This is due to the impact on local bus operations, particularly any additional vehicle travel time and distance, which can increase operational costs considerably. Therefore for this criterion, the closer to multiple WTA bus routes (both existing and planned) the better for both WTA operations and rider convenience for transfer between routes.

Compatible with Existing & Planned Land Uses: Is the neighborhood suitable for the associated transportation impacts related to the following: rail station, bus station, taxi operations, etc.? Noise and visual impacts can be major issues. Conversely, unattractive surrounding land uses may discourage the use of the terminal. Therefore the existence of a proposed multi-modal transportation center in an adopted plan is better than locating a multi-modal transportation center in an area without one planned.

Impact on Development or Redevelopment: Again, is the neighborhood suitable for the associated land use impacts related to the following: rail station, bus station, taxi operations, etc.? Therefore the existence of a proposed multi-modal transportation center in an adopted plan is better than locating a multi-modal transportation center in an area without one planned.

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Potential Joint Development Opportunities: Is the development potential in the vicinity of the proposed site such that non-transportation type uses would desire to co-locate within the proposed multi-modal transportation center? The more possible co-occupants the better for the proposed site.

Land Ownership & Availability: The acquisition of the land for a proposed site is a major consideration. Therefore already owning the land for a proposed site is better than having to acquire new land(s).

Impact on Public Transit Image & Public Visibility: Is the proposed site in an area of the Greater Wilmington Urban area that will provide visitors and residents alike with an enticing opportunity to try using, rail, bus or the other transportation services provided in the proposed multi-modal transportation center? Therefore the more central the proposed site is to pass-by traffic (both pedestrian and vehicular) the better.

User Security: High traffic, high visibility transportation centers are usually safer and are perceived as being safer. Sites in more remote locations may have less pedestrian or street activity, particularly at night, posing a real or perceived threat to the security of users. Costly security measures may be essential.

Impact on Environmental or Historical Resources: Are there environmental (wetland, community, contamination) and historic site ramifications of the proposed site's location? Therefore, the less the impact to the environment and historic structures the better.

Other Criteria: This category is used to provide the Steering Committee members with the opportunity to raise other issues that would cause them concern. Therefore the fewer "other criteria" the better.

Implementation Issues: Are there obvious "roadblocks" to going forward with the development of the proposed multi-modal center at a certain location? The fewer implementation issues the better.

4.3.3 Site Descriptions

Figure 1 shows the location of the alternative sites that were identified and evaluated during this study. Four sites were evaluated in Round 1: Police Headquarters; Carroll Carolina Corp. (Page Oil); Navassa; and Airport. These sites are described in the following paragraphs.

Police Headquarters Site

The site is in an adopted plan as a multi-modal center. There has been some concern that this site is too small to accommodate the functions of a multi-modal transportation center. Preliminary analysis of this site indicates that it can accommodate rail, inter-city bus, local bus and a demand response bus system. This site can also accommodate some of the functions of the Cape Fear Community College and the Wilmington Rail Road Museum. The site is at the intersection of Red Cross and Front Streets.

Carroll Carolina Corp. (Page Oil) Site

This site has had some discussion from the group and some work has been done by the consultant to date. Preliminary analysis of this site indicates that it can accommodate rail, inter-city bus, local bus and a demand response bus system. This site can also accommodate riverfront tourism type facilities. It is located between Dawson and Surry Streets southeast of the Memorial Bridge.

Navassa Site

This site was recommended at the second meeting by the Leland Town Manager and Wilmington Transportation staff. Preliminary analysis of this site indicates that it can accommodate rail, inter-city bus, local bus and a demand response bus system. This site consists of approximately 200 acres of vacant land along the railroad and is supported by the Mayor of Navassa. The site is northeast of Cedar Hill Road and south of Welch's Creek.

Airport Site

This site received little discussion from the group and not much work has been done by the consultant to date other than to search for vacant land in the vicinity of the airport along the railroad tracks, which of

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course does exist. Vacant land most applicable to a multi-modal transportation center would be between Blue Clay Road and North 23rd Street.

Figure 1. Alternative Sites Studies

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4.4 EVALUATION OF ROUND 1 SITES

The purpose of the third Steering Committee meeting (held on August 11, 1999) was to select the preferred location for the Wilmington multi-modal transportation center. Before the meeting a blank matrix with the evaluation criteria and the four sites as described above along the left side and top, respectively, was given to the Committee members. The cells of the matrix were blank and each Steering Committee member was requested to fill out a matrix for discussion purposes at the meeting.

During the presentation a completed matrix was distributed to the committee members for discussion. During the discussion (see Appendix A for meeting notes) the Carroll Carolina Corp. (Page Oil) Site was the first site to be eliminated from further consideration due to the additional travel time and community impacts. The Navassa Site was then evaluated and found to be more suitable site for a rail “flag stop” than a multi-modal transportation center. The Navassa Site is also located in an area that will probably not need a multi-modal transportation center in the next five to seven years, whereas the Wilmington downtown area will need additional transportation service. The WTA will also need to find a downtown transfer center probably sooner than five to seven years.

In the end, the discussion revolved around whether or not it would be preferable to put a multi-modal transportation center in a suburban location or downtown. The suburban site is the Airport Site where it would be cheaper and have less impact on the downtown. And the downtown site is the Police Headquarters Site (alternatively referred to as Police HQ site). The general consensus of the Steering Committee was that if the size and CFCC issues can be resolved through the design of the multi-modal center, then the Police Headquarters Site is the preferred site and should be further studied. The WTA transfer facility could not function cost effectively at a suburban location due to the added cost of route miles for all of its fleet to reach the suburban location.

Tables 4 and 5 present the evaluation for the Round 1 sites.

4.5 ALTERNATIVE SITES AND EVALUATION, ROUND 2

The Police Headquarters site emerged as the preferred site during meetings with the project Steering Committee. Implicit in that selection was general agreement that a Downtown location was preferred over a suburban location. During the final stages of the planning study the Cape Fear Community College requested an additional site be examined as a replacement for the Police Headquarters site. The alternative site was located between 3rd and 4th Streets along the former Coastline tracks. Part of the new alternative site overlaps the Police Headquarters site; both sites would have train platforms and tracks between 2nd and 3rd Streets. The City agreed to examine one other site in the Downtown and address issues raised by the Cape Fear Community College (CFCC) regarding locating a multi-modal transportation center on the Police Headquarters site. Issues included CFCC’s concern about the potential impacts of a multi-modal transportation center on the CFCC campus, as well as its desire to develop the Police Headquarters site for its own use. Figure 1 shows the location of the two sites.

This section focuses on:

- A feasibility analysis of the site between 3rd and 4th Streets and a comparison of it with the Police Headquarters site.
- A preliminary analysis of potential noise and traffic impacts of using the Police Headquarters site.

Table 4. Evaluation of Potential Multi-modal Sites With Rail Station—Outside of Downtown

Evaluation Criteria	OUTSIDE OF DOWNTOWN	
	Navassa Site	Airport Site

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Ability to Accommodate Transportation Functions	No size constraints, but would not include a significant transfer center for WTA.	No size constraints. Will be multi-modal by co-locating with the air terminal and being on a planned WTA Bus Route
Impact on Rail Ridership & Operations	Less central to existing and future population concentrations. May have to drive farther, but less traffic congestion at this location. Proposed bridge over river not funded.	More central than Brunswick Co. site, but roads may be more congested.
Impact on Intercity Bus Ridership and Operations	Ample space to provide ideal layout. Less accessible to downtown travelers with limited access by transit dependent populations.	Ample space to provide ideal layout. Less accessible with limited opportunities to access by transit (but better than Brunswick Co. site). Best access to air terminal.
Impact on WTA Operations & Rider Convenience	Cannot function as WTA transfer facility. Outside WTA service area and no plans to be served by WTA.	Not suitable location for WTA transfer facility. Would be served by one WTA route.
Impact on NHCOTS	Outside of service area.	Less central than Downtown locations. Larger area to accommodate more of operations at one location and on one site.
Vehicular Access & Traffic Impacts	Main thoroughfares connecting to Wilmington area are congested now (Village Road and US 74-76). Proposed bridge not funded.	Main thoroughfares connecting to Wilmington area congested now (23 rd Street and Castle Hayne Rd).
Ability to access by Pedestrian/Bike	Least accessible of all sites.	Minimal accessibility.
Compatibility with Existing & Planned Land Uses	Would be compatible. Has support of local elected officials	Would be compatible.
Development or Redevelopment Stimulant in Surrounding area	Would add to develop potential of site (elected officials supportive).	Would add to develop potential of site.
Public/Private Joint Development Opportunities	Opportunity for suburban development.	Opportunity for suburban development.
Land Ownership & Availability	Ownership unknown, but reportedly available.	Ownership and availability unknown.
Image & Public Visibility	Least visible and may be hard to find.	Not very visible and may be hard to find.
User Security	Less vehicular and pedestrian traffic than downtown locations (particularly at night).	Less vehicular and pedestrian traffic than downtown locations (particularly at night).
Environmental Issues	Unknown, but none anticipated by Leland town staff.	Unknown, but none anticipated by consultant.

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Table 5. Evaluation of Potential Multi-modal Sites With Rail Station - Downtown

Evaluation Criteria	DOWNTOWN	
	Police Headquarters Site	Carroll Carolina Site
Ability to Accommodate Transportation Functions	Small site, but can accommodate all functions by designing a multi-level facility. Platform length may be limited without rebuilding 3 rd St bridge. Limited size adds to construction costs. Some or much parking may have to be located off-site.	Large site, minimally constrained. All functions can easily be accommodated.
Impact on Rail Ridership & Operations	Rail ridership has correlation with reasonable walking distance to attractions, good transit access, and parking. Therefore, ridership expected to be higher in Downtown area with major destinations (business and tourism travel). Land available to reconnect to active CSX line.	Less accessible than Police HQ site to Downtown core. Requires multiple “at-grade crossings”, adds up to 30 minutes to total trip time and conflicts with freight lines.
Impact on Intercity Bus Ridership and Operations	Typically greater ridership when stations located downtown. Operators prefer Downtown site, but must be workable (size constraints). Site is very close to existing bus station. More visible site and more convenient to local transit.	More space to provide a more ideal layout.
Impact on WTA Operations & Rider Convenience	Most central location in Downtown and adjacent to some existing Downtown routes. Downtown is already significant destination. Ridership should increase with multiple walking destinations and other modes available at station. Least impact on WTA operations.	Less central to Downtown than Police HQ site. Now only one route passes by site. Requires more changes to WTA routes than Police HQ site to provide major transfer facility
Impact on NHCOTs	Central for clients/passengers.	Central and ability to accommodate more of operations at one location on site.
Vehicular Access & Traffic Impacts	Access to site from abutting streets not as good as other sites, and access roads will be congested at times. Parking garage can be asset to Downtown area (shared use). More accessible by other modes.	Easier than Police HQ site since less traffic on surrounding streets. Plans to redevelop site will increase traffic in area.
Ability to access by Pedestrian/Bike	Convenient Ped/Bike access to and from the site and multiple attractions/destinations. Extensive sidewalk network.	May be more Ped/Bike accessible for transit dependent populations, but not as accessible to the planned convention center and hotels in the northern Downtown areas. Less developed sidewalks.
Compatibility with Existing & Planned Land Uses	Urban areas more insensitive to noise and activity during night hours and a multi-modal facility is already in an adopted plan. Major tourist activities committed in area.	Current land uses are industrial/vacant. Current plans to redevelop site (cruise ship terminus).
Development or Redevelopment Stimulant in Surrounding area	Already an integral component of Downtown hotel/convention center redevelopment planning and implementation strategy.	Would add to develop potential of site (owner very interested).
Public/Private Joint Development Opportunities	Site attractive to private sector for development opportunities. CFCC interested in developing classroom space and parking on site; Railroad Museum interested in participating. Could provide revenue for project. Opportunity for shared parking.	Southern Downtown area is attractive to private sector for development opportunities and some land is already planned for redevelopment (but no firm plans).

Table 5 (cont.)

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Evaluation Criteria	Police Headquarters Site	Carroll Carolina Site
Land Ownership & Availability	Site already owned by City and is planned for redevelopment.	Site privately-owned and owner had indicated availability.
Image & Public Visibility	High visibility due to student and downtown traffic	Less visible than Police HQ site.
User Security	High traffic areas safer and require less security. Short response time period for police if HQ rebuilt in northern Downtown.	Less vehicular and pedestrian traffic than Police HQ site (particularly at night).
Environmental Issues	No contamination cleanup or wetland mitigation anticipated, but the Police Bldg. is historic. Adjacent apartments will be impacted by noise. Visual impact if parking garage located on Nutt St.	Contamination cleanup remains to be completed, but no anticipated impacts to historic structures. Environmental Justice Impacts may be greater due to number of neighborhoods that must be traversed to access site by rail.

4.5.1. Site Descriptions

Police Headquarters Site

The site identified in the Wilmington Downtown Plan for the multi-modal center is generally bound by Redcross Street on the south, the north edge of the former Coastline depressed track area on the north, Front street on the west and 3rd Street on the east.

Some of the key features of the site include:

The original Coastline track area is depressed at an elevation of about 10 feet above sea level.

- The police headquarters and an apartment building occupy part of the frontage of the site along Redcross Street.
- The police headquarters building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
- The railroad bed is approximately 20 feet below the elevation of Front Street.
- Second Street extends into the site from Redcross to a dead-end at the crossing of the former railroad bed.
- The Cape Fear Community College is located on the south side of Redcross Street and north of the historic retaining wall.
- The site has the sub-structure of the former Coastline building at the corner of Front and Redcross Streets.
- Portions of the property are used for parking of private vehicles, some associated with the police operations and others with the College.
- The retaining wall that forms the north limit of the site is considered to be historic dating to the Civil War era.

3rd to 4th Street Site

The alternative site is located on the CSX railroad corridor directly east of the Police Headquarters site. It is bounded by 3rd and 4th Streets to the west and east respectively, and Campbell and Hanover Streets to the south and north. During the preliminary review of the analysis of the 3rd to 4th Street site, the CFCC pointed out that the site requested by the College had a north boundary of Brunswick Street rather than Hanover

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Street. The consultant was instructed to take into consideration the larger alternative site in preparing the final report.

Some of the key features of the site include:

- The central portion of the site between Campbell and Hanover Streets, the original railroad right-of-way now owned by CFCC, is vacant, while the properties fronting Campbell and Hanover Streets are developed with active residential and commercial uses. There appear to be at least five businesses and three cottages in the block containing the site. The commercial buildings are one to two stories.
- The three cottages (on Hanover Street) are on the Historic Register but could possibly be moved. Two are well maintained and occupied, while the third (closest to Third Street) is vacant and in poor condition.
- Of the non-residential buildings, those on Campbell Street (on the north side) have the greatest historical significance and should be maintained (but could be reused as part of the multi-modal center). Though the commercial buildings on Hanover Street (on the south side) are less historically significant, according to the City they should also be retained if possible.
- The site is in the Wilmington National Register Historic District (as is the Police Headquarters site). The area is now redeveloping by building on its historic character.
- The railway bed through the site is approximately 40 feet lower than the surrounding streets. There is also a slightly higher “bench” above the level of the track bed (approximately 15 feet higher).
- There is a stone wall of major historic significance that separates the lower and upper track beds through the site. Its existence and the requirement to preserve it, has significant implications for layout of the rail tracks and platforms.
- Third and Fourth Streets are relatively wide and suitable for bus access.
- Hanover and Campbell Streets are brick paved and not suitable for carrying heavy volumes of bus traffic.
- The block between Hanover and Brunswick Streets contains a mixture of uses including businesses and a junk vehicle yard.

4.5.2 Concept Plans

Police Headquarters Site

Figures 2, 3 and 4 show a conceptual development plan for the site. The primary objective in developing the plan was to accommodate the transportation functions and to also incorporate the expansion of the Cape Fear Community College and the Wilmington Railroad Museum. Three plans for the conceptual layout are included: ground or track level, street level and the upper (typical) level.

The ground-level plan shows the tracks entering the site under the 3rd Street Bridge. Based on more detailed information, the location of the tracks may be adjusted to miss the piers for the 3rd Street Bridge. The platform would be 650 to 720 feet in length beginning near the 3rd Street Bridge. Again, depending on detailed information about the location of 3rd Street Bridge columns, there may be one center or two side platforms. The tracks and platforms would terminate on the east side of the Front Street Bridge at an elevation estimated to be 8 to 12 feet above sea level. The rail service building (ticketing, baggage and waiting) would be located immediately adjacent to the end of the platform(s) on the lowest level of the multi-use building at about 10 to 14 feet.

The Intercity bus circulation and platform area would also be located on an elevated level adjacent to the ground level at an elevation of about 18 feet. The intercity bus waiting, ticketing and package/baggage area would be located adjacent to the rail building space, perhaps sharing waiting areas. Buses would access the

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area by being driven down the 2nd Street incline and into the loading bays. Exiting buses would swing out of the site onto 2nd Street and up the incline to the intersection with 3rd Street. It is assumed all intercity buses would enter and exit the site using Redcross from 3rd Street.

The WTA bus handling area would be located on a platform above the intercity bus area (the WTA platform would form a cover over the intercity bus area). WTA passengers would receive service for the system's service center located on the second (street) level of the multi-use structure. The service center could be located in several locations along the face of the structure adjoining the bus-handling area. The concept plan shown in the accompanying drawings show the WTA buses exiting onto Redcross midway between 2nd and Front Streets. An optional concept shows the buses exiting onto 2nd Street, thus removing the WTA bus traffic from Redcross opposite the adjoining College building on the south side of Redcross.

Truck access to the railroad platform for mail and other packages would be provided by a truck lane adjacent to the railroad at the foot of 2nd Street. It is assumed that truck access would occur no more than once or twice a day.

The plans also show facilities for the relocated Wilmington Railroad Museum. The outdoor space is located between the Front Street Bridge and Nutt Street. A semi-circular drive provides parking for the museum as well as taxi space for the multi-modal center. Museum visitors would view the outdoor displays and then walk under the Front Street Bridge and enter the building portion of the museum. The enclosed space is on the ground level of the multi-use structure adjacent to the rail and intercity service centers.

Pedestrian access to the rail, intercity bus and WTA bus service areas and the museum could also be provided by the primary entrance to the multi-use building at the corner of Front and Redcross Streets. A special entrance area is proposed on the concept plan at the intersection to reflect the building's heritage and the rounded form of the original Coastline structure that occupied the site.

The CFCC building space has been shown at the street level as well as the two upper floors. The primary objective of the conceptual layout was to build a "college bridge" over the transportation center at street level. The approach is consistent with the layout envisioned for the site in the adopted Wilmington Downtown Plan.

There are at least two options for use of the street level floor space. First, of course, the 3,000± square feet of WTA space must be accommodated with direct access to their loading area. The College could use the remainder of the 39,000± square feet of space, or, part or all of it could be used for other revenue-generating, private rental space. The quantity of non-college space would depend on the funding package for the multi-use building and the market at the Front Street site for retail or general office space. Access to the street level part of the building would be from the primary entrance at Front and Redcross Streets as well as other entrances which could be from the Bridge along Front Street, from Redcross and from the north end of the building adjacent to the Schwartz Center.

The upper floors of the multi-use building were assumed to be occupied solely by the college. From the top level a pedestrian bridge would span Redcross Street entering the Allied Health wing of the college's new building into the second level commons area at the front of the building. Based on drawings provided by the college, it was estimated that the elevation of the second floor of the Allied Health building to be 57 feet. The elevation of the pedestrian bridge was, thus, set at the 57-foot elevation. This decision set the elevation of the top floor of the mixed-use building also to be 57 feet resulting in the lower floors set at an elevation of about 45 feet and a street-level floor of about 32 feet. All of the floor elevations are subject to change as the conceptual architectural plan is refined.

The building floor area that resulted from the decision to provide the pedestrian bridge is greater than the amount of floor space desired by the college. Upwards of 80,000 square feet of space could be made available by the conceptual plan shown on the accompanying drawings for non-transportation uses. The space for the college could be reduced to the 50,000 square foot level by incorporating private rental office/retail space on the street-level or by reducing the floor area by reducing the size of the top floor of the building starting at its north end. The smaller top floor could still provide the pedestrian connection to the Allied Health building as part of the "college bridge".

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The accompanying show the entire building with full floors spread across the entire college bridge. A perspective image of the building is provided in Section 5 of this report.

Figure 2. Police HQ Track-Level Plan View

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Figure 3. Police HQ Site Street Level Plan View

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Figure 4. Police HQ Site Upper Level Plan View

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3rd to 4th Street Site

A conceptual site layout showing potential locations for the various transportation uses has been developed for the initial alternative site between Campbell and Hanover Streets (see Figure 4-5). The concept features two basic levels, the track level and the street level. The rail tracks and platforms are located at the track level, while both the WTA and intercity bus operations are located on a large concrete deck to span between the two bridges on 3rd and 4th Streets. Bus access is from both 3rd and 4th Streets. The location of parking has not been designated on the plan but could occupy the junked vehicle area north of Hanover Street.

An expanded 3rd to 4th Street site would include the blocks between Campbell and Brunswick Streets. This area currently has a tier of lots facing Hanover, 4th and Brunswick Streets. Residences and small businesses occupy the lots. The 3rd Street frontage and the interior of the block are used for a junked vehicle storage yard. Based on discussions with Steering Committee members there has been discussion about the redevelopment of a portion of the block. A supermarket to serve the nearby residences and the downtown community has been mentioned as a potential new occupant of the block.

A plan for the expanded site between Campbell and Brunswick has not been prepared; however, the changes can be estimated. It is likely the bus deck between 3rd and 4th Streets on the Campbell/Hanover site would be replaced by a surface bus handling area occupying the area now used for junked vehicles north of Hanover. The train platform would remain in the same location under both options between Campbell and Hanover. Hanover Street would then be the centroid of the Campbell/Brunswick multi-modal center with the bus to the north and the train to the south. Due to the light traffic on Hanover, the street should function without too much friction from general traffic. One option would be to close Hanover Street to through traffic and incorporate the brick paved area into the center's design.

The Campbell/Brunswick layout would see a combined bus building located north of Hanover Street to serve the WTA and intercity buses. The rail service center would probably be located on the south side of Hanover Street with stair and elevator access to the lower track/platform level. The accompanying plan view shows the arrangement for the Campbell/Hanover site that had the intercity bus on the south side of Hanover and the combined WTA and rail service center on Campbell Street. Parking for the Campbell/Brunswick may not fit on the block north of Hanover due to the bus handling area. Another nearby location may have to be found like the combined use of the CFCC's lot east of 3rd Street.

A major issue with either option for the 3rd to 4th Street site is the layout of the rail tracks and platform(s). The desired minimum width for passenger platforms is 20 feet. A minimum of approximately 10 feet is required to accommodate each track and the train using it, therefore the combined width of two tracks and single platform is 40 feet. The desirable platform length is 800 feet (700 feet is the minimum).

A stone retaining wall follows a path in an east by northeast direction on the south side of the train level. The wall is considered to be historic, perhaps dating to the Civil War era. Because of the stone retaining wall, the tracks and platform must be located on the upper portion of the train level part of the site at an elevation of about 29 feet. The clearance under the Fourth Street Bridge, between the abutment on the north side and the retaining wall (but excluding the retaining wall) is less than 40 feet (approximately 35 feet in the center of the bridge).

Therefore, the platform cannot begin until the approaching tracks are west of the Fourth Street Bridge (estimated to be approximately 50 feet west of the bridge to allow the tracks to split to accommodate a 20-wide platform). To achieve even the minimum platform length (650 to 700 feet), the tracks and platform would have to protrude at least 250 to 300 feet into the CFCC parking lot behind the Schwartz Center.

The concept plan demonstrates that the site can only accommodate the required transportation functions if the tracks can extend into the CFCC parking lot. (Given the preliminary nature of the analysis, not all other functional details have been confirmed, e.g., mail truck access to the platform that would have to occur via the CFCC parking lot).

Both development options at the 3rd to 4th Street location would probably result in the need to move the historic cottages on Hanover Street. The building to the east of the cottages would also probably be demolished under both site options. The two-story office on the corner of Hanover and Fourth Streets is

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shown to be retained, but could be sacrificed if retaining the cottages were a higher priority. The red brick B & B Hose and Rubber Company building on Campbell Street is shown as the railway station and WTA offices and waiting area on the Campbell/Hanover option and would probably be untouched under the Campbell/Brunswick option.

The accompanying plans show the layout for the Campbell/Hanover option.

Figure 5. 3rd to 4th Street Site

4.5.3 Comparison of Police Headquarters and 3rd to 4th Street Sites

Cost Analysis

A programmatic cost estimate was prepared for the two sites based on the very conceptual site plans displayed in this section.

A concept level cost estimate must be considered as tentative since many questions have yet to be defined and answered. Typically, the cost estimate at the concept level is used as a rough “rule of thumb” to assist in identifying and programming funds. The concept estimate will usually prove to be inflated over the eventual construction cost. The estimating process intends to err on the high side in the early stage of project development and as more refined plans are developed, the costs tend to fall.

The conceptual plans for the Police Headquarters site make it difficult to assign costs to the benefiting entities. For example, on the Police Headquarters site the cost of removing the foundations for the original Coastline building at Front and Redcross Streets is required to construct the multi-use building. Yet the transportation mode operators, the college and museum all benefit from the removal. Also, the concept plan shows more floor area to be built than would be required by the combined needs of the transportation operators, the college and the museum. At issue is whether additional floor space should be constructed in the complex for the private sector. No matter what the size of the complex, the concept plan as envisioned would require a funding strategy to be developed for the entities participating in the completed complex. Each would have separate funding sources as well.

Preliminary estimates of capital costs have been prepared for the Police Headquarters site based on the concept site plan presented in Section 5.2. The total cost for the entire complex represented in the conceptual plans is estimated to be \$34.6 million, including design fees and a 20 percent contingency (\$5.5 million). If the college’s floor area is reduced to about 50,000 square feet and no additional rental space is provided, the total cost could drop to about \$22.4 million. The share of the cost allocated to the museum could be in the \$3.5 million range, the transportation modes about \$ 8.9 million and the college about \$9.9 million.

The cost of the 3rd to 4th Street site project had a set of design issues, like the Police Headquarters site, that have not been addressed in full due to the conceptual level of design. The cost estimate is, therefore, programmatic in nature and is useful primarily as a yardstick to compare the site with the Police Headquarters site. Figures were developed for the Campbell/Hanover site based on the accompanying concept sketch plan. Lacking a conceptual plan for the Campbell/Brunswick site, a cost estimate could not be prepared for that site option.

The estimated total cost for developing the Campbell/Hanover site is \$10.8 million. Table 6 shows the summary cost breakdown for the two estimates.

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Table 6. Comparative Costs: Police Headquarters Site (Minimum Floor Area) and 3rd to 4th Street Site (Campbell/Hanover)

Description of Item/Work Area:	Police Headquarters Site (Multi-use Building, Minimum Floor Area)			3rd to 4th Street Site (Campbell/Hanover Site)	
	Entity: Transport	College	Museum	Total (Police)	Transport:
<i>Shared Costs</i> (Transport = 19%, College =67.5%, Museum = 13.5%)					
Site Preparation	\$710,125	\$2,522,813	\$504,563		\$613,500
Outdoor Improvements (non-transportation)	\$60,430	\$214,684	\$42,937		\$345,500
Building Space/Mech./Elevators	\$1,501,950	\$5,335,875	\$1,067,175		\$908,750
<i>Museum Site /Park</i>			\$1,311,450		
<i>Transportation Improvements</i> (Transport = 100%)	\$5,145,356				\$7,048,000
<i>Historic Wall Restoration</i>	\$34,200	\$121,500	\$24,300		\$84,000
<i>Pedestrian Bridge to College</i>		\$84,000			
	\$7,452,061	\$8,278,871	\$2,950,424	\$18,681,356	\$8,999,750
Contingency @ 20%	\$1,490,412	\$1,655,774	\$590,085		\$1,799,950
Total Cost per Entity	\$8,942,473	\$9,934,646	\$3,540,509		
Total Cost				\$22,417,627	\$10,799,700

In comparing the cost estimates it is important to keep in mind the underlying assumptions and limitations of the data. The cost for the transportation improvements for the Police Headquarters site is part of a shared facility. If the college and museum were not built the transportation improvement costs on the Police Headquarters site would change from the \$8.9 million. The change might be an increase as the total cost of demolition and site preparation would become part of the transportation cost rather than being shared with the two other entities. On the other hand, other factors could drive down the transportation costs. Less funds would be spent on elevators and stairs for the more simple transportation center than in the mixed-use building.

The \$10.8 million cost for the 3rd to 4th Street site is only for transportation improvements. The concept plan did not include the museum and, of course, no college classroom space is provided on the 3rd to 4th Street site. Due to the differences in the facilities proposed for the two sites in the concept plans, the two estimates should be considered to be in the same approximate cost range. If the mixed-use complex becomes a reality on the Police Headquarters site, the transportation center's cost may be lower than the stand-alone transportation facility at the 3rd to 4th Street site.

Functional Characteristics

A comparison of the Police Headquarters site and the 3rd to 4th Street site is provided in Table 7. Some key conclusions are:

- The Campbell/Hanover site is smaller than Police Headquarters site, and multiple owners may be involved. The Campbell/Brunswick site is potentially larger than the Police Headquarters site if additional private property owners are impacted.

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- A rail station on the 3rd to 4th Street site would not be a prominent feature of the Downtown. A mixed-use building on Front Street as shown in the concept plan could be a prominent feature on Front Street.
- The 3rd to 4th Street site is slightly less convenient for WTA passengers bound for the existing Downtown, as well as rail passengers with Downtown destinations.
- Mail truck access to the 3rd to 4th Street site platform would be difficult.
- For the Campbell/Hanover site, access from the rail platform to the station must be via the WTA bus handling area (including one of the circulation aisles). Incoming checked baggage must also be transported from the platform level to the street level by elevators. For the Campbell/Brunswick site, the baggage would be moved between levels by elevator prior to being claimed by passengers.
- The 3rd to 4th Street area is somewhat less secure.
- Interest of private sector in 3rd to 4th Street site likely to be limited while students and proximity of the Front Street corridor make the Police Building site more attractive to private establishments.

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Table 7. Comparison of Police Headquarters Site and 3rd & 4th Street Site

Evaluation Criteria	Police Headquarters Site	3 rd & 4 th Street Site
Ability to Accommodate Long-Term Transportation Functions	The site can accommodate all functions by designing a multi-level facility. Platform length may be limited without rebuilding 3 rd St bridge. Limited size adds to construction costs. The historic Police Building would be demolished. Some or much parking may have to be located off-site.	Rail tracks and platform must extend under 3 rd St. bridge and into CFCC parking lot for at least 300 ft. For Campbell/Hanover site rail passengers must cross WTA bus area. Sufficient area available at upper level if 3 cottages are moved and another building on Hanover is removed, reuse some existing buildings (on Campbell), and locate bulk of parking in an adjacent block, perhaps north of Hanover. Mail truck access may be difficult. Campbell/Brunswick site has more direct movement between platform and rail service building. Site development will require moving three cottages, bulk of parking in an adjacent block, the use of block north of Hanover for bus may preclude its use for parking.
Impact on Rail Ridership & Operations	Rail ridership has correlation with reasonable walking distance to attractions, good transit access, and parking.	Slightly inferior location compared to Police HQ site. Less central for walking to Downtown destinations (2 blocks farther from waterfront). Also less visible from same destinations. Less landmarks to help arriving passengers orient themselves.
Impact on Intercity Bus Ridership and Operations	Typically greater ridership when stations located downtown. Operators prefer Downtown site, but must be workable (size constraints). Site is very close to existing bus station. More visible site and more convenient to local transit.	Same convenience as Police HQ site provided WTA can also co-locate.
Impact on WTA Operations & Rider Convenience	Most central location in Downtown and adjacent to some existing Downtown routes. Downtown is already significant destination. Ridership should increase with multiple walking destinations and other modes available at station. Minimal impact on WTA.	Slightly inferior location since longer walking distances for most Downtown passengers. More need for connecting Downtown shuttles. Minimal impact on WTA operations.
Impact on NHCOTs	Central for clients/passengers.	Same as Police HQ site.
Vehicular Access and Traffic Impacts	Access to site from abutting streets not as good as other sites, and access roads will be congested at times. Parking garage located on college property on Hanover west of 3 rd Street can be asset to Downtown area (shared use). More accessible by other modes.	Both Third is a wide street and 4 th is a two lane through street, combined the streets allow easy and convenient access. Campbell and Hanover are brick-paved and should not be used for bus access (damage from heavy vehicles).
Ability to access by Pedestrian/Bike	Convenient Ped/Bike access to and from the site and multiple attractions/destinations. Extensive sidewalk network.	Good bike access. Highly visible, convenient and safe pedestrian route to riverfront area needs to be created (via Red Cross and railroad ROW/Police HQ site)

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Table 7 (cont.)

Evaluation Criteria	Police Headquarters Site	3 rd & 4 th Street Site
Compatibility with Existing & Planned Land Uses	Urban areas more insensitive to noise and activity during night hours and a multi-modal facility is already in an adopted plan. Major tourist activities committed in area.	Still within CBD zone, but closer to residential R3 zone. Efforts underway to build on and strengthen historic character of area (particularly Fourth St). Residences on Hanover and east side of Fourth. Generally less intensive uses anticipated for this area.
Development or Redevelopment Stimulant in Surrounding area	Already an integral component of Downtown hotel/convention center redevelopment planning and implementation strategy.	Area is experiencing limited redevelopment (e.g., NOFO restaurant). If appropriately planned and designed, multi-modal center might stimulate some additional development.
Public/Private Joint Development Opportunities	Site may be attractive to private sector for development opportunities. Joint development may benefit from market generated by College students and proximity to Front Street in core of downtown. CFCC interested in developing classroom space and parking on site; Railroad Museum interested in participating. Could provide revenue for project. Opportunity for shared parking.	Opportunities for joint development appear to be limited. Would also require use of additional parcels surrounding site. Less desirable location for Museum. Options should be explored if site selected.
Land Ownership & Availability	Site already owned by City and is planned for redevelopment.. Apartment building under separate ownership on NW corner of Red Cross and Second.	Part of Campbell/Hanover site owned by CFCC who have indicated willingness to make site available. Surrounding parcels in same block (some of which may be required) owned by approximately seven separate owners. Ownership of Hanover to Brunswick block adds more owners to Campbell/Brunswick site.
Image & Public Visibility	High visibility due to pedestrian focus on Front Street, student traffic and downtown vehicular traffic.	Less visible than Police HQ site. Not visible from waterfront activities and development, or Front and Nutt Streets (i.e., high pedestrian areas). More visible to motorists (Third/Fourth traffic).
User Security	High pedestrian traffic areas safer and require less security.	Less secure than Police HQ site due to lower pedestrian traffic and less night activity in area.
Environmental Issues	No contamination cleanup or wetland mitigation anticipated, but the Police Building is historic and would be removed. Adjacent apartments will be impacted by noise.	No contamination visible. Development must be sensitive to adjacent historic buildings and residences.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Multi-modal Steering Committee found in August, 1999 that the Police Headquarters site promised to provide the best location for the multi-modal center. The decision was based on the needs of the potential transportation modes that would use the facility and an evaluation of other sites in addition to the selected site. The Committee's decision affirmed the location of the multi-modal center as part of a mixed-use complex shown in the adopted Downtown plan.

During the final stages of the study a site recommended for consideration by the Cape Fear Community College was also evaluated as a replacement for the Police Headquarters site.

5.1 RECOMMENDED SITE

5.1.1 Traffic Analysis

An assessment of traffic conditions was undertaken for Red Cross Street between and including the Front and Second Street intersections. Based on initial traffic volume counts, it was determined that midday (between 11:45 AM and 1:00 PM) is the peak traffic period for this area. Based on conversations with a representative of CFCC, it was also determined that the peak pedestrian traffic also occurs during the same period. Therefore on Tuesday, February 22, 2000, a turning movement count (in 15-minute increments) was conducted at the intersection of Front and Red Cross Streets between 11:45 AM and 12:45 PM. The count also included pedestrians.

Using data from the turning movement count and the volume counters, the midday peak hourly flow rates, both vehicles and pedestrians, were expanded to the year 2010 using a compound growth factor of three percent per year. The peak period, site-generated traffic (buses and cars) was then added to represent worst-case conditions (in reality the two peaks would not coincide), and the resulting peak hourly flow rates were used to perform an intersection capacity analysis.

Traffic Impacts at Red Cross/Front Intersection

This intersection is unsignalized with Stop control on both approaches of Red Cross Street. The current weekday traffic volume on Red Cross Street is 3,700 vehicles per day (vpd) in front of the Police Headquarters site, and approximately 3,000 vpd on Front Street north of Red Cross. These volumes are well below the capacity of two-lane streets.

The initial analysis indicated that the westbound right turn from Red Cross into Front Street would operate at Level of Service (LOS) F, with a significant average delay, due to the significant pedestrian volume crossing the east approach. A subsequent analysis using current volumes indicated that, while the average delay for the westbound right turn was roughly 10% of that for the year 2000, the movement currently operates at LOS F; again, due to the high volume of pedestrians. The second analysis also confirmed field observations.

An analysis of year 2010 conditions under all-way Stop control indicates that all movements in conflict will operate at LOS B or better. However, the Highway Capacity Software (HCS) all-way Stop analysis does not consider pedestrians. Therefore, the results may not be valid given the heavy pedestrian volumes.

A signalized capacity analysis at the intersection resulted in all movements operating at LOS C or better, including the pedestrian volumes. The initial analysis considered pedestrians moving with the signal phasing. However, field observations indicate that pedestrians rarely travel within the crosswalks. Diagonal moves are prevalent, even at times of peak vehicular traffic. A signalized capacity analysis was performed that provided an exclusive pedestrian phase and resulted in acceptable LOS on all approaches.

The volume studies that were conducted are not sufficient for a traffic signal warrant analysis, especially an evaluation of the pedestrian warrant. However, currently pedestrian-vehicular conflicts result in less than acceptable LOS and will only be exacerbated with increased pedestrians and vehicles. Therefore, it is

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recommended that some consideration be given to collecting sufficient data to perform a proper warrant analysis, and, should a traffic signal be warranted, giving consideration to an exclusive pedestrian phase.

The inclusion of both site and bus traffic does not have a significant impact on the operation of the intersection of Front and Red Cross Streets. The lack of operational efficiency at this intersection is not related to the construction of the multi-modal facility on the proposed site. Therefore, the consideration of this location for the facility should not be dependent upon the LOS of the intersection of Front and Red Cross Streets. However, if this project serves as a catalyst for improvements to traffic facilities in this area, the above recommendations for signalization should be considered.

Traffic Impacts at Red Cross/Second Intersection

This intersection is unsignalized with Stop control on both approaches of Second Street. The current weekday traffic volume on Second Street south of Red Cross is approximately 1,600 vpd. This volume is well below the capacity of two-lane streets.

The data used to develop the peak hourly flow rates for the intersection of Front and Red Cross Streets was used to develop similar flow rates for the intersection of Second and Red Cross Streets. The site-generated and bus traffic volumes were added and an unsignalized capacity analysis for the year 2010 was performed at this intersection. The results indicate that all movements in conflict will operate at LOS A. Constructing the multi-modal facility on the proposed site will not adversely impact the intersection of Second and Red Cross Streets.

Pedestrian Impacts

As indicated earlier, there are large volumes of pedestrians crossing Red Cross Street at Front Street. With expansion of the college these numbers can be expected to increase.

With the exception of vehicular conflicts, no pedestrian safety hazards were identified at the intersection. The major hazard to pedestrians is the traffic that will increase over time regardless of whether or where the multi-modal center is built.

It is recommended that measures be implemented to improve pedestrian safety and amenity. These could include:

- Add all-way stop or a traffic signal at the intersection of Red Cross Street at Front Street. More detailed analysis is required to determine the most appropriate control.
- Brick paving and/or raising the entire intersection to provide a speed plateau and visual signal to motorists.
- Narrowing both Front (between Walnut and Hanover Streets) and Red Cross Streets by adding landscaped “chokers” near the intersections and midblock (similar to other sections of Front Street). The location and extent of the narrowings would be subject to more detailed traffic and design studies.
- If the multi-modal center were located on the Police Headquarters site, incorporating a pedestrian overpass into the design to connect to the Allied Health addition building, through the site and over the railroad tracks (as shown in the concept plan).

Some of the above measures are directed at “calming” traffic. The possibility of closing Front Street for the two blocks between Walnut and Hanover Streets has also been raised to improve pedestrian safety. This is feasible for the following reasons:

- There is no driveway access to any properties along this section (except for the CFCC campus north of the railroad tracks).
- The street network in this area has sufficient capacity to carry the displaced traffic.

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However, there would be undesirable consequences resulting from the closure:

- Motorists, particularly visitors could be confused and disoriented when faced with a street closure.
- The displaced traffic would be diverted to and have impacts on the alternative routes, particularly Nutt and Water Streets.

In conclusion, closing a section of Front Street would have benefits for pedestrians, but the pros and cons should be compared to other, less extreme alternatives.

5.1.2 Noise Analysis

Part 772 of Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations contains the noise regulations promulgated by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The regulations require that a noise analysis be conducted for all highway projects. The same analysis can be applied to any traffic-generating project. Anticipated noise levels are computed for the noise-sensitive areas on the basis of expected design-hour or worst-case conditions. The regulations also contain noise abatement criteria considered by FHWA to be upper limits of acceptable noise levels for exterior land uses and outdoor activities and for certain interior uses (refer to Table 8).

The analysis was undertaken with the following inputs:

- The latest concept plan for the site was used.
- Year 2010 traffic was considered, assuming a three- percent annual growth rate.
- The Police Headquarters site was assumed to be fully operational as a multi-modal center.
- The number of future bus routes serving Downtown was increased to 12 based on long-term WTA plans.
- All buses enter from Second Street and exit onto Red Cross Street opposite the proposed Allied Health addition building.
- The peak bus period was assumed to coincide with the peak street traffic period.
- The proposed 35-space parking lot abutting Red Cross Street is accessed from Second Street.
- Traffic generated by the Police Building was subtracted from the existing traffic, but traffic now parking in the portion of the site between Nutt and Front Streets was not subtracted since some parking is retained in this area in the plan.
- Most of the parking for the proposed development on the site would be located off-site. Regardless of where parking is located, a portion of the traffic is assumed to use Red Cross Street based on likely travel patterns.

An estimate of the exterior noise level at the face of the proposed Allied Health addition building was made using the FHWA Stamina/Optima Traffic Noise Prediction Model. The model takes into account traffic volumes, type of traffic, speeds and street grades.

The exterior noise level at the face of the building was estimated at 74.6 dBA. The corresponding interior noise level would be 44.6 to 49.6 dBA since the noise levels inside an insulated, air conditioned building are typically 25 to 30 dBA less than outside the building. Therefore the noise abatement criteria for the interior of a school building would not be violated. Note however, that these are average values for the worst hour, and at for short periods during the hour, noise levels could be higher.

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Table 8. Noise abatement criteria (NAC) hourly A-weighted sound level–decibels (dBA)

Activity Category	L_{eq} (H)	Description of Activity Category
A	57 (exterior)	Lands on which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of those qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its intended purpose.
B	67 (exterior)	Picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sports areas, parks, residences, motels, hotels, schools, churches, libraries, and hospitals.
C	72	Developed lands, properties, or activities not included in Categories A or B above.
D	–	Undeveloped lands.
E	52 (interior)	Residences, motels, hotels, public meeting rooms, schools, churches, libraries, hospitals, and auditoriums.

Source: Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 772 (23 CFR 772).

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5.1.3 Impact on Rail Operations

Of the five alternative sites considered, the Police Headquarters site is the closest one to the Downtown Core (e.g., Cotton Exchange and other buildings), approximately 1,000 feet from these attractions or about a four to eight minute walk. The Police Headquarter site also provides the most visibility for a multi-modal transportation center in the downtown portion of the Wilmington Urban Area. Also because the rail operations will be grade separated, there are no expected conflicts with buses and other vehicles in the downtown area caused by rail crossings.

5.1.4 Impact on WTA Operations

Of the five alternative sites considered, the Police Headquarters site is the closest to the Downtown Core (e.g., Cotton Exchange and other buildings); it is approximately 1,000 feet from these attractions or about a four to eight minute walk. The Police Headquarter site also provides a minimum amount of deviation from the existing and proposed WTA routes in this part of the Wilmington Urban Area. Also, because the rail operations will be grade separated, there are no expected impacts to the WTA bus schedules because of conflict with rail crossings or traffic congestion.

5.1.5 Vibration Analysis

According to a Parsons Brinckerhoff vibration specialist, vibrations from trains entering or departing the station will not create any problems given that (a) the proposed Allied Health addition building would be approximately 300 feet from the tracks, and (b) trains will be travelling at very low speeds. Vibration impacts would also be minimized since trains would most likely be reversed into the station to avoid a build-up of diesel fumes within the partially enclosed station area.

5.2 CONCEPT SITE PLAN

Figure 6 shows a perspective of the concept plan for the Police Building site. The drawing's labels show the intention of incorporating the CFCC expansion and relocated museum into the complex.

5.3 COST & FUNDING

5.3.1 Estimated Capital Costs

Preliminary estimates of capital costs have been prepared based on the conceptual site plans presented in Section 4.5.2. The total cost for the entire complex represented in the conceptual plans is estimated to be \$34.6 million, including design fees and a 20 percent contingency (\$5.5 million). The concept plan includes space for private sector rental space (retail and office). If the size of the mixed-use building is reduced to the minimum area required by the transportation operators, college and museum, the preliminary cost estimate could be reduced to \$22.4 million.

Section 4.5.3 presents cost estimates for the complex in its reduced minimum size. The share of the cost allocated to the museum could likely be in the \$3.4 million range, the transportation modes about \$ 8.9 million and the college about \$9.9 million. The cost estimates are considered to be tentative and conservative at this stage of the development. As additional design studies occur and interaction with the client transpires to consider major design issues, the cost may be reduced.

If the site were developed only as a transportation center the costs would likely change for the transportation operations, however the direction and magnitude of the change has not been estimated.

Figure 6. Police HQ Site Perspective

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5.3.2 Possible Funding Sources

This report examines new alternative revenue sources and financing strategies that may be utilized by the Wilmington MPO to fund their transportation capital and operating needs. It should be noted that the MPO must coordinate closely with NCDOT and the various divisions and branches that will be involved with the funding of a multi-modal transportation center. The opportunity exists to leverage federal funds with matching funds generated at the local, regional and state levels.

Local Funding Sources

The six dedicated revenue sources that are examined are: sales tax, property tax, occupancy tax, rental car tax, vehicle title transfer tax and a motor fuels retail sales tax.

- An increase in the retail sales tax provides for a strong and stable revenue source that grows with the economy over time.
- The revenue potential from an occupancy tax and/or a rental car tax is more limited. However, New Hanover County could enjoy a captured rental car consumer market because of the location of the Wilmington Airport, and this tax would export the burden of the tax to visitors that are using New Hanover County transportation facilities.
- A county level vehicle title transfer tax has strong revenue potential, and would be in addition to the existing State Highway Use Tax. This creates the incentive, however, for truck and car owners (especially businesses) to register their vehicles in border counties, thus eroding part of the tax base.
- An increased annual vehicle registration fee has limited revenue potential and, as a unit tax, does not keep pace with inflation (the fee would have to be increased periodically).
- The extension of a retail sales tax to include motor fuels has moderate revenue potential, depending on the incremental tax rate. Given the current cost of fuel in North Carolina, a tax levy increasing the price per gallon by one cent, for instance, would likely push the “critical threshold” that moves consumers to look elsewhere for the same product.
- A property tax, as always, has very strong revenue potential, but bears the least direct relationship to transportation use relative to the other potential revenue vehicles.

In addition to a dedicated revenue source, project specific financing approaches must be considered within any specific financing plan. When benefits from a transportation improvement are well defined, a benefit assessment district may be created in order to recapture some of the initial investment. This also holds true for tax increment financing. With a benefit assessment district, a formal agreement is reached and private participants openly agree to be taxed in order to finance a specific transportation investment that will benefit them. Tax increment financing is completely dependent on property values within the improved corridor increasing, so that the revenue yield from the existing property base would increase, creating new revenue to finance the project.

Dedicated funding sources are, of course, the most desirable funding sources in that they provide a stable and reliable source of revenue over a determined period of time. This allows for more comprehensive planning, and can accelerate project completion as the dedicated revenue stream provides security that can be bonded against, thereby accelerating an agency’s cash flow. Private sector partnering and transportation-based revenue sources should be considered in the context of a specific project. When considering these project specific approaches, it is important to determine the economic benefits produced by a specific investment, and to identify the beneficiaries so that some form of benefit capture, whether it be tolling strategies or a benefit assessment district can be assessed in terms of its feasibility. While each financing mechanism should be considered on an independent basis, a successful financing plan will incorporate many of the above listed financing techniques.

Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

Federal Funding Sources

Possible sources of federal funding includes:

- FTA Formula (Section 5307) funding.
- Section 5309 Discretionary New Starts funding.
- Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding, which can be used for transit and multi-modal projects.
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding.
- Borders and Corridors Grants, a USDOT discretionary program that authorizes the allocation of dollars to states and MPOs.
- Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP), another USDOT discretionary program that gives them the authority to allocate dollars to states and MPOs.
- Other funds; in theory, the state can transfer from the National Highway System (NHS), Bridge, Interstate Maintenance, and Minimum Allocation and Donor State Bonus funds to the STP fund. These funds are usually committed to highway projects.

5.4 JOINT DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The multi-modal center would be a periodic generator of activity. Most activity would occur on the local bus transfer platform as passengers change buses and some begin a walk to nearby destinations. Additional activity would occur upon the arrival of a train from Charlotte or Raleigh. It is assumed for the foreseeable future trains would arrive about two times each day. The Intercity bus station would also generate a modest amount of activity with a facility served by four bus bays.

A primary advantage of a downtown location would be to take advantage of other activity generators in the vicinity of the site and add to the range of services available to the concentration of people using the downtown. A mixed-use complex associated with the multi-modal center is an attractive option to increase the level of transportation services for downtown and to spread the level of activity beyond the limited transportation activity that would be expected to occur. The Police Headquarters site has the opportunity to live up to the vision displayed in the adopted Downtown Plan.

The Police Headquarters site has the greatest potential for an effective joint development arrangement when compared to all of the competing alternative sites. The Police Headquarters site has the advantage of proximity to the Cape Fear Community College and the Wilmington Railroad Museum; both institutions have expressed a need for expansion. The site is also near the downtown core area along Front Street that may add to the potential for retail and office uses. The retail market appeal of the site may also be reinforced by the presence of a growing number of students and staff at the College and an expanded Museum attraction.

Development of a combined parking garage may also be a product of a combined development program. Such an arrangement between the management entity for the transportation operators and the College could help meet the modest needs of the multi-modal center and the growing needs of the College.

To fulfill the promise of joint development on the police headquarters site, a cooperative program must be developed with the major players including managers of the transportation modes, the Cape Fear Community College and the Wilmington Railroad Museum. The cooperative venture may also include other interests that control sources of funding. A role for the private sector in the arrangements for the site may also exist depending on the desire for the major players to involve them and the strength of the market for private space.

APPENDIX A: STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

Meeting Date: April 28, 1999 (10:00 AM)

Location: Wilmington City Council Conference Room, City Hall

Subject: Steering Committee Kickoff Meeting

Present: Ronnie Parker, Port City Taxi
Carl Brown, Cape Fear Community College
Bill Morine, Wilmington Railroad Museum
Kent Jackson, City of Wilmington
Howard Capps, Vice-Chair WTA
Steve Head, NCDOT Rail Division
Bill Austin, City of Wilmington
Elvis Latiolais, Carolina Trailways
Chris O'Keefe, New Hanover County Planning
Lisa Dyer Hollowell, NCDOT Public Transit Division
Bob Murphrey, DARE, Inc. (Downtown Revitalization)
Howard Loving, Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce
George Alexiou, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Slade McCalip, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Handouts: Background Information for Kickoff Meeting, Project Scope & Schedule

Introductions

During introductions there was a brief discussion of other agencies and persons to invite to be on this Steering Committee to insure that all issues related to a City of Wilmington Multi-modal Transportation Center would be addressed in a comprehensive manner. The following persons and \ or agencies were mentioned: Frank Block, Mayor's Rail Committee; Dave Shingleton, Greyhound Bus Lines; Dick Scott, UNC-W; Judith Grizzel, Cape Fear Coastal Convention & Visitors Bureau (she's already been contacted and will provide information and input upon request); Chris O'Keefe, New Hanover County Planning (present at the meeting and representing the Bicycling Community); someone from the Wilmington Historical Society; Someone from Community Development to coordinate redevelopment planning issues in the vicinity of the rail line (mentioned later in the meeting), and someone from the Retail Business Sector (mentioned later in the meeting).

Elvis Latiolais briefly explained how shared intercity and local bus operations work in other areas.

Study Objectives

The focus of the study is downtown.

The study will consider locations for intercity rail, intercity bus, and transit center locations, and whether or not they can be combined into one location.

Bill Morine stated that the Railroad Museum is in the process of studying a possible change of location for the museum. He also added that due to the federal transportation legislation (ISTEA) the inclusion of the railroad museum in a multi-modal center could provide additional funding (through the enhancements category) for the construction of the project.

3. Study Scope & Schedule

Page 2 of the Handout was discussed and George Alexiou emphasized that this is a planning study and not a design project.

Role of Steering Committee

Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

Each meeting will be from 10:00 AM to 12:00PM for a maximum of 2 hours each.

Information will be provided to Steering Committee members before each meeting.

The committee is to provide input on all the issues that need to be considered for the study.

Schedule Future Meetings

The following meeting dates were discussed and approved by the committee members with the understanding that if a member could not be present that they could send an alternate in their place: June 2, 1999; July 9, 1999; August 11, 1999. All meetings will commence at 10:00 AM and end at 12:00 PM.

Other significant meetings that pertain to public transportation in Wilmington and surrounding counties were mentioned (at different times during the meeting) and include: WTA Brainstorming Session on May 22nd; the Wilmington Transportation Summit on May 26th; and the Downtown Vision 2020 Committee that meets on the 4th Monday of each month.

Background Information

The handout was discussed and WTA Route Schedules were distributed.

Previously adopted plans were reviewed. Discussion on the Wilmington Downtown Plan: Vision 2020 envisions new development in the north part of the Downtown.

Under Issues it was mentioned that a downtown multi-modal center would very likely go on the rail station site. The "police station" site was shown to the steering committee on a map.

WTA service can be easily rerouted to accommodate the location of a multi-modal center at the proposed intercity rail station site; the current bus transfer location should be moved off the street; there is currently no funding to construct a new bus transfer facility, but it is a TIP request by the City of Wilmington; George asked if there was data as to where passengers are transferring and to determine if bus travel is more suburban in nature.

Intercity rail information was provided by Steve Head. NCDOT is in the process of acquiring ROW in the Wilmington Downtown now. The right of way required for the proposed station is owned by the City, CFCC, or CSX. David King, Norris Tolson and the Governor have been strong advocates of intercity and regional rail and it is expected that this support will continue for the next two years (after that the Governors term of office expires).

Some issues that may need to be addressed for intercity rail include; customer parking, bicycle parking and tractor trailer access.

Intercity bus background discussion included the need for inviting a representative from the Greyhound Bus Line to be on the Steering Committee. Elvis Latiolais provided a name and phone number to Slade.

Carl Brown mentioned that Cape Fear Community College is still expanding and expects to have a maximum student body of 6,000 students. The community college is concerned how the added students and the multi-modal center can both fit in the "police station" area together, and added that the CFCC has its own needs. Carl requested that the CFCC meet separately with the study staff to discuss this project.

Bill Austin stated that the City knows about the CFCC needs and that this study is intended to address those needs and concerns. Bill also stated that the City has discussed this issue with Dr. McKeithan (CFCC President) on two occasions.

Multi-Modal Center Examples

Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

Slides were shown and included; a 10 acre Multi-Modal Center site in Irvine, CA; a 1 block site in Fullerton, CA; a 1 block site in Arizona; a local bus transfer center on a parking deck in Greenville, SC; and a proposed Charlotte's Intercity bus and rail center. During the presentation Bill Morine requested information as to passenger projections. Steve Head responded that rail passenger projections would not be developed for another two months. Elvis Latiolais asked why the "head-in" bus berths used by intercity bus is not also used by local buses which seem to prefer the "straight through" or "sawtooth" design. Elvis also emphasized that Trailways is very much interested in sharing as much of a terminal facility as possible as it is much more efficient to share facilities.

Preliminary Issues, 9. WTA Needs, and 10. Functions to be Accommodated, were all discussed together.

Howard Capps mentioned that it might be that there is a need for more than one bus transfer center. That the WTA is having a "brainstorming" meeting on May 22nd to consider the overall WTA route configuration and a transfer center on the block of land between 16th, 17th, Wooster, and Dawson Streets. That WTA needs to provide more service to annexed areas. A downtown bus transfer center is not a priority.

George Alexiou mentioned that local transit usually and primarily serves the transit dependent population. These users must be given a high priority in considering service changes. That Mark Maus knows best the operating characteristics of the WTA bus routes and where their customers are.

Bill Morine wanted to know if parking would be free for a fee. He also wanted a typical passenger profile of intercity rail passengers.

Other issues included: the accommodation of rental cars; long term business parking; relationship to park & ride lots; cab and shuttle service to hotels.

An issue would be how much non-transportation uses are needed. In discussing retail services that could be included in multi-modal facility, CFCC retail needs that are currently or will be accommodated on campus included food and bookstore that will be located in a new 50,000 sq. ft building. Chris O'Keefe identified the need for more dry-cleaning services downtown. Bob Murphrey again mentioned the significance of the Downtown Plan and that in the next 5 years (and beyond) there will be significant development-redevelopment shift to the north part of downtown.

Bob Murphrey showed the vacant 9-acre lot where a new Marriott Hotel is planned that will also include office, retail, and residential development. He also mentioned that there are approximately 75 more acres in that section of the city that is being planned for development-redevelopment.

Howard Capps identified that an additional rail corridor that could serve Pender County transportation needs (i.e., commuter rail) is the Weldon CSX Corridor. It is a 26 mile abandoned rail corridor that has 150' wide ROW that is reserved by court order for access to the state port.

Steve Head mentioned that freight rail traffic to\from Wilmington is growing. That there are no plans at this time to expand passenger rail service to Wilmington other than the Charlotte to Wilmington Service (study to be started in the next week or two and then finished later this year). That there are no plans to extend service to the Castle Hayne area at this time.

For our study we should assume that rail service will be coming to Wilmington. The amount of demand for rail service will be developed as part of the rail study.

Bill Austin provided a brief overview of the draft Wilmington Comprehensive Transportation Plan currently being developed. The study area for the plan is the current Wilmington Urban Area. That there will be no local rail service. That the WTA will expand by ten-fold (4,000 daily riders in 1999 growing to 40,000 in 2025). That it may be that WTA will merge with the county's para-transit service, this has been presented to the TAC for consideration. That the Transportation Summit meeting on May 26th will include bus, auto, park & ride lots, TDM, bicycle and walking modes. That there will be "mini-hubs" for transit transfers.

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Howard Capps emphasized that the committee needs to be thinking of the transportation system that will be needed 30 years from now.

11. Site Options

Bill Morine provided the four locations that the Railroad Museum Foundation is considering for relocating the museum. In order of priority of consideration they are: 1) the existing RR Museum site, 2) Existing Police Station Site, 3) Almont Warehouse (currently scheduled for demolition), and 4) Almont Shipping Co. Headquarters at the corner of Brunswick & Nutt Streets.

Bill Austin reminded George of a landowner south of Memorial Bridge that has a site that needs to be considered.

12. Other Items

More detailed information will be provided to the committee members before the next meeting.

An updated steering committee member list will be distributed to each committee member.

Bill Morine volunteered the use of the Railroad Museum for possible displays of public exhibits on rail passenger service.

Cc: All present
Absent steering committee members

Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

Meeting Date: June 2, 1999 (10:00 AM)

Location: Wilmington City Council Conference Room, City Hall
Subject: Steering Committee Second Meeting

Present: Frank Funk, Wilmington Railroad Museum
Kent Jackson, City of Wilmington
Marc Maus, WTA
Pat Melvin, New Hanover Transportation Services
Annette Crumpton, New Hanover County Dept. of Aging
Steve Head, NCDOT Rail Division
Susi Hamilton, City of Wilmington
Bill Austin, City of Wilmington
Elvis Latiolais, Carolina Trailways
Kristin White, New Hanover County Planning
Lisa Dyer Hollowell, NCDOT Public Transit Division
Bob Murphrey, DARE, Inc. (Downtown Revitalization)
Donald Sellars, Town of Leland
Laura Wilson, Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce
George Alexiou, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Slade McCalip, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Handouts: Background Information for Kickoff Meeting, Project Scope & Schedule

Introductions

New faces at the meeting included; Mr. Frank Funk, Laura Wilson, Donald Sellars, Kristin White, Pat Melvin, Annette Crumpton, and Susi Hamilton.

Change of Venue for July meeting & Corrections to the April 28, 1999 Meeting Notes

Those present decided to change the July meetings date from the 9th to the 2nd.

Mr. Sellars expressed concern that the focus of the study is downtown. As a member of the Transportation Advisory Committee for the Wilmington MPO, he wanted the feasibility of a multi-modal transportation center (MMC) determined across the Cape Fear River in Brunswick County. He is very concerned that a MMC downtown will create more congestion. He also stated that the purpose of the Feasibility Study is to determine the regional need for a MMC and not just a downtown MMC especially given the 20 to 30 year forecasts for traffic and the new bridges to be constructed across the Cape Fear River.

George Alexiou responded that a comparison of suburban and downtown location advantages and disadvantages would be developed.

Mr. Frank Funk provided corrections to the meeting notes for the April 28th meeting to include: changing "would" to "could" on page 2, changing "Almont House" to "Almont Shipping Company Headquarters" on page 4 and also changing "Nut" to "Nutt" on page 4. Changing "for public meetings" to "for possible public study exhibits on rail passenger service" (the Railroad Museum is not suitable for public meetings).

Preliminary Facility Space Requirements

George Alexiou provided an overview of the report which is intended to document the space needed by each different user of a potential Wilmington MMC.

Ms. Melvin provided a brief overview of the needs of the New Hanover County Human Service Transportation System. As it is now, it is a separate paratransit system that is planned to be combined with the WTA bus system. They have one fixed route at this time from Wilmington to Castle Hayne. They have 22 vans and 1 mini-bus that will carry 16 passengers. Their existing facility, at 3rd and Cowan Streets, is

Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

1,100 square feet. They have 1 full time staff and 20 drivers. They would like to merge with WTA or at least be collocated. Bill Austin also spoke in support of combining the paratransit system with WTA's system.

Other systems mentioned that may need space in a MMC included; the downtown trolley (run by Cape Fear River Boats), and hotel shuttles.

Kristin White mentioned that the MMC should have public shower facilities to accommodate bicyclists. Elvis Latiolais made a point to inform the committee that public shower facilities would be a serious security issue within the MMC since outsiders would be tempted to use them. Elvis recommended against including public showers in the MMC.

Frank Funk noticed that there were more stalls and urinals for men than stalls for women and recommended that they be equal.

Elvis Latiolais provided detailed space requirements for the MMC which are less than what was described in the report. He mentioned that Trailways needs a maximum of only 736 square feet in a combine lobby area. Trailways is very concerned about having too much space and it not being cost effective for their needs. Slade McCalip stated that he developed the space requirements based upon information provided by NCDOT's Rail Division (which suggested the proposed Durham MMC program as appropriate for Wilmington) and that they can be adjusted. The purpose of going with the greater space requirements is so that they can be used to determine an "absolute maximum" of space needed for identifying sites that can accommodate that amount of space. Elvis's specific requirements are: page 3, needs 180 square feet for ticket area, on page 4, needs 108 square feet for manager's office, needs a secured storeroom in addition to the baggage area on page 3, and needs two parking spaces near baggage room area on page 6.

Steve Head mentioned that the NCDOT Rail Division expects significant growth in Wilmington in the next 20 years. The Wilmington area has a higher than average growth rate than anywhere else in NC. The station space requirements should also allow for peak capacity season variations. That the space needed will be much greater in the summer than other times. A MMC in Wilmington will not be a "normal" station in the same sense as a Durham station. It will have significant seasonal traffic.

Marc Maus mentioned that the population of Wilmington has increased from 120,000 to 150,000 in the last 20 years and is projected to grow to more than 200,000 in the next 15 years.

Elvis wants more consolidation of common spaces in this MMC than in the Durham station, especially in the lobby area. In the Durham plan, uses were segregated.

George Alexiou mentioned that the space requirements are not finished and other agencies/organizations will be contacted to determine their space requirements for instance the hotel shuttle space requirements, etc. George Alexiou emphasized that this is not a design study, and details would be worked out in later studies. This study is intended to understand the space requirements as an input to determining the suitability of alternative sites.

George Alexiou went on to discuss the external space requirements.

Frank Funk mentioned that the RR Museum Parking needed is 10 short-term spaces, 2 bus spaces for tours, and 10 employee/volunteer spaces.

Elvis asked that the table at the end of the report to be corrected to say "intercity buses" instead of "intracity buses". He also needs a staging area space for 3 buses that is not adjacent to the building.

George Alexiou described the space requirements (i.e., 1700 parking spaces) needed by the CFCC to include a brief description of their campus expansion plans.

Bill Austin mentioned that the space planning for the Police Headquarters site should assume that the building is removed. Laura Wilson confirmed that NCDOT Staff recommends the building for removal when

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she toured the building with them previously. Their recommendations were based upon the facts that it is not ADA compliant and has asbestos hazards and other serious problems.

Susi Hamilton advised that the Police Headquarters building is not national register site but is a contributing resource to the Wilmington National Register Historic District. She asked that the steering committee not “write off” the building without an evaluation of the costs to renovate the building and that there be consideration of including the building in plans for a MMC at that site. It may also be eligible for tax credits if developed for non-public uses.

WTA Update & Transfer Site Options

Marc Maus made a presentation about the current plans for the WTA System. He used a map of the proposed WTA Route expansions to illustrate the growth of the system based upon the city’s annexations of the area to the south and east of the downtown. WTA plans on expanding by at least 4 more routes to serve the annexed areas (or a total of 14). The Phase I annexation started on January 1st. They are planning to add a route to Wrightsville Beach. He added that Wrightsville Beach doesn’t want bus services to their area. The expansion plans are part of the proposed Wilmington MPO Transportation Plan’s Transit Element. WTA expects that the Phase II Annexation will be out of the courts in the next 12 months. This phase of annexation will be further south. He went on to discuss the need for “mini-hubs” and that WTA was looking at a site near the intersection of College and Oleander streets. Downtown will no longer be the focus of the transit system. There are plans for a deviated fixed route to serve in a north/south corridor. He showed the planned park and ride lots on the map. In 2003 the WTA will need 5 million dollars for new buses and will need 1 million dollars from the city as a matching fund.

Bill Austin added that the intersection of College and Oleander is under study by NCDOT for a “single point urban interchange” and that there may be additional right of way needed for that project that may affect the land available for a transfer center. A concept design of the new interchange is due to be completed this fall.

No matter what happens with the WTA expansion a downtown transfer station is still needed. It is still not yet clear as to whether the MMC needs to be that transfer station. Other locations in the downtown will be examined for a possible bus transfer site that could accommodate 6 buses.

Multi-modal Center Options

George Alexiou wanted to get from the committee their thoughts on what additional sites and other considerations need to be evaluated for a possible MMC for Wilmington.

Frank Funk wanted to know why the Almont Buildings are not a potential MMC site. Susi Hamilton pointed out that the Almont site is not in the Downtown Plan for a MCC and that the adjacent site is being developed as a Marriott Hotel. In addition, the Almont site may not be for sale, and Almont Shipping may not be done with the site. The site is planned for a convention center eventually.

Steve Head pointed out that most of the rail corridor for the Police HQ site is in place, and there are no at-grade crossings within Wilmington. NCDOT is working with the New Hanover School System to obtain the land at their school site at the “Y” in the rail road tracks northeast of the Police HQ site, which is necessary to connect to the Police HQ site.

He also mentioned that a MMC site located south of the Memorial Bridge adds 30 – 35 minutes to the total travel time for Charlotte passenger trips. There are also many at-grade rail crossings and a lot of residential neighborhoods that would have to be traversed if using the southern site for a train station. He also expressed a concern that there would be environmental justice issues if trains traveled that route. The WTA mentioned that there are no new routes planned to serve that area of Wilmington.

The matrix in the handout was then discussed. Some discussion followed about whether or not a MMC in the downtown should be located at the airport or across the Cape Fear River.

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George Alexiou pointed out that the focus of the downtown growth is directed to the northern part of town and also that this is where the CFCC is planning on expanding. Elvis Latiolais stated that they have been approached by the CFCC to sell their property to them.

Bill Austin suggested that a meeting be set up with Mr. Sellars to discuss possible MMC sites across the Cape Fear River in Brunswick County.

Donald Sellars pointed out: that there are 225 acres available across the bridge from downtown; that there is the Davis laydown yard in Leland; that most tourists coming to Wilmington are going to the beaches; that the planned extension of the Smith Creek Parkway comes **across the bridge**.

George Alexiou asked the committee on their thoughts about whether the rail station should come downtown.

Laura Wilson stated that it is important to have walking access to the rail station.

Steve Head mentioned that NCDOT and other cities across the state are all trying or are locating their rail stations in their downtown areas. He went on to describe the rail station projects in Raleigh and Charlotte. He mentioned that NCDOT is not "close minded", but that if the goal is to bring rail to Wilmington that it should be located at a downtown station.

Elvis Latiolais stated that downtown locations are always best for intercity bus stations. Suburban bus stations had been tried, but that they showed a decrease in usage.

Frank Funk stated that the rail museum wants the rail station to be in the downtown.

Steve Head stated that rail station ridership numbers are up in the downtowns. Rail stations also enhance the downtowns.

Kristin White stated that if the funding of the station were to be a public/private venture then that would affect its location. Steve Head described how the Charlotte rail station is planned to be integrated with a future private sector agency for joint development using the air rights for future development. He also feels that the space requirements needed by the CFCC can be accommodated by using the space above a rail station on the Police HQ sites. It is advantageous to use a public/private funding option to offset the public costs of the station. Kristin replied that any building shouldn't be too tall, as then it will lose its pedestrian scale.

George Alexiou asked Mr. Sellars about his concerns regarding a downtown MMC. Mr. Sellars replied that traffic congestion is a big concern and that a downtown MMC would bring traffic to an already congested area. Donald Sellars responded that the rail station could be located across the bridge and that shuttles or rail could bring the downtown trips across the river. The rail station could be located across the bridge, and shuttles or local rail could bring the downtown trips across the river. Land is also cheaper across the river.

Kristin White responded that a downtown MMC would provide for alternative transportation modes to the car. The trips are coming anyway so why not give them a choice of using bus, bike and walking.

Bill Austin suggested that maybe there may be a rail stop on the Leland side of the river and Steve Head agreed that that could be accommodated. Perhaps this could be collocated with a planned WTA park and ride lot, and train passengers wanting leave their car could use this location.

With regard to property across the river would be cheaper, Steve Head noted that the city already owned the Police HQ site.

George Alexiou mentioned that the Police HQ site can be used to help alleviate the pedestrian crossing issues in the vicinity of the CFCC buildings near Red Cross and Front Streets. He also mentioned that a matrix would be developed to determine the advantages and disadvantages of a suburban MMC versus a downtown MMC.

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Steve Head strongly suggested that PB staff schedule an interview with Allan Paul of the NCDOT Rail Division to insure that all rail operational considerations are included in the downtown vs. suburban MMC matrix.

George Alexiou mentioned that the Police HQ site will be used as a baseline for comparison purposes when doing the matrix.

Elvis Latiolais stated that it would be more difficult for WTA and Greyhound/Trailways to service a MMC outside of the downtown.

Bill Austin mentioned that pedestrian access is a key issue with the having a site across the river. The area across the river is being planned as a residential area with apartments and condominiums. There is also the ¾ mile WTA service area boundary that has to be considered. But he didn't want to "rule out" a Brunswick County MMC location. He also wanted to mention that the Smith Creek Parkway would reduce the travel time to Brunswick County.

Police Headquarters Site Considerations

George Alexiou made a presentation showing some preliminary architectural sketches of the Police HQ Site to illustrate the kind of issues and constraints that will be encountered in trying to site a MMC in the downtown area.

Issues and constraints to be resolved and addressed include:

Parks: is the park at the intersection of Nutt and Red Cross Streets an official city park? Bob Murphrey responded that the park there is an informal park used by the CFCC, but that the land is owned by the city and that it is a remnant of a redevelopment sale to the city.

Bridges: the Front Street bridge does not have the 23-foot clearance desired by NCDOT. The clearance is about 18 feet. Steve Head thinks this is acceptable and the tracks might need to be extended to Nutt Street. He is obtaining the bridge diagrams that show the supporting columns. But he did say that Allan Paul at the NCDOT Rail Division is the person to confirm whether a clearance less than 23 feet would be adequate.

Walls: the walls to the north and south of the track bed appear not wide enough to accommodate 3 tracks, and can the walls be removed? Steve Head responded that the walls are historic and should be retained. Frank Funk stated that the previous or historic rail station accommodated 8 tracks. This is another rail station specification that should be discussed with Allan Paul. If need be, take the rail platform all the way to Nutt Street to save the walls.

Bus Area: some of the preliminary drawings keep the Police HQ building, and have the intercity and local bus loading areas on Nutt Street. Will this type of street activity be appropriate given the convention center/hotel uses across the street? Elvis Latiolais responded that the sawtooth parking design is very inefficient for intercity bus luggage handling operations. Buses should face into the building and bays should be 14 feet wide.

George Alexiou stated that based upon preliminary space requirements and architectural sketches that the Police HQ site could work for a downtown MMC with or without the Police HQ building itself being present.

Kent Jackson stated that the city is looking for a new facility for the Police HQ and that it may or may not remove the existing building and replace it with a new one.

The meeting was then adjourned, as it was 12 o'clock.

Cc: All present
Absent steering committee members

Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

Meeting Date: August 11, 1999 (10:00 AM)
Location: Wilmington City Council Conference Room, City Hall
Subject: Steering Committee Third Meeting
Present: Bill Morine, Wilmington Railroad Museum Foundation, INC.
Dexter Hayes, New Hanover County Planning
Kent Jackson, City of Wilmington
Steve Head, NCDOT Rail Division
Susi Hamilton, City of Wilmington
Bill Austin, City of Wilmington
Elvis Latiolais, Carolina Trailways
Chris O'keefe, New Hanover County Planning
Lisa Dyer Hollowell, NCDOT Public Transit Division
Bob Murphrey, DARE, Inc. (Downtown Revitalization)
David Hewett, Town of Leland
Laura Wilson, Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce
Frank Block, Wilmington Passenger Rail Committee
Howard Loving, Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce
George Alexiou, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Slade McCalip, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Absent: Carl Brown, Cape Fear Community College
Wayne Clark, City of Wilmington
Marc Maus, Wilmington Transit Authority
Pat Melvin, New Hanover County
Donald Sellars, Town of Leland
Dave Shingleton, Greyhound Lines
Bobbi Brown, Town of Leland
Ronnie Parker, Port City Taxi
Judith Grizzel, Cape Fear Coastal Convention Center and Visitors Bureau

Handouts: Agenda and Completed Site Matrix

Mailouts: Third Meeting Memo, Revised Facility Space Report, June 2, 1999 Meeting Notes, Blank Site Matrix and Site Descriptions Memo

Introductions

New faces at the meeting included; Mr. Frank Block and Dexter Hayes.

George Alexiou then presented an overview of the committee's progress to date;

1st meeting had an overview of multi-modal transportation centers (MMC), background information specific to Wilmington, and the key elements of a multi-modal transportation center.

2nd meeting was more of a "nuts and bolts" discussion of what types of uses could be located in the Wilmington multi-modal transportation center to includes specifics like the length of the rail platform, etc..

3rd meeting's purpose is to select a preferred location for the Wilmington multi-modal transportation center and whatever modes of transportation are to be located there. It was suggested that the preferred site is one that could accommodate as many of the transportation modes available to Wilmington as possible (i.e., especially passenger rail, WTA and the New Hanover Co. Transportation System).

That the next meeting will be an open house to get the public's input on the committee's preferred site, which will be brought back to the committee at the next steering committee after the open house.

Updated Facility Space Report

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George Alexiou gave a brief description of the changes to the facilities space report to include;

The non-transportation functions (i.e., museum and classrooms) had been taken out of the report to make it just transportation specific.

The report is now just a technical memorandum that describes the transportation functions specific to the Wilmington Urban Area that should be accommodated in a multi-modal transportation center.

Frank Block stated that this meeting is really a decision process and one the first decisions should be whether or not the rail station should be at the Airport and whether or not a rail station for the Wilmington area should be able to eventually accommodate six passenger trains.

George Alexiou went on to say that, while there is no quantitative data as to where to locate a rail station at this time, there are other considerations that can help locate the rail station such as would someone who has traveled from Charlotte want to catch a plane at the airport? It is doubtful that this would be a valid trip purpose for siting a MMC in Wilmington at this time. He also mentioned that the space report is intended to address the future long range transportation needs of the transportation modes to be located there (e.g., WTA thinks that their future needs include space for 10 local city buses).

Elvis Latiolais stated that he thought that the external space for the MMC was too much. To which George Alexiou replied that the external space requirements would be heavily dependent upon the final design of the facility and the design of the circulation patterns for the various transportation modes to be housed there.

Elvis went on to make some technical corrections to the Trailways/Greyhound portion of the report to include;

Table 3 on page 6 of report should have 4,410 square feet for Trailways/Greyhound buses instead of 3,780.

On page three the report needs to indicate that the passenger window will have two cell positions.

Chris O'keefe suggested that the six bicycle lockers should be supplemented with bicycle parking racks.

Evaluation of potential sites using the matrix.

George Alexiou provided some background information before the discussion of the various MMC sites to include:

That WTA is going to reconfigure their transit system and may; combine with the New Hanover Co. Transportation System, expand their north-south routes, expand from seven to 14 routes, their service area is expected to continue to end on the west at the river, a lot of the routes cross east of the downtown, there may be small bus transfer hubs where the routes cross, and that the railroad station site will affect the hubs.

That WTA will need at least one new bus transfer facility within the next few years.

That rail passenger service will take from five to seven years before it is implemented in Wilmington (Steve Head mentioned that passenger rail is only three to five years away for Asheville and that rail station planning for the western service should be completed within the next year).

That the process to plan/design/build a multi-modal transportation center will take three to four years.

There are decisions that must be made about the police headquarters building by the city of Wilmington.

George then went on to review the four sites listed on the matrix (the completed matrix was distributed at this time). He stated that the pros and cons of each site would be presented and that a decision would be called for by the group through consensus of the group. It was also stated that if some persons at the meeting felt that they could not make a decision today without first consulting with others (elected officials, etc) that this was OK too. And that consensus doesn't necessarily mean everyone's preference is satisfied, but overall the best site for community needs is selected.

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Bill Morine asked that if the study uses the word terminal that this would preclude any other rail stops in the greater Wilmington Urban Area. George replied that other sites that have merit could also be stops. Bill Austin agreed that since this is a long-range study that other rail stops should be considered to address future needs.

Frank Block asked whether the CSX line was a factor in siting the MMC.

George and Steve both replied that it is a factor in that the Charlotte to Wilmington line will be the first passenger rail line to Wilmington. The fact that the CSX line that goes past the airport to Raleigh indicates a future possibility but that the planning for that line is not being done at this time while the planning for the Charlotte to Wilmington line is being performed at this time.

Laura Wilson asked how far it is in miles to get to the Navassa site. David Hewett replied that it is a 15 mile drive today without the planned US 17 Bypass or the northern Outer Loop.

Bill Austin mentioned that the US 17 Bypass (to include the bridge) is funded to be completed in 2006 NC State TIP. The project is on schedule from Market Street to 421, but that the Brunswick County side of the project has some environmental constraints that are being addressed. Bill also stated that another bridge is planned south of the Memorial Bridge but that it is not relevant.

George went on to state that the population and employment projections for the Wilmington area indicate that the majority of the growth will be on the eastern side of the urban area. That the three sites on the eastern side of the river will be somewhat constrained due to surface traffic and that the Navassa site would probably be less congested with traffic.

Discussion then centered on the Police HQ site and whether it would be able to accommodate the amount of parking stated in the space report. George replied that the Police HQ site would have to include a multi-story site with a parking deck. It may also be that off site parking may be secured through a sharing arrangement with other agencies, business, etc in the vicinity of the Police HQ site.

Bill Austin asked if the consultants had spoken to the Cape Fear Community College (CFCC) about sharing parking with them. To which Slade replied that they had not spoken to them recently. Bill then asked the consultants to contact CFCC to see if they'd be amenable to sharing space in a multi-story MMC located at the Police HQ site.

George went on to discuss the various aspects of rail passenger ridership specific to Wilmington. That the highest density of businesses for business travel is in the downtown. That for tourism there are more rooms per acre in the downtown. That for day trip tourists parking and access to the downtown is adequate. That as much as 15% of rail riders for stations between Richmond and Hampton Roads got to the rail station by transit. That a percentage of rail riders access the rail station by walking (which would be higher in the downtown). That the existing and future population base is located on the eastern side of the river. That the Navassa site has no direct route at this time. That even with new routes to Navassa the total travel time for potential rail passengers to access the station from eastern Wilmington is greater than if the station was downtown.

Bill Austin brought it to the committees attention that if transit is to become a way to access the downtown without using a car then rail should have a significant connection to transit. Bill also mentioned that the Airport site is not central to the urban area. That the Page Oil site has bad access off of Third Street and Surry Street. Steve Head mentioned that the rail connection to the Page Oil site has neighborhood impacts.

Frank Block mentioned that to him it seemed that locating a facility like a MMC at either downtown location was like putting an industrial use in those locations. Does the committee really want to do that?

Bob Murphrey mentioned that the Police HQ site has already been included in an adopted land use plan as a MMC. That the public during the development of the 2020 Downtown Plan wanted rail in the downtown.

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Elvis Latiolais mentioned that passenger convenience is the most important factor in locating an inter-city bus terminal. That is why they locate their bus stations in downtown areas.

George and Steve Head then mentioned that Greensboro, Charlotte and Richmond are all in the process of moving their passenger rail stations back into their respective downtowns. Elvis then mentioned that Trailways receives complaints about the suburban location of their station in Richmond.

George also mentioned that beach tourism traffic is also a big draw to the greater Wilmington urban area and that these trips need to be facilitated too.

Frank Block then asked how much additional travel time is required to access the Page Oil site. To which Steve Head replied that it takes an additional 30-35 minutes, plus creates the potential for additional rail crossing accidents due to the numerous at-grade rail crossings and that it also travels through numerous neighborhoods.

Steve Head suggested that a rail stop could be included in Brunswick County (Navassa) to make sure that the beach tourism ridership is accommodated in their desire to use rail to get to the beaches.

George then asked if anyone would suggest any sites that could be eliminated from further consideration.

Laura Wilson suggested that the Page Oil site be eliminated due to its potential impacts to neighborhoods and the fact that it will add time to the total trip length.

David Hewett then asked about how much time it would actually take to get from Charlotte to Wilmington by train.

Steve Head responded that the NCDOT Rail Division estimates that it will take approximately four hours. That the tracks from Charlotte to Wilmington are the longest straight piece of track in the state. That the average speed might be somewhere between 59 to 70 mph with stops in Monroe and Pembroke.

Frank Block asked if the Wilmington MMC is similar to the Durham MMC.

Steve Head responded that they are similar. That Durham has placed their MMC in their downtown at the Liggett Myers site and plans to sell the air rights above the MMC's rail station to a private enterprise and that similar plans are being developed for the downtown Charlotte MMC.

George asked if the Page Oil site could then be eliminated.

To which Elvis replied that Trailways could use the Page Oil site, but that it would be their second choice.

No one then spoke in favor of the Page Oil site for continued discussion so it was considered dropped.

George then went on to describe some of the attributes of the Airport site to include: it is too far from the downtown for local bus transfer center to be located there, it would be a good stop later in the development of the rail corridors supporting the greater Wilmington urban area and that the proposed bypasses could tie into a site in the this vicinity and that land should probably be reserved for a train stop.

Frank Block then expressed concern that the Police HQ site is too narrow and would negatively impact the neighborhood and the CFCC.

Slade McCalip replied that because the Police HQ site is in an adopted plan that carries some weight including the public participation process necessary for the development of the plan and that it has been adopted by local elected officials.

Steve Head responded that if the Police HQ site is selected then the design of the MMC could be developed so as to accommodate the CFCC.

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Dexter Hayes mentioned that the air rights above the MMC can be sold to minimize the impacts on the neighborhood.

Bill Morine asked about the CFCC railroad rights-of-way issues.

Steve Head responded that CSX has deeded the rights-of-way of the old railroad bed to CFCC between 3rd and 4th Streets and that the state would have to acquire that land and also that the state would work with New Hanover County School system to mitigate the possible rail impacts to the elementary school next to the rail bed north east of the Police HQ site.

Bill Austin then mentioned that if the Police HQ site was chosen and WTA relocated there that this would help students to access CFCC. Bill also mentioned that the Brunswick County site (Navassa) will probably not have the need for a MMC in the next five to seven years, but that the downtown area around the Police HQ site has a need for it now. He also mentioned that Navassa could have a rail stop.

Selection of the preferred multi-modal site for further analysis.

George asked the committee if therefore anyone had any comments on effectively selecting the Police HQ site for the MMC site. To which there was no reply.

Howard Loving asked if a MMC could be accommodated on the Police HQ site.

George replied that it is very dependent upon the actual design of the facility and that it may be that some of the functions, like parking, may end up being off the site.

Frank Block then stated that the problems with the Police HQ site are enormous and wanted to know if a MMC at that site would be inconsistent with the rest of the downtown?

George mentioned that there are lots of design issues that will be addressed by the final design based upon input by the city and others. But that most of these issues can be addressed through the design process.

Steve Head mentioned that the MMC must be pedestrian friendly and that money should be spent on the design to insure that it is a desirable facility.

Frank Block then mentioned that the Airport site is cheaper and easier to build upon as there is a lot more open space and that it is centrally located to the population of the greater Wilmington urban area. He also wanted to know if the commercial center of Wilmington really is in the downtown area.

George then suggested that the information developed to date about the MMC site locating process be presented at the open house to gather input on the committees selection of the Police HQ site for a MMC.

WTA Transfer Sites.

George asked if the committee wanted to discuss this issue at this time, there was no response from the committee. George then mentioned that the next step in the study would be to perform a phase I environmental screening analysis of the Police HQ site.

Format, date and location for the first Open House.

George then posed the question about when to hold an open house meeting to gather public input on the process to date. He mentioned that the hours 4 to 8 p.m. are usually good times for holding a meeting. That the open house would include speakers, displays, maps, and that the committee members would be there. That there would be a form for comments.

It was decided that the meeting should be held sometime during the last week of September or the first week of October. Bill Austin said that he'd try to get reservations for the open house meeting at the Coast Line Convention Center.

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A date for the next steering committee meeting was not set at this meeting.

The meeting was then adjourned, as it was 12 o'clock.

Cc: All present
Absent steering committee members

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To: Bill Austin, Transportation Planner
From: George Alexiou, Senior Transportation Engineer
Date: October 28, 1999
Subject: Wilmington Multi-modal Transportation Center Open House

The Open House for the Wilmington Multi-modal Transportation Center project was held on October 13, 1999 from 4:00 to 8:00 P.M. at the Coastline Convention Center on the corner of Nutt and Water Streets, Downtown Wilmington. Information was available on the objectives of the study, the meetings held by the project steering committee, the four locations considered by the steering committee to include the criteria by which each was evaluated, and an overview of the site, Police Headquarters, selected by the steering committee for further study. Over 20 boards and maps were on display, and the consultant team and City staff were available to answer questions.

The Open House was attended by 38 persons that signed in on the meeting attendance sheets. There may have been some additional persons that did not sign in, but there should not be too many that are unaccounted for as each person was requested to sign in.

The following comments were submitted in writing at the Open House:

- Plans looking good – Site sketches copies would help. Would like a copy of the blow-up of our picture of the former R.R. Site.
- I would like to be notified of future meetings. I would like to represent interests of the elderly.
- Police Station Bldg. – only logical place for it.
- From a tourism standpoint, our tourism assets, beaches and attractions are pretty spread out and anyone arriving by rail will require a rental car to visit the entire area or get to the beach. Our inter-city bus service is not designed to meet the travel & tourism industry's needs, I feel at some point you will need some rental car availability. Very few (several only) of our lodging industry providers pick-up transportation service for airport arrivals or rail arrivals.
- We need a place for tourist buses to park. Tourist buses overwhelm our historic streets. Tourists could be dropped off in the central business district and the buses parked at the multi-modal transportation center or tourists could be brought to the multi-modal center and taken to smaller buses to the central business district.
- I feel Wilmington is ready for rail service to our area. I support the Police Station as a Multi-modal Center.
- Strongly support the Police Headquarters site. It far outweighs the other potential locations.
- Strongly support the Police Station site & will assist in garnering support for this if necessary.

Verbal comments from those in attendance were generally in favor of the concept and selected site, with the exception of representatives from Cape Fear Community College. The College has indicated it is preparing written comments regarding their concerns with use of the site as a multi-modal center facility.

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Wilmington Urban Area Multi-Modal Transportation Study

*Meeting with Cape Fear Community College (CFCC)
November 2, 1999
Meeting Notes*

Key concerns and comments raised at the November 2 Cape Fear Community College (CFCC) Planning Committee meeting and as noted by George Alexiou are as follows:

The college is opposed to locating a multi-modal facility on the Police Headquarter site.

The site is in the heart of the campus and as such is critical to the function and integration of the campus. The site now splits the south and north campuses.

Noise impacts from trains and buses on sensitive functions within the proposed Allied Health addition which will front the south side of Red Cross Street. Sensitive functions within that building include a CCTV studio for college use and an audio/learning laboratory.

Congestion resulting from the transportation functions on the multi-modal transportation site.

Exacerbation of pedestrian safety problems on Red Cross Street including the intersections with Front and Third Streets.

Loss of college parking that is now provided on the portion of the Police Headquarters site between Front and Nutt Streets.

Even though the 2020 Downtown plan identified the site as a location for a multi-modal center, the same plan also referred to college uses on the site.

The college's important education function and its role in revitalizing the northern part of downtown are not acknowledged by the city and community. Past studies have failed to understand the college's issues and needs.

The college has for years made it clear the importance of the site to their long-range plans, and concerns about the impact of a multi-modal center. Most recently these issues were raised by the college at the first steering committee meeting for the multi-modal center project in April 99. But to the college it appears that the site was selected even before the feasibility study commenced.

The feasibility of rail services to Wilmington was questioned, including the availability of funding even if it were feasible. If rail service were to be implemented, then it seems Raleigh would be a better starting point than Charlotte.

There were general concerns expressed about the feasibility of public transportation in general. The WTA service was considered a failure.

There was considerable support for locating the center near the airport on the basis that there might be a stronger relationship between airport and rail travel (more so than between rail and intercity or local bus). There is also more land available, and impacts would also be less.

There was strong support for a site just to the east of the Police Headquarters site on the railroad corridor between Third and Fourth streets if it was considered important for the multi-modal center to be located downtown. Land is available in this area, some of it owned by the college. The area needs a boost to be revitalized. Any existing land uses are low intensity.

George Alexiou stated that it was his professional opinion that (1) the Police Headquarters site can work with the proposed transportation uses without unacceptable impacts on surrounding land uses. It can also

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accommodate additional development which could include college uses. (2) This was the best site for a multi-modal center in Wilmington.

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Meeting Date: December 7, 1999 (2:00 PM)

Location: Wilmington City Council Conference Room, City Hall
Subject: Steering Committee
Fourth Meeting

Present: Carl Brown, Cape Fear Community College
Laura Padgett, Councilperson elect City of Wilmington Council
Bill Morine, Wilmington Railroad Museum Foundation, INC.
Dexter Hayes, New Hanover County Planning
Steve Head, NCDOT Rail Division
Susi Hamilton, City of Wilmington
Bill Austin, City of Wilmington
Elvis Latiolais, Carolina Trailways
Lisa Dyer Hollowell, NCDOT Public Transit Division
Bob Murphrey, DARE, Inc. (Downtown Revitalization)
David Hewett, Town of Leland
Laura Wilson, Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce
Frank Block, Wilmington Passenger Rail Committee
Howard Loving, Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce
George Alexiou, Parsons Brinckerhoff
John Rosborough, CFCC BOT/WIA Admin
J.D. Causey, Cape Fear Community College
Barbara Schwartz, Cape Fear Community College
Nancy Marks, Cape Fear Community College
Andrew Koeppel, Rail Commission

Absent: Wayne Clark, City of Wilmington
Kent Jackson, City of Wilmington
Marc Maus, Wilmington Transit Authority
Pat Melvin, New Hanover County
Donald Sellars, Town of Leland
Chris O'Keefe, New Hanover Bicycle Advisory
Dave Shingleton, Greyhound Lines
Bobby Brown, Town of Leland
Ronnie Parker, Port City Taxi
Judith Grizzel, Cape Fear Coastal Convention Center and Visitors Bureau

Handouts: Agenda, Open House Handout, Memo Summary of Open House Feedback, Summary of Key Issues from Meeting with CFCC, article about downtown's benefiting from transportation centers

Mailouts: Fourth Meeting Minutes and handouts

- George Alexiou provided an overview of the study process. At the last Planning Committee meeting in August the Police Headquarters site was selected as the preferred multi-modal center site. This information was presented at the open house in October and most feedback supported that conclusion (refer to attachments); however, the Cape Fear Community College voiced its concerns and opposition to this site. A presentation was made to the CFCC Planning Committee on November 2, where the college's concerns and opposition was reiterated (refer to attachment).
- The purpose of today's meeting was to review the feedback from the open house and make a final decision on the preferred site. The next step would be to complete the study and pass on the recommendations to City Council. If Council endorsed the recommendations of the committee then Council's recommendation would be passed onto the TAC for formal adoption. George reminded the committee that they were appointed to make a decision on a site and they could do that today if they thought that was appropriate.

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- George added that the NCDOT Rail Division also had some new information on the proposed rail service. Steve Head reported that the Rail Division conducted a survey during the Riverfest event in Wilmington to receive input on the proposed rail service. This survey determined that there was more support for service from Raleigh to Wilmington than Charlotte to Wilmington. NCDOT will therefore expand its study to include Raleigh.
- Frank Block asked if any studies had been undertaken to determine users' preferences for the location of the rail station. Steve replied no, but they could consider doing such a study. Frank indicated that Bill Gallagher was scheduled to start the rail feasibility study next week and he asked that a user survey to determine a preferred location be included. Steve added that the public would not be as knowledgeable as the committee members and certainly don't have as much information to be able to make an informed decision about preferred locations.
- George stated that there is generally strong agreement among rail planners that downtown sites are to be preferred over suburban sites.
- Carl Brown asked if the fact that the City owned the Police Headquarters site was the driving force for preferring that site. He also asked if there weren't alternative sites that would not divide CFCC.
- George responded that the key issue the committee needed to address today was competing needs and desires of the transportation systems and the college. He emphasized that these are not necessarily contradictory or mutually exclusive. It is quite possible through good planning and design to accommodate many of the college's objectives for development on the Police site, e.g., pedestrian connections, use of street level floor area, and development of floors above the multi-modal center.
- John Rosborough, chair of the CFCC board stated that he believes there has been insufficient public input on the selection of the site. He stated that he believes that the airport is a better location. He noted that George's summary of the key concerns of CFCC expressed at the November 2 meeting (attached) were accurate but also noted that one point that was made at the meeting was missing, and that is visitors to Wilmington don't want to come to the downtown. Most people would come to Wilmington and probably rent a car to go to the beach. He also added that the multi-modal center would be better located north of the downtown where a lot of growth is occurring. He also added that CFCC is seriously considering leaving downtown. Loss of the Police Headquarters site further jeopardizes staying downtown. Being able to provide parking for students is also a big issue for the college. The average age of students is 29 and most are working and therefore need convenient access to the college which now can only be provided by car. He also added that the November 2 presentation occurred only because the college requested a presentation.
- J.D. Causey, chair of the CFCC Planning Committee, noted that there was another omission from the meeting notes of the November 2 meeting. He had suggested that an alternative site could be between Fourth and Fifth Streets and not just Third and Fourth Streets as indicated in those notes.
- Carl informed the committee that the college has hired an engineer to design an expansion of the surface parking facility just north of the tracks and west of Third Street. The expansion would occur to the east under the Third Street bridge on property that the college acquired from CSX, and add about 60 spaces at about \$250-300,000¹. The plan is to have the spaces open by September 2000. He is concerned that this will be a wasted investment if the rail corridor is required to serve the Police Headquarters site, or particularly if the multi-modal center is located east of Third Street. The meeting returned to this issue at various times. Steve noted that if the Police Headquarters site is selected then the rail must still go through the area planned for the parking expansion, and that it should not be developed until final decisions have been made. However, it was noted that the portion of the rail corridor through the site that would be used for the rail tracks to connect to the Police Headquarters site is at a lower elevation that is not proposed to be used for the parking expansion. Furthermore, rail service would not be implemented for at least five years.

¹ More recent cost estimate provided by CFCC is \$120,000-\$140,000.

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Carl pointed out that if the lot is to be opened in September, then the design work that has already started cannot be delayed for more than a few weeks. Carl was also concerned that if the parking were built and then torn up after a few years, the public may perceive it as a waste. No decision was reached on whether to advise the college to hold work on the project. The college indicated it would consider the issue in-house.

- Nancy Marks a CFCC board member expressed concern that the selection of the site was moving too fast, that the public doesn't understand the options and that there has been no real public involvement in considering a multi-modal center.
- Bill Austin noted that the multi-modal center is included in the Downtown 2020 Vision Plan in which had a great deal of public participation. He stated that a downtown location for the facility had also been included in the recently adopted New Hanover County/City of Wilmington Comprehensive Plan which had very substantial public involvement prior to its adoption by City Council and the County Commissioners. He also stated that the almost 40 people that attended the open house far exceeds the typical attendance for long range planning public meetings.
- Laura Padgett, Councilperson elect, reminded the group that there was extensive public involvement in the Community Growth Planning study that also endorsed downtown as the site for a multi-modal center. She also informed the group that WTA desperately needs a transfer facility and it needs to be centrally located.
- Andy asked if additional parking was required by CFCC, couldn't it be located in a deck over the railroad corridors between Third and Fourth Streets? He also noted that having a downtown station did not preclude an additional stop at the airport. He urged CFCC to consider the advantages a transportation center could have for the college. He suggested a survey to determine where students live and what kind of transit services they need. A transit system to meet these needs could then be designed. A transit center located within the college campus would facilitate transit use by students.
- Laura Wilson also responded to the comment of insufficient public involvement. She noted that she and others met with the NCDOT and Cape Fear Community College two years ago on possible rail service and a station in Wilmington. In fact the first meeting in Wilmington on the topic was at Cape Fear Community College. Carl Brown and Dr. McKeithan both attended meetings about this possibility. There has also been a lot of citizen participation along the way.
- Carl agreed that there have been discussions in the past, but they had always disagreed on the Police Headquarters site for the transportation center.
- Frank Block expressed his support for an airport location. He believes the preference of the rider, who is the customer, must be considered. If their needs are not served then the facility will not be successful. He reiterated the need to include potential users in a survey that should include the issue of a preferred site. He also added that the parking needs have yet to be satisfied for the Police Headquarters site and that this must be resolved.
- George informed the group that while no surveys have been undertaken, that he had spoken to an expert in rail ridership forecasting at Peat Marwick KPMG about the merits of a downtown station versus a suburban station. (Steve noted that it is KPMG that will be undertaking the rail ridership study for NCDOT.) This expert noted that the ability for the passengers to be able to walk to their ultimate destination from the station is very important. This favors downtown locations since this is where much of the development in an urban area is concentrated. The expert noted however, that for passengers that would be originating in Wilmington, accessibility to the station and availability of parking are key factors. In that respect downtown Wilmington is a good location in that it is reasonably central to the whole region. He also noted that people destined for the beaches would probably not use rail to travel to Wilmington.

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- George added that downtown is the only realistic location for a multi-modal center that includes WTA since that is where all or most routes converge. A site outside of downtown cannot serve as the WTA transfer center.
- Elvis added that the successful intercity bus stations are also in the downtown and that the further from the downtown they are located, the less successful they are. They would not be that interested in a location that was some distance from the downtown.
- Steve noted that if service were implemented between Raleigh and Wilmington then a stop would likely be located at the airport. This would be desirable, as it would enhance ridership. If the service went to Charlotte then a stop at the airport is still a possibility by providing a spur to the airport; however, this would add to the time for the passengers going to the downtown.
- Frank pointed out that there are major differences between Raleigh or Charlotte and Wilmington. If one were traveling to Raleigh or Charlotte, then the downtown would be a major destination for many people. But downtown Wilmington is primarily entertainment. People don't come to Wilmington to shop, and most go to the beaches.
- George responded that beach travelers had been discussed with the KPMG expert who did not think they would be significant users of the rail service.
- John Rosborough expressed support for an airport site noting that he is on the airport authority board. He is not interested in a site at the airport for the airport's sake. The airport is a strong growth area that will be more central in the future. The airport has 1,650 acres available for development with a vision for a transportation center or hub to be associated with the airport. He supports Frank's request for a user survey. He also believes that rail to Wilmington may not be feasible. Finally, he is concerned that the proposed CCTV studio to be accommodated in the Allied Health addition will be forced to move out because of impacts from the multi-modal center.
- Laura Padgett urged the group to think long term. The region is faced with growing congestion and alternative transportation modes are needed. People must have more choices in the future and we need to change how we think about transportation.
- Andy believes the airport would fit into a long-term triangular rail service that connects Wilmington, Charlotte, and Raleigh. He asked why CFCC is not supporting WTA service for its students.
- Carl reiterated that most students work and therefore time is very critical. The current bus service could not meet the needs of students. More extensive routes as well as extended hours of service would be necessary for this to be a reasonable alternative for students.
- Andy urged the college to undertake a survey to determine what kind of transit system the students need.
- Bill Austin supported Laura's urging to promote alternatives to the automobile. He noted that the recently adopted long range transportation plan has transit as a key element with a proposal for a great deal of expanded transit service. The region has committed to expanding and enhancing its transit services with the adoption of the long range transportation plan.
- George agreed that we have to be thinking longer term, where alternatives will play a much larger role. Our current approach to dealing with transportation issues is not sustainable in the longer term.
- Carl agreed that this is necessary and also agreed that the downtown is the preferred location for a multi-modal center. His concern is using the Police Headquarters site, which is so important to the college. He asked what advantages this site provided over the block east of Third Street.
- George responded that walking distance to major activities is very important and a few hundred feet could make a difference. The Police Headquarters site will be within easy walking distance of hotels

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and the proposed convention center site. A facility on the Police Headquarters site will also be more visible and more likely to be utilized. The Third/Fourth Street site would leave arriving passengers in an undefined area. That would discourage usage.

- Susi added that there would be residential impacts east of Third Street and she is concerned about the viability of a facility any further east.
- Carl asked if there are any examples of multi-modal centers in the middle of a campus. He is particularly concerned about noise impacts.
- George outlined the scope of work for some additional effort that would include:
 1. An assessment of a site between Third and Fourth Streets.
 2. An assessment of potential noise impacts on the college.
 3. An assessment on potential traffic impacts and pedestrian safety impacts on Red Cross Street.
 4. Additional renderings for the Police Headquarters site.

Bill indicated that a proposal for the funding of this additional work was being presented to the City Council tonight. The committee endorsed the additional work.

- George noted that the parking needs for the multi-modal center had yet to be resolved. Prior to the open house it was proposed to show this need for approximately 200 spaces to be satisfied in a deck to be built on the CFCC parking lot. When approached the college responded that it was not appropriate without gaining approval of the board of trustees. George noted that while the location had yet to be determined, he was confident that a site could be found and therefore, it was not a critical issue.
- John Rosborough expressed skepticism about the feasibility of decked parking. He noted that it is very expensive and cannot be funded by the college. Parking has become a critical issue in serving the needs of the students. The college will consider conducting a study to determine the potential for students to use transit. He believes that focus on improved local transit is appropriate but that intercity rail may not be feasible.
- Bill Austin noted that there are many plans for development in downtown including a convention center and an additional hotel. This growth will add to the feasibility of passenger rail in the future and passenger rail could greatly enhance downtown's growth. He also noted that if this project moves forward that federal funds may be available for the construction of a parking deck greatly reducing the cost to the local participants.
- Bob Murphy stated support for a downtown location. He noted that the number of trains would be very limited and therefore impacts would not be significant. The CFCC is only one element of the downtown area and the whole downtown needs to be considered, not just the impacts on one player. The participation of CFCC in downtown planning has always been actively sought. Overall the impact of a multi-modal center on the downtown will be positive. Bob then distributed an article that described how downtown's had benefited from rail stations (attached). Bob noted that the development of the 2020 Downtown Plan had a lot of involvement and support for the Police Headquarters site. It also showed parking on the site which is integral to a multi-modal center. He urged the group to think broadly, particularly about the overall benefits a center could have for the community and the downtown. DARE continues to support the Police Headquarters site.
- Carl noted that alternative sites to be considered could be anywhere east of Third Street. This includes the block north of the railroad corridor between Third and Fourth Street that is now a junkyard. However, there may be plans to develop a supermarket on this site.

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- Bill Morine suggested that if the issue is locating the multi-modal center on the Police Headquarters site, then would it be acceptable to continue the tracks through the site across Nutt Street and use a location west of Nutt Street. No-one was opposed to this idea, but nor was there a suggestion that it should be pursued.
- Barbara Schwartz stated that the Community College wants the Police Headquarters site.
- George expressed confidence that train noise will not be a problem for the college. Trains would be traveling no more than five miles per hour. The site could also possibly be reconfigured to bring the local buses back onto the Second Street intersection with Red Cross Street; thereby, avoiding use of Red Cross Street between Second and Front which is the sensitive portion of the college.
- John Rosborough noted that George's summary of the November 2 meeting issues was accurate with regard to the college's concerns, particularly the first four items listed in the notes. The number one issue of concern to the college is that the site splits the north and south campuses. The other issues such as noise are secondary. George explained that there is a lot of potential to design the multi-modal center in a way that accommodates the college's needs as well as uniting the two campuses. Bill Austin asked if the college would be more agreeable to the site housing the facility if the center could be designed to accommodate their needs. John Rosborough responded that they would be open to discussion.
- Laura Wilson stressed the importance of working together. Wilmington has missed out on potential funding in the past because they have not been able to agree on projects. Other regions are cooperating more and as a result are more successful in getting funding. Mass transportation is the way of the future and we have to remember that we are making decisions that affect people who don't have cars.
- Steve stressed that he would like the multi-modal center to benefit everyone and that they would want to consider the college's purpose and needs in the planning and design. If the Police Headquarters site were selected, the first step would be to sit down with the college and incorporate their needs and concerns into the plans.
- Carl asked what the decision-making process was. The response was that the committee is charged only with making a recommendation for a preferred site which will go to City Council, which in turn would make a recommendation to the region's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). Steve noted that this is similar to the NCDOT process with regard to restoring rail passenger service to Wilmington where NCDOT will make recommendations that are then referred to the legislature which will decide on funding.
- Howard said that he was disturbed by comments that we are planning in a vacuum. The idea of a multi-modal center on this site is not new and has been discussed publicly in various planning projects. We also should not be prejudging the feasibility of rail; that is the purpose of the NCDOT study.
- Frank asked if rail is not implemented, how would this affect selection of a site for the WTA operations and possibly Trailways.
- George responded that there are not many available sites in the downtown area and this would still be a good site for a WTA transfer facility.
- There was more discussion about transit services for CFCC including potential shuttle services. Susi wondered if there was an opportunity for WTA to partner with the college to provide park and ride and shuttle services.
- George concluded the meeting by saying the next steps were to undertake the additional work for reviewing the alternative site and better understanding the potential impacts on the proposed Allied Health addition. The results would be reported at the next committee meeting.

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- Elvis asked that the Trailways baggage area be located adjacent to the platform. It could be placed where the ticket office is shown and the ticket office moved slightly south.

Cc: All steering committee members

Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

Meeting Date: March 15, 2000 (10:00 AM)

Location: Wilmington City Council Conference Room, City Hall
Subject: Steering Committee, Fifth Meeting

Present: Bill Morine, Wilmington Railroad Museum Foundation, INC.
Susie Hamilton, City of Wilmington
Bill Austin, City of Wilmington
Elvis Latiolais, Carolina Trailways
Chris O'keefe, New Hanover County Planning
Carl Brown, Cape Fear Community College
Bob Murphrey, DARE, Inc. (Downtown Revitalization)
Laura Wilson, Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce
Frank Block, Wilmington Passenger Rail Committee
Howard Loving, Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce
Marc Maus, Wilmington Transit Authority
Michael Kozak, NCDOT, Public Transportation Division
George Alexiou, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Absent: David Hewett, Town of Leland
Wayne Clark, City of Wilmington
Pat Melvin, New Hanover County
Donald Sellars, Town of Leland
Dave Shingleton, Greyhound Lines
Bobbi Brown, Town of Leland
Ronnie Parker, Port City Taxi
Dexter Hayes, New Hanover County Planning
Kent Jackson, City of Wilmington
Judith Grizzel, Cape Fear Coastal Convention Center and Visitors Bureau

Handouts: Agenda and Article on Downtown Stations, and Copies of Fifth meeting Minutes of Study.

Mailouts: Fifth Meeting Minutes and report as part of study titled "Additional Analyses of Downtown Sites."

Introductions:

Additional attendees at the meeting included:
David Jones, Mayor, City of Wilmington
Laura Padgett, City Council, Technical Advisory Committee
Bob Martenis, Trustee, Cape Fear Community College
Eric McKeithan, Cape Fear Community College
Howard Capps, Chairman, Wilmington Transit Authority
J.D. Causey, Cape Fear Community College
Charlie Howell, Commissioner, New Hanover County
Nelson Robinson, New Hanover Transportation Service
Linda Carroll-Vogt, Carroll Carolina Corporate Development
John Rosborough, CFCC BOA/WIA Admin
Gene Merritt, Merritt Construction
Allan Paul, NCDOT Rail Division
Dan Dock, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Ed Womack, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Opening Comments:

Mayor Jones made opening comments prior his departure to a previous commitment. As a member of the Transportation Committee of the National League of Cities he is very much aware that the importance of rail

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is being discussed across the country. He recognizes that the Police Headquarters site is good, but the alternative site between 3rd and 4th Streets also appears to be feasible. His comments included:

He believes the two sites are comparable as far as walking convenience is concerned.

Because rail service is important to the city, he will support the Committee's recommendation. His personal preferences lean toward the 3rd to 4th Street site.

It is important that the community unite behind the selected site.

He cautioned the attendees that they might need to compromise in making a decision and decide what is beneficial for Wilmington in the long term; don't give government the opportunity not to fund our facility.

Presentation by Eric McKeithan, President, Cape Fear Community College:

Dr. McKeithan distributed a summary of his comments to the attendees. His comments emphasized the following:

Assumptions made in the analysis of the multi-modal facility include 1). use of CFCC land between 3rd and 4th Streets to gain rail access to the multi-modal facility on the Police Headquarters site, and 2), construction of a garage on CFCC property (adjacent to the Schwartz Center) for the "hundreds/thousands" of multi-modal customers and employees. These assumptions have not been discussed with nor approved by the CFCC Board.

In comparing the Police Headquarters and 3rd to 4th Street sites, the definition of the downtown in the study is faulty. In the future both sites will be equally convenient to the "downtown". The future downtown will be defined by at least five major areas (illustrated on an aerial photograph) including, 1, the existing business district between Third Street and the river. He explained that the limitations of the acetate sheets on the photograph prevented showing the entire commercial strip that generally follows the river and adjoins the most substantial section of the mostly residential historic district. (2) A quasi-"governmental/legal" district, generally lying east of Third Street, adjacent to the "existing" downtown. (3) A new convention/riverfront multi-use district lying north of the Chamber of Commerce and between Front Street and the river, extending to the Northeast Bridge. (4) The North Fourth Street commercial district (a portion of which he later referred to as an emerging "art district"). And (5), a vast inter-city residential area lying immediately east of all of these previous areas where census information is likely to confirm that more people who are dependent on mass transportation are likely to live. He stated his purpose in defining the downtown was to have a comprehensive understanding of all five areas as the downtown.

The alternative for the Police Headquarters site proposed by the CFCC are the two blocks bound by Brunswick, Campbell, 3rd and 4th Streets. The site evaluated by the consultant stopped at Hanover Street and did not include the block (with junkyards) north to Brunswick. Some of the CFCC Board members have expressed willingness to exchange CFCC land between 3rd and 4th Streets (including the railbeds) for the Police Headquarters building in order to make the 3rd to 4th Street site available for the rail station. Prior to such a trade, the CFCC Board as a whole, then the New Hanover County Commission, and then the State Board of Community Colleges would have to approve such a matter. No such consideration has been asked for thus far by anyone.

He questioned the "historic" characterization of three small wood frame houses on the 3rd to 4th street site by the consultant and other WPD-site proponents. He noted the irony of the logic of those who, by seeking to locate this multi-modal facility at the WPD site, actually advocate demolishing the large historic building housing the WPD while simultaneously espousing a "preference not to relocate" these very small and very plain "historic?" houses.

The 3rd to 4th Street site is in the downtown based on the future downtown boundary that will include the north-end redevelopment area.

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The 3rd to 4th Street site will be just as convenient to the downtown in the future as the Police Headquarters site.

The consultant's favoring the Police Headquarters site over the 3rd to 4th Street site for walking distance to downtown destinations does not take into account the future downtown. The 3rd to 4th Street site is more convenient to the emerging "art district", the "huge" low income residential district and is more or equally convenient to the government district and the future North Wilmington Riverfront district. By using an aerial photo of Wilmington, he illustrated how the completed Smith Creek Parkway would channel I-40, airport, and other traffic into downtown on North Third Street and how the Third/Fourth location would be far more convenient to the masses of the motoring public than will the WPD site. The 3rd to 4th Street site is far more convenient to the "masses" of the motoring public that will use the center.

He stated the consultant's statement that the Third/Fourth location was "less secure" was based on supposition, not facts. The 3rd to 4th Street site will be just as secure as the Police Headquarters site. He noted that he believed actual crime reports would reveal far more crimes occurring in the existing central business district than at this Third/Fourth location because the central business district is where the people, money, nightclubs, and merchandise are. He noted that even if the consultant's statement had been based in fact, that such a reason is a poor basis for ruling out the Third/Fourth location. He mentioned that if "less secure" was a reason for ruling out a location, that neither CFCC, the Cotton Exchange, the Hilton (nor most of the other existing downtown businesses) would be located where they are today because in the mid-60's, the entire area was a "less secure" area. It was then disaffectionately known as "skid row" with boarded up buildings, tattoo parlors, bars, and unsavory street people. He indicated that locating the vast multi-modal operation envisioned by the consultant in that location (3rd to 4th Street) would have the effect of making the area "more secure" while simultaneously spurring potentially enormous community development along Third and Fourth Streets. This type of development reflects a long-standing objective of the Wilmington City Council that was reinforced by their expenditure of a considerable sum to help revitalize the area.

Concerning the statement that the Police Headquarters site is more convenient for WTA passengers, he observed that WTA buses currently have lots of stops throughout the downtown area, and that passengers obviously get on and off the buses at the most convenient location for them. He asked and was told that, in the future, WTA will continue to have lots of stops throughout the downtown area. There are very few WTA bus passengers using stops near the Police Headquarters site. Those that do use the stops are probably from the nearby residential area, which is east of 4th Street and they are using the closest stop to their homes. Only 4 or 5 CFCC people use the WTA bus to reach the campus. He concluded that he wonders where the "more convenient" tag for the Police Headquarters site came from.

The 3rd to 4th Street site poses no less opportunity for joint development with the railroad museum than the Police Headquarters site. The Police Headquarters site is locked in by the CFCC property. The 3rd to 4th Street site provides "enormous" community development opportunities for several blocks on North 3rd and North 4th Streets.

Concern of the CFCC about the Police Headquarters site focus on

Noise. The citizens of New Hanover County have a \$30-40 million investment in CFCC facilities, including a major new library, a closed circuit TV studio, a new learning lab to assist struggling students, and numerous science and health training laboratories. All of these facilities will be impacted by noise generated by bus and other traffic that will be immediately adjacent to these facilities.

Congestion and safety. The Police Headquarters site is on Redcross Street. The intersection of Redcross at 3rd Street is on the NCDOT's list of 25 most dangerous intersections in the state as reported in the Star-News. The intersection of Front and Redcross Streets is not on the list (it is not a state route). But, given the heavy pedestrian traffic, the horrendous sight line for eastbound traffic at the intersection, and the accidents and near-misses that he and many others have observed, it is his belief that the intersection of Front and Red Cross is equally, if not more, dangerous than Third and Red Cross. He believes it is very careless to locate such a busy multi-modal facility as the consultant envisions with increased bus, taxi, and automobile traffic between these two highly dangerous intersections.

The Police Headquarters site used as a multi-modal center permanently divides the CFCC campus.

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The additional 50,000 square feet of CFCC space shown on the Police Headquarters site is not accompanied by an explanation of who will pay for the space. The location for parking of 400 additional peak hour cars for the multi-modal center is not explained. Also, the location of parking for customers and employees attracted to the various entities in the "vast" multi-modal facility is not explained.

CFCC has an \$88.5 million annual economic impact on the community as documented in a recent study and is Wilmington's, New Hanover County's and southeaster North Carolina's largest provider of workforce training. As recently as 1991, downtown business people and city leaders lobbied strenuously with CFCC trustees not to follow a consultant's recommendations that the College buy property out of the downtown section and relocate. The trustees listened and elected to keep CFCC's main campus in downtown, but to do so required that the College acquire additional property for expansion. Trustees formed a Planning Committee that included elected and appointed representatives of the City of Wilmington, and a master plan for the downtown campus was developed in 1994 that included eventual acquisition of the WPD site so as to unify the dissected heart of CFCC's main campus. CFCC proceeded with development of the plan for the downtown campus. Had CFCC trustees and staff have known in 1994 that the City would seriously consider jamming a multi-modal facility into the very heart of CFCC's main campus in 2000, it is very likely that CFCC would not have continued to invest in its downtown campus. Certainly, CFCC staff would not have recommended building a major library, learning lab, TV studio, science and health services labs, etc. immediately adjacent to such a multi-modal facility. The college is part of the future downtown. Parking is critical to the CFCC.

Next year CFCC expects enrollment to reach 6,000 to 6,500 students. In the future the college can build parking decks on the lot adjacent to the Schwartz Center and across Hanover Street to meet the demand of a range of activities in the area including development of the multi-modal center on 3rd to 4th Streets and the new waterfront development.

4. Presentation by Linda Carroll-Vogt, Carroll Carolina Corporation:

Ms. Carroll commented on the "Page Oil" site, previously considered by the Committee as an alternative location for the multi-modal center. Ms. Carroll's comments included:

The site is incorrectly referred to as the Page Oil site. It was the ATC Refinery and is now owned by her corporation (purchased in 1994).

Her site has been ignored during the planning process for the multi-modal center.

The previous owners contaminated the site and it was a super fund site. It has now been cleaned up at a cost of \$8.9 million and six years, and is ready for prime development. Her job was to make sure the site was cleaned.

Andres Duany has stated people will walk in a city and live over stores. The south side of Wilmington is ready for redevelopment that can be integrated into the adjacent residential neighborhoods. The new bridge, US 17, in the south side is "the" entrance into Wilmington.

The cost of the North Wilmington Riverfront Redevelopment project will be enormous; the sites are still "dirty" (contaminated) and will be very costly to clean. Cost will also be high to relocate existing uses of the land. The community will not use the north bridge. If the north area is redeveloped it will pull traffic through the existing downtown. Progress at the north end is very slow.

The south side redevelopment area will not pull traffic through the downtown. The south side of Wilmington will go fast. She presented a drawing of the plan proposing a conference center, hotel and retail (department store) space. Her approach is to have a conference center rather than a convention center. The south side is closer to the heart of downtown than the Police Headquarters site (only two blocks from Chandler's Warf). She is working with surrounding property owners and has filed for rezoning of the property. She owns 20.99 acres (4.9 acres are in a riparian corridor which is unusual) and can control 32 acres with her partners.

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Her site includes the south bridge and the cruise ship port. She has talked to Carnival and Norwegian lines about cruise ship service to the port. She needs additional transportation and can extend the existing rail line into our site just north of the bridge approach for the multi-modal center.

Bill Austin thanked her and said the committee would consider this information.

George Alexiou commented that the south side is too isolated for a bus station in its current status.

Discussion

Ms. Carroll stated the multi-modal study process should have asked for the development plan for the south side property. The consultant noted that contacts were made with the developers but that a copy of the plan was not provided to the study team.

In response to a question asking for a comparison of the amount of rail construction for the alternative north and south side sites, Allan Paul of the NCDOT responded. He stated that the Police Headquarters site or the 3rd to 4th Street site could be served by the rebuilding of one half mile of track. There is new rail service to Almont. Use of the existing port line on the south side of Wilmington would require some track reconstruction and the running of additional trains through residential areas. Less construction would be needed to serve the north sites than the south-side sites.

Mr. McKeithan stated the college had to provide more parking for next fall and CFCC was moving ahead to build approximately 50 spaces on CFCC property between 3rd and 4th Street bridges at an investment of \$150,000. This parking would be lost if the site were selected for center. In response to a question he acknowledged the parking investment was short-term and could be replaced in the future if the site were selected for the multi-modal center.

Frank Block asked if the upper level on the 3rd/4th Street site was doable for rail. Alexiou replied that it was doable.

Clarification about the location of the tracks for the two alternative sites was sought. The response stated the Police Headquarters site would be served by trains operating on the lower track level, at the base of the historic retaining wall (about 40 feet below the 3rd Street bridge). The 3rd to 4th Street site would be served by tracks on the upper level of the wall (about 24 feet below the 3rd Street bridge) and extend into the CFCC parking lot adjacent to the Schwartz Center. Both track routes appear to be feasible.

It was noted the 3rd Street bridge is old and has maintenance problems. The bridge appears to be in sound condition and will have to be maintained over the years, and may have to be replaced in the future. Replacement of the bridge, if required, could disrupt use of the 3rd to 4th Street site as a multi-modal center.

Comments by George Alexiou, Parsons Brinckerhoff

George Alexiou provided the following comments to summarize the consultant's analysis of the 3rd to 4th Street and Police Headquarters sites.

Alexiou summarized the 3rd/4th Street site. A major issue is the layout of the rail tracks and the platform(s). The railway bed through the site is approximately 40 feet lower than the surrounding streets. There is also a slightly higher "bench" above the level of the track bed (approximately 15 feet higher). There is a stone wall of major historic significance that separates the lower and upper track beds through the site. Its existence and the requirement to preserve it, has significant implications for layout of the rail tracks and platforms. The key constraint is accommodating the rail tracks and platform which must extend 300+ feet into the CFCC parking lot. The desired minimum width for passenger platforms is 20 feet. A minimum of approximately 10 feet is required to accommodate each track and the train using it, therefore the combined width of two tracks and single platform is 40 feet. The desirable platform length is 800 feet (700 feet is the minimum). Because of the stone retaining wall, the tracks and platform must be located on the upper portion of the site. The clearance under the Fourth Street bridge, between the abutment on the north side and the retaining wall (but excluding the retaining wall) is approximately 35 feet (in the center of the bridge). Therefore, the platform

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cannot begin until west of the Fourth Street bridge (approximately 50 feet west of the bridge to allow the tracks to split to accommodate a 20-wide platform. To achieve even the minimum platform length (700 feet), the tracks and platform would have to protrude at least 300 feet into the CFCC parking lot behind the Schwartz Center. Therefore the concept plan demonstrates that the site can only accommodate the required transportation functions if the tracks can extend into the CFCC parking lot. (Given the preliminary nature of the analysis, not all other functional details have been confirmed, e.g., mail truck access to the platform which would have to occur via the CFCC parking lot.). As for the Police Headquarters site, the transportation functions to be accommodated include expansion capability for the long term.

Noise Analysis – A study analyzed the existing and future traffic conditions in the vicinity of the Police Headquarters site. The purpose of the analysis was to estimate the impact of traffic on the noise levels inside the CFCC buildings adjoining Redcross Street. The future analysis examined a worst case option for the future growth of traffic. Existing traffic was used as the base of the study. Added to the base was a three percent growth rate to achieve 2010 traffic levels. Also added was traffic generated by the multi-modal center including WTA bus traffic. Using established analysis techniques for translating traffic into equivalent noise levels, the analysis determined that the average noise levels inside a school building met the approved FHWA standards. (Additional information is available in the report, Additional Analysis of Downtown Sites, provided the Committee members prior to the meeting.)

Vibration Observations – A specialist in the analysis of vibrations, a typical analysis conducted for rail transit systems, was consulted regarding the location of the Wilmington Multi-Modal Center. Several key factors influenced the response from the specialist. 1. Trains would be traveling at a very slow pace on their approach to the “end-of-the-line” train terminal, about five miles per hour. 2. The train platforms would be at least 300 feet from the new Allied Health Building, the new sensitive building in the CFCC complex. 3. Trains would likely reverse into the platform so that the diesel engine would remain at the far end of the train. For the Police Headquarters site, the engine would remain in the vicinity of the 3rd or 4th Street bridges, depending on the length of the train. For these three conditions the specialist stated the vibrations from train operations would not be a problem for the CFCC buildings.

Traffic Impacts – An analysis of traffic and pedestrian movements were conducted at the intersections of Redcross Street with both Front Street and 2nd Street. The analysis considered current traffic, growth in background traffic to 2010 and traffic added by the multi-modal center if located on the Police Headquarters site. The analysis included field counts of traffic and pedestrians at the Front Street intersection. The analysis concluded that during the peak mid-day hour, traffic operations at the Front Street intersection both today and in 2010 were below desirable standards. The intersection’s operation would be substantially improved to an acceptable level of service if signals were installed with an exclusive pedestrian phase. Additional study is required to determine if the signals can meet warrants for streets operating under the cited conditions. It was noted the signals would benefit both today’s conditions and meet future needs. And, that the traffic added to the street intersection due to the operation of the multi-modal center did not have a significant impact on the street operations. The intersection issue exists due to the interaction of pedestrians and the street traffic and is not related to the decision about using the Police Headquarters site for the inter-modal center.

Additional Discussion:

A question regarding the loss of CFCC parking spaces on Nutt Street, Redcross Street and the Police Headquarters site was raised. George Alexiou responded that some spaces on Redcross Street may be lost due to installation of “traffic calming” devices to slow the flow of traffic on Redcross, a common tactic used to reduce friction between traffic and high pedestrian volumes. The Nutt Street spaces (of which 34 are allocated to CFCC) are on city property that may be used for the museum and a joint community parking facility could replace the Police Headquarters site spaces that are also on city property.

Dr. McKeithan stated the CFCC was totally surprised to see drawings at the public open house on October 13, 1999 that eliminated 34 CFCC faculty, parking spaces for a 26 space semi-circular taxi staging area. The College had depended on those spaces for a couple of decades. To have them eliminated without any prior notice or discussion seemed indicative of bad faith, and would require the College the unexpected dilemma of adding yet another half-acre for parking spaces.

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A question was raised by Frank Block regarding funding for the transportation facilities at the center. Michael Kozak, NCDOT, responded that the funding formula for the rail service has not been decided. The other public transit facilities would probably be funded on an 80% (federal), 10% (state) and 10% (local) ratio. Kozak also encouraged the community not to be constrained by the study budget; additional effort will be needed to address the parking needs raised by CFCC. In response to a question from Frank Block, he added that funding required DOT approval.

A question was asked about the need to develop a perspective drawing of the 3rd to 4th Street site to provide a comparison with the drawing prepared for the Police Headquarters site. Ed Womack, the designer for the concept plans responded that the drawing prepared for the Police Headquarters site shows the non-transportation elements of the structure. The CFCC classrooms or other non-transportation uses are included in the three floors of the building that are visible in the drawing. The transportation facilities are at track level and along the backside of the structure and are not visible in the drawing. The Committee would have to determine what to show in the drawing of the Police Headquarters site, transportation or non-transportation uses. Since joint development is not expected on the 3rd to 4th Street site, the drawing would show only two small transportation buildings, the bus handling area and the existing buildings to be retained on the site.

In response to a question, Ed Womack clarified that the majority of the building space shown on the concept drawings for the Police Headquarters site had been shown to meet the needs of the College's classroom space needs, as understood by the consultant. All of the building space shown on the perspective drawing would be College space or some other non-transportation use.

Alexiou also noted, that CFCC's stated needs for the Police Headquarters site can be accommodated in the design with the exception of the parking.

A question was raised about the "historic" wall that runs from under the Front Street Bridge to beyond the 4th Street Bridge along the path of former railroad tracks. George Alexiou had commented that it placed constraints on the location of the train platform on both the 3rd to 4th Street site and the Police Headquarters site. Allan Paul commented that the wall dating to the civil war era had caused an alternative for the Smith Creek Parkway that looked at the former rail tracks as a possible location for the road, to abandon the option. The study and the wall's impact are documented in the Environmental Impact Statement for the Parkway.

Instructions to the Consultant

Bill Austin stated that the committee now has the information needed to make a decision.

After discussion, Bill Austin instructed the consultant to prepare the draft final report showing the Police Headquarters site to be the preferred site, consistent with previous committee actions. The report will include the consultant's analysis and recommendations and the deliberations of the Committee and the public involvement process. The Committee will review the report and then make a final decision regarding their recommendation for the multi-modal site.

Dr. McKeithan asked the record show that the CFCC had asked for the alternative site to extend north to Brunswick Street rather than Hanover Street. Bill Austin instructed the consultant to show in the report that the alternative site includes the area bound by 3rd, 4th, Campbell and Brunswick Streets.

Bill Austin noted that the report should address funding sources and order-of-magnitude costs for both sites.

John Rosborough asked if the airport was out of the question for the multimodal center. Bill responded most likely since it could not function as the WTA transfer center.

Laura Padgett noted that the committee had a lot of information and needed to make a decision at one more meeting.

Bob Murphrey asked that sites not be revisited at the next meeting.

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Carl Brown asked that the potential to boost 4th Street development should be considered for the alternative site (3rd/4th Street).

Dr. McKeithan wanted the record to show that the alternative site should extend to Brunswick and the accommodation of parking must be addressed.

Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

Meeting Date: April 11, 2000 (10:00 AM)

Location: Wilmington City Council Conference Room, City Hall

Subject: Steering Committee, Final Meeting

Present: Bill Morine, Wilmington Railroad Museum Foundation, INC.
Susi Hamilton, City of Wilmington
Bill Austin, City of Wilmington
John Ponder, City of Wilmington
Elvis Latiolais, Carolina Trailways
Chris O'keefe, New Hanover County Planning
Carl Brown, Cape Fear Community College
Bob Murphrey, DARE, Inc. (Downtown Revitalization)
Howard Loving, Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce
Marc Maus, Wilmington Transit Authority
Corey Johnson, Wilmington Transit Authority
Michael Kozak, NCDOT, Public Transportation Division
Allan Paul, NC DOT, Rail Division
David Bender, NC DOT Rail Division
Deborah M. Houston, New Hanover Co. Transportation Services
Dexter Hayes, New Hanover Co. Planning
Laura Padgett, City Council, Technical Advisory Committee
Slade McCalip, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Ed Womack, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Absent: David Hewett, Town of Leland
Wayne Clark, City of Wilmington
Pat Melvin, New Hanover County
Donald Sellars, Town of Leland
Dave Shingleton, Greyhound Lines
Bobbi Brown, Town of Leland
Ronnie Parker, Port City Taxi
Kent Jackson, City of Wilmington
Judith Grizzel, Cape Fear Coastal Convention Center and Visitors Bureau

Handouts: Agenda and 30 Copies of Draft Final Feasibility Study.

Mailouts: March 15, 2000 Meeting Minutes and Executive Summary of the Draft Final Feasibility Study report with the agenda for today's meeting.

From 10:00 AM until 10:15 AM copies of the draft study were distributed and reviewed by committee members. At 10:15 AM, Bill Austin asked if anyone needed more time to review the draft report. Hearing no one ask for additional time, Bill called the meeting to order. Bill then asked Slade McCalip, Transportation Planner for Parsons Brinckerhoff, to present on the draft report.

Meeting Notes from the March 15, 2000 meeting:

Slade asked if the committee had any comments or corrections to the meeting notes for the March 15th meeting. Hearing none he moved on to the draft report.

Overview of Draft Report:

Slade then informed the committee that George Alexiou has left Parsons Brinckerhoff and that he and Ed Womack, Senior Transportation Planner/Architect for Parsons Brinckerhoff, had written the draft report. The theme of the draft report is "possibilities". By that he went on to explain that it is possible to put all the things described in the report on the Police Headquarters site and that this multi-modal transportation center could possibly be one of the premier multi-modal stations in the country.

Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

Slade asked for comments or questions on the draft report. Elvis Latiolais commented that there were two minor corrections needed on page 9 of the report under the Trailways/Greyhound Intercity Bus Services section to include changing the current text to "that two passenger ticket windows with two sell positions" in the second paragraph from the top of the section.

Carl Brown then stated that he would have rather had overnight to review the draft report. He then stated that the Cape Fear Community College feels very strongly that the Police Headquarters site is not the preferred site for the Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center. That the CFCC strongly disagrees with the findings of the report. And that Dr. McKeithan would have liked to be at the meeting, but was away due to a family emergency.

Bill Austin responded that the City of Wilmington is still interested in working with the Community College to work on the College's issues.

Approve\Accept Draft Report:

Bill Austin then instructed the committee that the presentation of the report required a second by a committee member to bring the acceptance of the report by the committee to a vote. Marc Maus then seconded the motion to accept the draft report.

Bill then asked for those in favor of accepting the report to vote "yes" to which all the committee members present, except for Carl Brown, responded with a "yes" vote.

Bill then asked for those not in favor of accepting the report to vote "no" to which only Carol Brown responded with a "no" vote.

Bill then announced that the committee accepts the report. Bill also instructed the committee to provide any comments and/or minor corrections on or about the draft report to him or Slade McCalip by close of business on Tuesday, April 25, 2000.

Adjournment: The meeting was then adjourned at approximately 10:30 AM.

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**APPENDIX B: NOTES OF NOVEMBER 2, 1999 MEETING WITH CAPE FEAR
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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On November 2, 1999 a presentation was made to the Cape Fear Community College Planning Committee. Key concerns and comments raised by the Cape Fear Community College (CFCC) Planning Committee meeting are as follows:

- The college is opposed to locating a multi-modal facility on the Police Headquarter site.
- The site is in the heart of the campus and as such is critical to the function and integration of the campus. The site now splits the south and north campuses.
- Noise impacts from trains and buses on sensitive functions within the proposed Allied Health addition which will front the south side of Red Cross Street. Sensitive functions within that building include a CCTV studio for college use and an audio/learning laboratory.
- Congestion resulting from the transportation functions on the multi-modal transportation site.
- Exacerbation of pedestrian safety problems on Red Cross Street including the intersections with Front and Third Streets.
- Loss of college parking that is now provided on the portion of the Police Headquarters site between Front and Nutt Streets.
- Even though the 2020 Downtown plan identified the site as a location for a multi-modal center, the same plan also referred to college uses on the site.
- The college's important education function and its role in revitalizing the northern part of downtown are not acknowledged by the city and community. Past studies have failed to understand the college's issues and needs.
- The college has for years made it clear the importance of the site to their long-range plans, and concerns about the impact of a multi-modal center. Most recently these issues were raised by the college at the first steering committee meeting for the multi-modal center project in April 99. But to the college it appears that the site was selected even before the feasibility study commenced.
- The feasibility of rail services to Wilmington was questioned, including the availability of funding even if it were feasible. If rail service were to be implemented, then it seems Raleigh would be a better starting point than Charlotte.
- There were general concerns expressed about the feasibility of public transportation in general. The WTA service was considered a failure.
- There was considerable support for locating the center near the airport on the basis that there might be a stronger relationship between airport and rail travel (more so than between rail and intercity or local bus). There is also more land available, and impacts would also be less.
- There was strong support for a site just to the east of the Police Headquarters site on the railroad corridor between Third and Fourth streets if it was considered important for the multi-modal center to be located downtown. Land is available in this area, some of it owned by the college. The area needs a boost to be revitalized. Any existing land uses are low intensity.

APPENDIX C: 3RD & 4TH STREET SITE EVALUATION

SITE DESCRIPTION

The alternative site is located on the CSX railroad corridor directly east of the Police Headquarters site. It is bounded by Third and Fourth Streets to the west and east respectively, and Campbell and Hanover Streets to the south and north respectively. Some of the key features of the site include:

The central portion of the site, the original railroad right-of-way now owned by CFCC, is vacant, while the properties fronting Campbell and Hanover Streets are developed with active residential and commercial uses. There appear to be at least five businesses and three cottages in the block containing the site. The commercial buildings are one to two stories.

The three cottages (on Hanover Street) are on the Historic Register but could possibly be moved. Two are well maintained and occupied, while the third (closest to Third Street) is vacant and in poor condition.

Of the non-residential buildings, those on Campbell Street (on the north side) have the greatest historical significance and should be maintained (but could be reused as part of the multi-modal center). Though the commercial buildings on Hanover Street (on the south side) are less historically significant, according to the City they should also be retained if possible.

The site is in the Wilmington National Register Historic District (as is the Police Headquarters site). The area is now redeveloping by building on its historic character.

The railway bed through the site is approximately 40 feet lower than the surrounding streets. There is also a slightly higher "bench" above the level of the track bed (approximately 15 feet higher).

There is a stone wall of major historic significance that separates the lower and upper track beds through the site. Its existence and the requirement to preserve it, has significant implications for layout of the rail tracks and platforms.

Third and Fourth Streets are relatively wide and suitable for bus access.

Hanover and Campbell Streets are brick paved, and not suitable for carrying heavy volumes of bus traffic.

CONCEPT PLAN

A conceptual site layout showing potential locations for the various transportation uses has been developed (see separate plans). The concept features two basic levels. The rail tracks and platforms are located at the lower level, while both the WTA and intercity bus operations are located on a large concrete deck at street level. Bus access is from Third and Fourth Streets.

A major issue is the layout of the rail tracks and the platform(s). The desired minimum width for passenger platforms is 20 feet. A minimum of approximately 10 feet is required to accommodate each track and the train using it, therefore the combined width of two tracks and single platform is 40 feet. The desirable platform length is 800 feet (700 feet is the minimum).

Because of the stone retaining wall, the tracks and platform must be located on the upper portion of the site. The clearance under the Fourth Street bridge, between the abutment on the north side and the retaining wall (but excluding the retaining wall) is approximately 35 feet (in the center of the bridge).

Therefore, the platform cannot begin until west of the Fourth Street bridge (approximately 50 feet west of the bridge to allow the tracks to split to accommodate a 20-wide platform. To achieve even the minimum platform length (700 feet), the tracks and platform would have to protrude at least 300 feet into the CFCC parking lot behind the Schwartz Center

Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

Therefore the concept plan demonstrates that the site can only accommodate the required transportation functions if the tracks can extend into the CFCC parking lot. (Given the preliminary nature of the analysis, not all other functional details have been confirmed, e.g., mail truck access to the platform which would have to occur via the CFCC parking lot.). As for the Police Headquarters site, the transportation functions to be accommodated include expansion capability for the long term.

The plan shows the cottages removed and the building to the east of the cottages demolished. The two-story office on the corner of Hanover and Fourth Streets is shown retained, but could be sacrificed if retaining the cottages were a higher priority. The red brick B & B Hose and Rubber Company building on Campbell Street is shown as the railway station and WTA offices and waiting area.

A comparison of this and the Police Headquarters site is provided in Table 1. Some other key conclusions are:

- The Site is smaller than Police Headquarters HQ site, and multiple owners may be involved.
- A rail station on this site would not be a prominent feature of the Downtown.
- The site is less convenient for WTA passengers bound for Downtown, as well as rail passengers with Downtown destinations.
- Mail truck access to the platform would be difficult.
- Access from the rail platform to the station must be via the WTA bus handling area (including one of the circulation aisles). Checked baggage must also be transported use this route.
- The area has less pedestrian traffic and other activity and therefore appears less secure.
- The opportunities for joint development are more rare as you move further away from the waterfront district.

Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

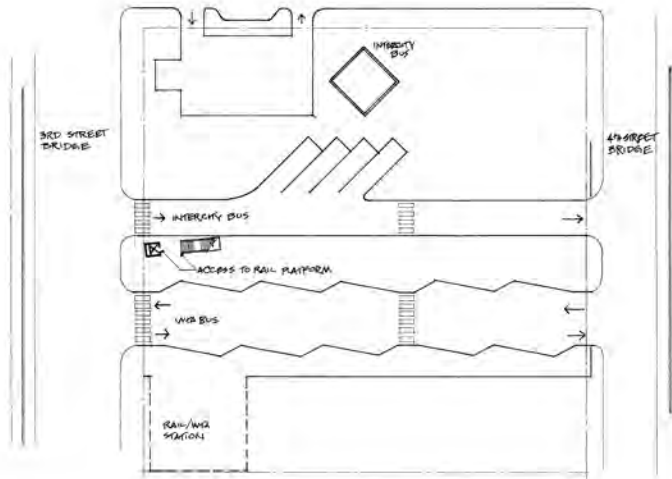
**Table C-1
Comparison of Police HQ Site and Third/Fourth St. Site**

Evaluation Criteria		
	<u>Police Headquarters Site</u>	<u>3rd & 4th Street Site</u>
Ability to Accommodate Long-Term Transportation Functions	Small site, but can accommodate all functions by designing a multi-level facility. Platform length may be limited without rebuilding 3 rd St bridge. Limited size adds to construction costs. Some or much parking may have to be located off-site.	Cannot accommodate rail tracks and platform on site – must extend under 3 rd St. bridge and into CFCC parking lot for at least 300 ft. Rail passengers must cross WTA bus area. Sufficient area available at upper level if can relocate 3 cottages, and remove buildings on Hanover, reuse some existing buildings (on Campbell), and locate bulk of parking in an adjacent block. Mail truck access may be difficult.
Impact on Rail Ridership & Operations	Rail ridership has correlation with reasonable walking distance to attractions, good transit access, and parking.	Inferior location compared to Police HQ site. Less central for walking to Downtown destinations (2 blocks farther from waterfront). Also less visible from same destinations. Less landmarks to help arriving passengers orient themselves.
Impact on Intercity Bus Ridership and Operations	Typically greater ridership when stations located downtown. Operators prefer Downtown site, but must be workable (size constraints). Site is very close to existing bus station. More visible site and more convenient to local transit.	Same convenience as Police HQ site provided WTA can also co-locate.
Impact on WTA Operations & Rider Convenience	Most central location in Downtown and adjacent to some existing Downtown routes. Downtown is already significant destination. Ridership should increase with multiple walking destinations and other modes available at station. Minimal impact on WTA.	Inferior location since longer walking distances for most Downtown passengers. More need for connecting Downtown shuttles. Minimal impact on WTA operations.
Impact on NHCOTS	Central for clients/passengers.	Same as Police HQ site.
Vehicular Access and Traffic Impacts	Access to site from abutting streets not as good as other sites, and access roads will be congested at times. Parking garage can be asset to Downtown area (shared use). More accessible by other modes.	Both Third and Fourth are wide, allowing for easy and convenient access. Campbell and Hanover are brick-paved and should not be used for bus access.
Ability to access by Pedestrian/Bike	Convenient Ped/Bike access to and from the site and multiple attractions/destinations. Extensive sidewalk network.	Good bike access. Highly visible, convenient and safe pedestrian route to riverfront area needs to be created (via Red Cross and railroad ROW/Police HQ site)
Compatibility with Existing & Planned Land Uses	Urban areas more insensitive to noise and activity during night hours and a multi-modal facility is already in an adopted plan. Major tourist activities committed in area.	Still within CBD zone, but closer to residential R3 zone. Efforts underway to build on and strengthen historic character of area (particularly Fourth St). Residences on Hanover and east side of Fourth. Generally less intensive uses anticipated for this area.

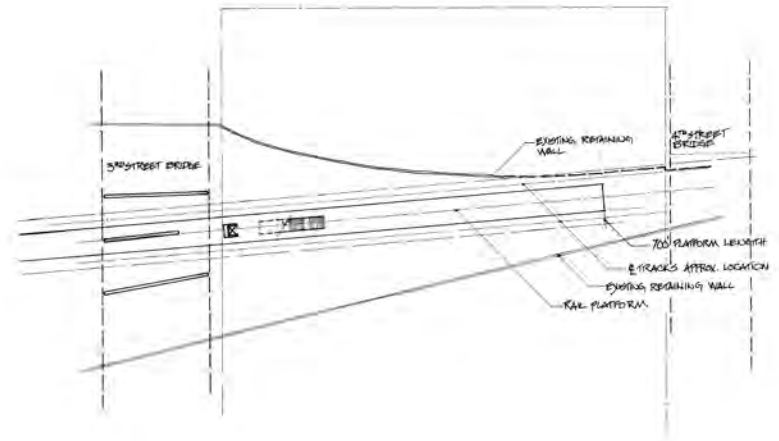
Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center

**Table C-1 (continued)
Comparison of Police HQ Site and Third/Fourth St. Site**

Evaluation Criteria		
	<u>Police Headquarters Site</u>	<i>3rd & 4th Street Site</i>
Development or Redevelopment Stimulant in Surrounding area	Already an integral component of Downtown hotel/convention center redevelopment planning and implementation strategy.	Area is experiencing limited redevelopment (e.g., NOFO restaurant). If appropriately planned and designed, multi-modal center might stimulate some additional development.
Public/Private Joint Development Opportunities	Site attractive to private sector for development opportunities. CFCC interested in developing classroom space and parking on site; Railroad Museum interested in participating. Could provide revenue for project. Opportunity for shared parking.	Opportunities for joint development appear to be limited. Would also require use of additional parcels surrounding site. Less desirable location for Museum. Options should be explored if site selected.
Land Ownership & Availability	Site already owned by City and is planned for redevelopment.. Apartment building under separate ownership on NW corner of Red Cross and Second.	Site owned by CFCC who have indicated willingness to make site available. Surrounding parcels in same block (some of which may be required) owned by approximately seven separate owners. .
Image & Public Visibility	High visibility due to student and downtown traffic	Less visible than Police HQ site. Not visible from waterfront activities and development, or Front and Nutt Streets, i.e., high pedestrian areas. But more visible to motorists (Third/Fourth traffic).
User Security	High traffic areas safer and require less security..	Less secure than Police HQ site as much less pedestrian and night activity in area.
Environmental Issues	No contamination cleanup or wetland mitigation anticipated, but the Police Bldg. is historic. Adjacent apartments will be impacted by noise	No contamination visible. Development must be sensitive to adjacent historic buildings and residences.

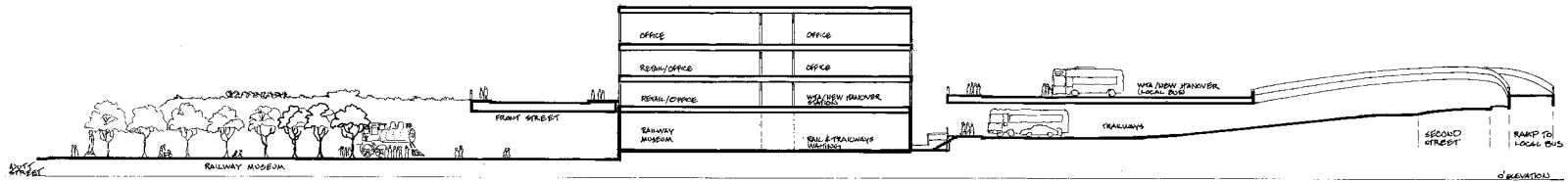


Street Level Plan View

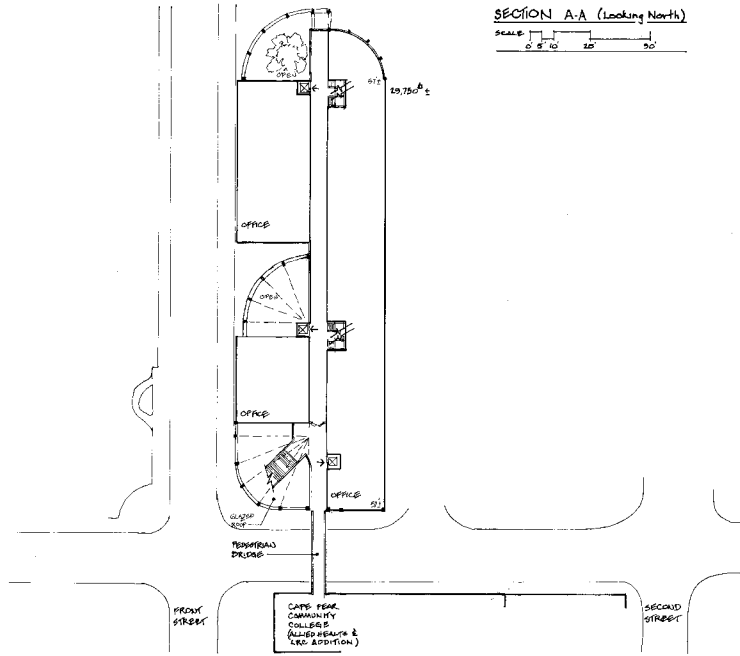


Track (Ground)-Level Plan View

3rd to 4th Street Site
Figure 5

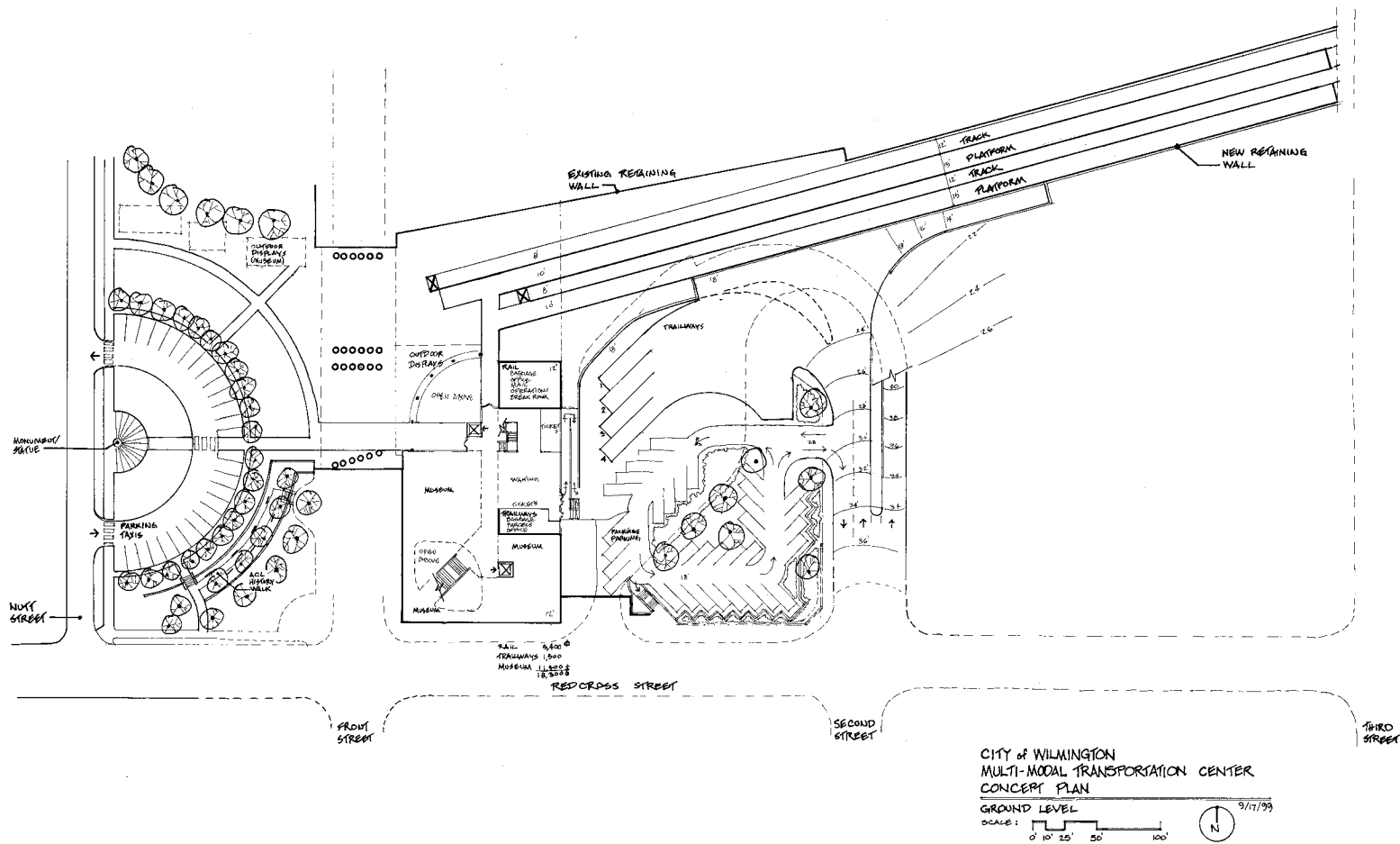


SECTION A-A (Looking North)
SCALE: 0 5 10 20 30'

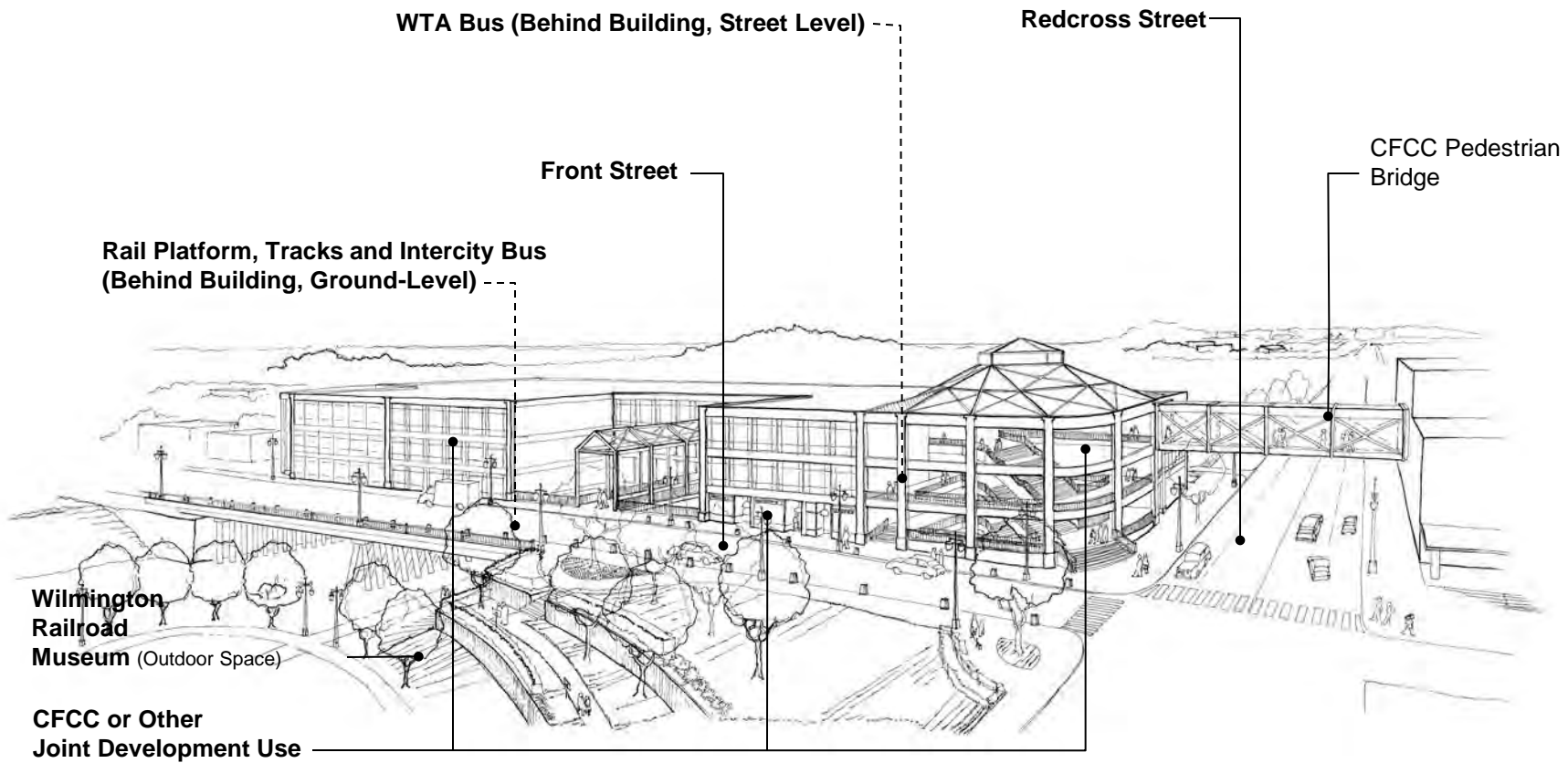


CITY OF WILMINGTON
MULTI-MODAL TRANSFORMATION CENTER
CONCEPT PLAN
UPPER LEVEL (FLOOR 3 & 4)
SCALE: 0 25 50 100' 3/1/19

Police Headquarters Site
Upper Level Plan View
Figure 4

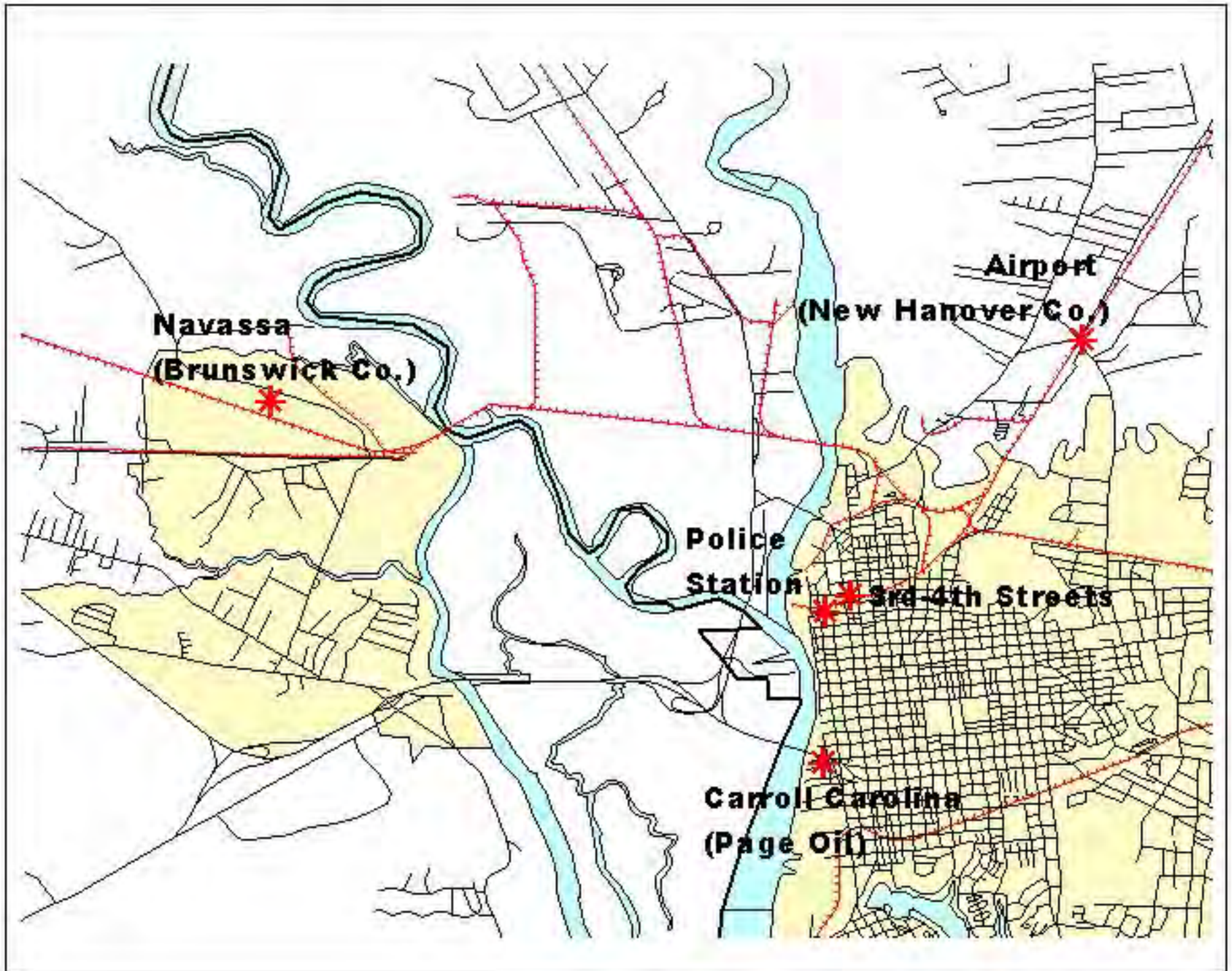


**Police Headquarters Site
Track (Ground)-Level Plan View
Figure 2**



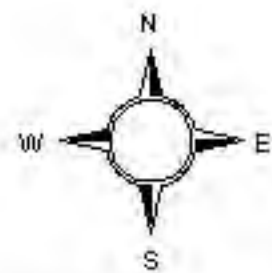
**Police Headquarters Site
Perspective of Conceptual Development
Figure 6**

Wilmington Multi-Modal Transportation Center Feasibility Study Alternative Sites Studied



Legend

- * Proposed Multi-Modal Transportation Center Sites
- Roadways
- Railroads
- Counties
- Water Bodies
- Cities



2 0 2 4 Miles