

Prioritization Subcommittee

Meeting Agenda

April 6, 2021

9:00 AM

Meeting to be held via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/91373453789>

Voting Members on the Committee: Dan Baechtold (City of Asheville), Larry Harris (Black Mountain), Peyton O’Conner (Buncombe County, Chair), Autumn Radcliff (Henderson County), Anthony Sutton (Town of Waynesville), Elizabeth Teague (Town of Waynesville, Vice-Chair), Jerry Vebaun (Town of Woodfin)

1. Welcome and Introductions	Peyton O’Conner
2. Public Comment	Peyton O’Conner
3. Approval of February, 2021 Meeting Minutes	Peyton O’Conner
4. Business	
FTA 5310 Project Selection Update	MPO Staff
LAPP Request: Cost Increase for EB-5945	MPO Staff
Prioritization Local Input Methodology for P 6.0	MPO Staff
5. News, Events, Updates	Peyton O’Conner
6. Public Comment	Peyton O’Conner
7. Adjournment	Peyton O’Conner

Item 3

February, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Prioritization Subcommittee Meeting Minutes* March 2, 2021

*Meeting held virtually via Zoom. All votes held by roll-call.

ATTENDING

Voting Members

-Steve Williams, NCDOT

-Peyton O'Conner, Buncombe
County

-Dan Baechtold, City of Asheville

-Larry Harris, Town of Black
Mountain

-Anthony Sutton, Town of
Waynesville

-Jerry Vehaun, Town of Woodfin

-Autumn Radcliff, Henderson
County

-Elizabeth Teague, Town of
Waynesville

Non-Voting

-Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO

-Nick Kroncke, FBRMPO

-Emily Scott Cruz, FBRMPO

-John Ridout, FBRMPO

-William High, Buncombe County

-Matt Cable, Buncombe County

-Kim Roney, City of Asheville

-Brian Burch, NCDOT

-Janna Peterson, Henderson
County

-Daniel Cobb, Town of Mills River

-John Fargher, Consultant

-Vicki Eastland, LOSRPO

-Hannah Cook, NCDOT

-Mark Gibbs, NCDOT

-Daniel Sellers, NCDOT

-Nick Tuttle, NCDOT

-Steve Williams, NCDOT

-Stephen Sparks, NCDOT

-Brendan Merithew, NCDOT

I. Welcome and Introductions

Prioritization Chair, Peyton O’Conner, presided calling meeting to order at 9:00 am. Members gave their introduction. The Agenda was approved.

II. Public Comment

None at this time.

III. Approval of February 2021 Minutes and Approval of Agenda

The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed. Jerry Vehaun made a motion to approve. Anthony Sutton seconded the motion. All approved.

IV. Business

IV-A // FTA 5310 Project Selection

Emily Scott-Cruz brought up the item regarding 5310 and CRRSA funds. 5310 is funds for enhanced mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities with 55% going towards “traditional” projects and 35% towards “other” projects. Emily showed the funding available which totals \$312,000 for this upcoming fiscal year. The other funding source, CRRSAA is COVID-19 funding and Asheville UZA received \$60,153 in funding. With the 10% for admin, there is a total of \$54,138 available to be allocated. Emily noted that Regional Transit Operators discussed this funding and how to allocate the funds. They noted it is easiest to give all the funding to one project but no applicants requested around the \$54,000 available. Emily noted that Senior Companions program was unable to provide a letter committing match for the full amount available, but Mountain Projects in Haywood County was able to provide that letter.

Emily showed which projects submitted for 5310 funding, as provided in the agenda packet. Emily had the voting members use an interactive questionnaire to score the projects. Questions were regarding SEDTAP eligibility (for Buncombe County) and for the City of Asheville’s paratransit project. Emily went over the scores received. Emily went through 4 funding alternatives: (1) only fund traditional projects with Buncombe County and City of Asheville both getting 85% of requested funding. Then “Other” projects will have to be scored separately (2) fund Buncombe County’s

paratransit/SED TAP at 100% and use remaining funds for City of Asheville's paratransit. Fully fund the Other 5310 projects, using CRRSSA funds for Other projects. (3) fund Asheville's paratransit at 100% and use remaining funds for Buncombe County's SED TAP (19% of requested funding), with Other 5310 projects receiving full funding (4) Fund both Buncombe and Asheville's projects at 56% of their requested funding and still use CRRSAA funds for fully funding Other 5310 projects. More information on these scenarios is in the agenda packet.

Elizabeth Teague asked for clarification on Alternative 4 given how it spreads funding and asked for feedback from staff on how it impacts their ability to provide services. Tristan Winkler noted that Alternative 4, by funding 56%, is similar to previous years but overall a lower amount. Matt Cable with Buncombe County noted impacts between the different alternatives noting that Alternative 4 would likely be preferable. Tristan Winkler noted MPO staff following up with City staff to ensure Alternative 4 would be suitable before moving to TCC and Board.

Elizabeth Teague made the recommendation to move forward with Alternative 4. Anthony Sutton seconded. All approved.

IV -B // LAPP Requests

John Ridout brought up the request for TIP project BL-0005 Broadway Avenue/NC 251 sidewalks by Division 13. The request is to accelerate the projects from FY 22 to FY 21, meaning starting construction of the project this summer. This project involves sidewalks along the southside of Broadway under US 19/23 near UNCA. Mark Gibbs added that the purpose of moving ahead with this is to have it on the ground before the A-0010AA project kicks off. Elizabeth Teague noted the importance of this corridor for bicycle and pedestrian activity and voiced support for this project.

Discussion took place around the importance of this as a pedestrian and greenway connection with multiple routes.

Elizabeth Teague made a recommendation to approve acceleration with this project from FY 22 to FY 21. Larry B. Harris seconded. All approved.

IV - C // Prioritization Local Input Methodology

Tristan brought up a presentation on P6 and provided a brief recap. Projects were submitted in summer of 2020. The next task is to provide methodology for local input points. Tristan provided an overview of the steps of prioritization, what projects fall in which funding tiers, and how investment decisions are made via scoring and data. The MPO has 1,900 points for each tier and each project can receive 100 points max. The current methodology has % points on safety, local priority, congestion, bike/ped, environment, and freight. Tristan noted the big caveat that it is likely that there will be very little, if any, funding available in P6.0 for this region.

Tristan noted some potential changes regarding changing the 120% allocation of each funding tier's projected budget (as it currently is) as well as adding language regarding flexing of points and adding language regarding coordination between the MPO and NCDOT Divisions. Other things to consider adding: project inclusion in the MTP, resiliency considerations, Environmental Justice, and folding-in public survey results. Hannah Cook made a comment that caveats should be provided if projects are not in the MTP, or if they are smaller projects such as a safety benefit, they should still be included. Elizabeth Teague made a comment regarding freight and asked if local road systems are ready for freight given the economic development in the region. Janna Peterson asked about how bike/ped is scored in this process versus at the statewide level. Tristan clarified the nuances of scoring bike/ped in the Prioritization process. Discussion took place around resiliency efforts at the statewide and regional level. Staff will look at boosting freight, reducing local priority, reconsidering Bike/ped and potentially boosting it. MPO will bring this back in the following month(s). There will additionally be public input in the coming months.

V. Announcement, News, Special Updates -

MPO Orientation on March 26.

Steve Williams stated that Division 14 Engineer Brian Burch has been promoted within NCDOT and they are seeking a replacement at this time. Elizabeth Teague mentioned considering project delays with safety issues and looking for additional funding or ways to repackage them to fund the safety elements of these projects. She mentioned the Amboy/Meadow Road project and the need for improvements there given the multi-modal needs there. She also mentioned US 70 near the V.A. hospital and the issues with the bus stop(s) and lack of sidewalks. With it being a federal facility, she mentioned creative funding solutions could be sought out. Tristan noted that it is possible that there will be solutions to the Amboy/Meadow Road project. Mark Gibbs clarified they have temporary fixes to the pedestrian issues over the Amboy/Meadow Road bridge, including widening the sidewalk on the bridge until it can be replaced in a few years and extending the bike lanes on Meadow Road. Discussion took place around the potential of these projects moving forward.

Next Meeting **April 6 at 9am.**

VI. Public Comment – None at this time.

VII. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 A.M.

Item 4A

5310 Project Selection and CRRSAA

CRRSAA and 5310 Project Selection

CRRSAA

The Asheville UZA was awarded Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Apportionment Act (CRRSAA) funds to Section 5310. Funds are to be used for 5310 operations and payroll (if recipients have furloughed employees). The UZA received \$60,153 in additional Section 5310 funds. The Regional Transit Operators Workgroup met to discuss CRRSAA funding, deciding that the best approach would be to divert the funding, which totals \$54,138 after taking out 10% Admin costs for the City of Asheville to a single recipient. The ongoing 5310 Call for Projects made this process simplified.

The agencies that submitted “Other” (operating) projects with the highest funding request, for only one project, were asked if they could provide an updated letter of local match and extend their Period of Performance to expend the entire \$54,138. Senior Companions was approached first because their project spans more than one County; however, they were unable to provide a match commitment letter for the full amount. Mountain Projects was also approached and confirmed their ability to provide a local match commitment, revised budget, and certification that they have not furloughed employees.

Note: Mountain Projects is eligible to receive CRRSAA funds, in which case **all** Other Projects could be fully funded for FY22 with 5310 funds, and an additional \$14,902 could be added to the Traditional pot of funds.

Section 5310

Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) funds are allocated to the Asheville Urbanized Area, with the City of Asheville serving as the designated recipient for these funds. The application process for Section 5310 ran from November 20th, 2020 through December 31st, 2020. Additional information about Section 5310 is available at: <http://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/5310-and-jarc/>.

The 5310 Grant has two categories for funding:

- Traditional/Capital projects: at least 55% of the total funding amount has to go to “traditional” projects.
- Other/Operations projects: no more than 45% of the total funding amount can go to these projects

Following the February Prioritization Subcommittee meeting, Alternative 4 (shown below) was approved pending a conversation with the Traditional applicants, whose projects were scored during the February Prioritization Subcommittee meeting.

Alternative 5 was created after a conversation between Buncombe County, the City of Asheville, and MPO Staff.

SUBMITTED PROJECTS:

The table below shows the projects submitted and funding requested.

Applicant	Traditional or Other	Project Title	Period of Performance	Project Description	Funding Requested	Local Match	Total Cost
Buncombe County	Traditional	SED TAP	7/1/21 - 6/30/22	Door-to-door service for seniors/disabled on ADA compliant vans. Funds to support medical trips for elderly adults; demand response for customers with disabilities. 5310 funds allow more state and local funds to extend across all programs to cover transportation needs.	\$ 200,081	\$ 50,021	\$ 1,257,510
City of Asheville	Traditional	Asheville Paratransit	7/1/21 - 6/30/22	Allows CoA to offer service to residents beyond the 3/4 service boundary	\$ 166,832	\$ 41,708	\$ 208,540
Buncombe County	Other	RIDE Voucher Program	2/1/22 - 6/20/22	Curb-to-curb, user-side subsidy that allows users to purchase vouchers for rides at a lower rate to be used in Buncombe county for same day, unforeseen trips and trips not available through public transit	\$ 20,112	\$ 20,112	\$ 40,224
Land of Sky	Other	Senior Companions Program	7/1/21 - 6/30/22	Provides companions for senior adults that provide transportation and other needed services.	\$ 42,838	\$ 42,838	\$ 85,676
Madison County	Other	Expanded Nutrition Access	7/1/21 - 6/30/22	Continue providing home delivery meals for Mars Hill meal side and provide extra 35 home deliveries since March 2020.	\$ 26,058	\$ 26,058	\$ 52,116
Madison County	Other	Expanded Transportation to Mars Hill	7/1/21 - 6/30/22	Allow MCTA to continue providing transportation services to Mars Hill residents for medical appointments and other accessibility, covering cost of driver, vans, scheduling, and management.	\$ 17,426	\$ 17,426	\$ 34,852
Mountain Projects, Inc.	Other	Haywood Public Transit Paratransit	7/1/21 - 6/30/22	Funds support paratransit services; if awarded, 5310 State funding could serve a wider portion of Haywood County and these funds could pay for the UZA	\$ 43,136	\$ 43,136	\$ 86,272

Alternatives 4 and 5: 5310 funding breakdown and CRRSAA allocation—recommended by Regional Transit Operators Group:

FRENCH BROAD RIVER

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Funding Type	Amount	Percentage of Total Allocation
Admin	\$ 34,668	10%
Total Traditional Projects Funding	\$ 205,574	59%
Total Other Projects Funding	\$ 106,434	31%
Total 5310 Funding Amount	\$ 346,676	100%

Applicant	Project Title	Period of Performance	Recommended Funding	Recommended Funding Level	Funding Requested	Local Match	Total Cost
Buncombe County	RIDE Voucher Program	2/1/22-6/30/22	\$ 20,112	100%	\$20,112	\$20,112	\$40,224
Land of Sky	Senior Companions Program	7/1/21 - 6/30/22	\$ 42,838	100%	\$ 42,838	\$ 42,838	\$ 85,676
Madison County	Expanded Nutrition Access	7/1/21 - 6/30/22	\$ 26,058	100%	\$ 26,058	\$ 26,058	\$ 52,116
Madison County	Expanded Transportation to Mars Hill	7/1/21 - 6/30/22	\$ 17,426	100%	\$ 17,426	\$17,426	\$ 34,852
CRRSAA Funding							
Mountain Projects, Inc.	Haywood Public Transit Paratransit	7/1/21 - 12/31/22	\$ 108,276	100%	\$ 54,138	\$ 54,138	\$ 108,276

CONSIDER THE TRADITIONAL SCORE

Alternative 4:

Fund both Buncombe SEDTAP and Asheville's Paratransit at 56% of their requested funding. Use CRRSAA funds as detailed above and fully fund Other 5310 projects, diverting an extra \$14,902 to Traditional percentage of the 5310 allocation.

ALTERNATIVE 4	Project Title	Recommended Funding	Recommended Funding Level	Funding Requested	Local Match
Buncombe County	SEDTAP	\$ 112,148	56%	\$200,081	\$50,021
City of Asheville	Asheville Paratransit	\$ 93,426	56%	\$166,832	\$41,708

Alternative 5:

Split the total Traditional funding available (\$205,574) between Buncombe’s SEDTAP and Asheville’s Paratransit—leaving each project with \$102,787. Use CRRSAA funds as detailed above and fully fund Other 5310 projects, diverting that additional \$14,902 to Traditional funding.

Alternative 5	Project Title	Recommended Funding	Recommended Funding Level	Funding Requested	Local Match
Buncombe County	SEDTAP	\$ 102,787	51%	\$200,081	\$25,697
City of Asheville	Asheville Paratransit	\$ 102,787	62%	\$166,832	\$25,697

Action Required:

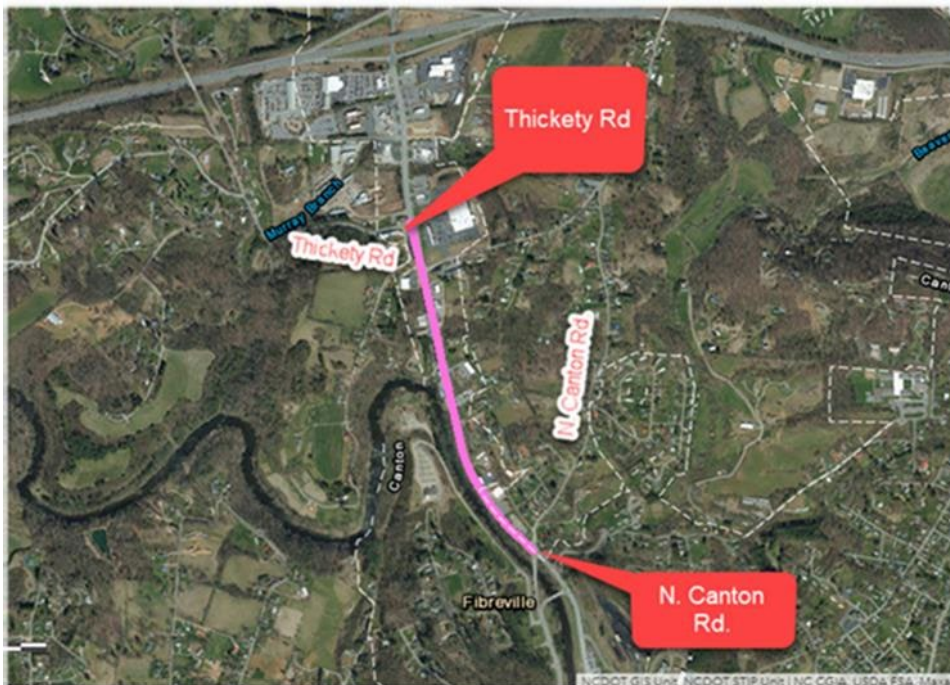
Approve the *updated* funding alternative to be recommended to TCC and Board.

Item 4B

LAPP Project- Cost Increase, Scope Change for EB-5945

The **Town of Canton** is wishing to alter the Champion Drive Sidewalk Project (EB-5945) from a sidewalk to a mixed-use path (MUP). The initial project scope was a 6 FT wide sidewalk to be separated from the roadway by a 4 FT grassy strip. The Town of Canton has since explored potentially changing this and has chosen a MUP which is identified as an 8FT Planting Strip, 10 FT Sidewalk, 2 FT grass strip. The project description otherwise is unchanged.

The ~0.7-mile sidewalk is expected to be located along the EAST side of Champion Drive from Thickety Road to the intersection of North Canton Rd. The general location of the project within Haywood County is identified below.



Action Item: Approve change of scope. ROW/Construction is not funded at this time.

Cost estimate provided on the next page.

Per NCDOT Div. 14:

Asphalt MUP

- 8 FT planting strip, 10 FT Sidewalk, 2 FT grass strip
- Total Project Costs:
- Construction Cost = \$725K
- ROW Cost = \$200K
- Construction Costs + ROW Costs + Utility Costs + PE Costs + SRV Costs
- = ~\$725K + ~\$200K + ~\$150K + ~\$150K ~\$90K
- = ~\$1.315M This is high-level cost estimate of the TOTAL project.

Please note, the entire project was previously estimated at \$440K and thus the full cost share for the Town was previously estimated at \$88K. It

Other options considered:

Reviewed cost estimates of MUP vs Sidewalk, concrete vs asphalt.

Concrete Sidewalk: TOTAL = ~\$940K ... + PE + SRV & SUE needs

- 8 FT planting strip, 6 FT Sidewalk, 2 FT grass strip:

Concrete MUP

- 8 FT planting strip, 10 FT Sidewalk, 2 FT grass strip – higher cost than the asphalt MUP. Not selected.

Item 4C

Prioritization Local Input Methodology (continued)

Overview

As part of the Statewide Prioritization Process, determined by the [Strategic Transportation Investments Act](#), MPOs, RPOs, and Divisions have local input points that play a major role in prioritizing projects at the Regional Impact and Division Needs levels. Local input points are utilized to help priority projects have a better chance of being funded.

Funding Tier	Statewide Mobility	Regional Impact	Division Needs
Quantitative Score	100%	70%	50%
MPO Score	0%	15%	25%
Division Score	0%	15%	25%
Amount of All Funding	40%	30%	30%
Distribution	All Projects Compete Against Each Other	Split Between Seven Regions, Projects Compete Within Each Region	Split Between 14 Divisions, Projects Compete Within Division
Funding	One Big Pot of Funds	Split to Each Region Based on Population	Split Equally Between 14 Divisions

How local input points are applied is not. . .intuitive. Each MPO, RPO, and Division receive a set number of points they may assign to projects. Projects may receive up to 100 local input points from each MPO, RPO, or Division. However, 100 local input points on a projects boosts a Regional Impact project by 15 points, a Division Needs projects by 25 points.

For MPOs, RPOs, and Divisions, a methodology must be developed and approved to assign local input points to projects. These methodologies must include at least one quantitative criterion and at least one qualitative criterion.

Changes in Local Input Methodology Considerations from P 5.0 to P 6.0

-MPOs, RPOs, and Divisions now have the option of “flexing” Regional Impact points to Division Needs points or vice-versa. Ex. The French Broad River MPO has 1,900 Regional

Impact points and 1,900 Division Needs points; we can flex 100 points from Regional Impact to Division Needs to put points on an additional Regional Impact project.

Changes to Consider for the MPO's Local Input Methodology

- incorporate the MTP into the methodology (i.e., prioritize projects in the region's 25-year plan over projects that are not)
- incorporate public input as part of the scoring (discussed in P 5.0)
- additional categories to consider: resiliency? Environmental justice?
- change weights to categories being scored
- change point allocations for other modes

Schedule Moving Forward

~~March: general discussion on goals and direction for the P 6.0 local input point methodology~~

April: further discussion on more specific items

May: draft methodology

June: final methodology and take to TCC and Board

The French Broad River MPO P 5.0 local input point methodology is below.

Discussion Items for April

- data from Accel Adapt and Historic Landslides that could be used for Resiliency scoring and evaluation
- altering data for Multimodal considerations and utilizing the bike/ped crash risk layer
- increasing weight for freight considerations
- decreasing weight for local priorities