



METROPOLITAN PLANNING
ORGANIZATION
A PROGRAM OF LAND OF SKY

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
Minutes from the Governing Board meeting on May 23, 2019

Attendance

William Lapsley	Tristan Winkler	Nick Kroncke	Zia Rifkin
David White	George Banta	Brian Caskey	Gwen Wisler
Amanda Edwards	Bob Davy	Troy Wilson	Wanda Austin
Steve Williams	David Wasserman	Kevin Ensley	Ritchie Rozzelle
Brownie Newman	Tom Widmer	Janna Peterson	Vicki Eastland
Mark Gibbs	Hannah Cook	George Webb	Vijay Kapoor
Larry Harris	LeRoy Roberson	Daniel Sellers	Jeff McKenna
Autumn Radcliff	Stephen Sparks	Matt Wechtel	Anne Coletta
Chris Medlin			

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS, APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Lapsley called the meeting to order, requested that everyone introduce himself or herself, read the Ethics Statement and inquired if there were any conflicts of interest to note for today's meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Lapsley called for any public comments. None were received.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was presented for approval with no modification requested.

Bob Davy moved to approve the agenda as presented. Brian Caskey seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

CONSENT AGENDA

Larry Harris moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of the March 28, 2019 minutes and an Appointment to the Regional Trail Workgroup. Gwen Wisler seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

JARC Project Selection

JARC, Jobs Access Reverse Commute, is one of two transit and human services transportation funding categories allocated to the Asheville Urbanized Area. FBRMPO holds a call for projects once a year, and the City of Asheville is the Designated Recipient for these funds. The application process for Spring 2019 ran from January 31 to March 29. Additional information about these programs available at www.fbrmpo.org/jarc.

Nick Kroncke shared that the JARC funds are for programs that serve mainly low-income people commuting to work. He noted that there was \$187 thousand available for Haywood County through the application process. He communicated that MPO staff recommend funding at the level requested by applicants. The Prioritization Subcommittee approved that recommendation and the projects are presented to the Board for approval today.

Matt Wechtel moved to approve the JARC projects for funding as presented. Larry Harris seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

Amendments to the 2018-2027 TIP

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is our region's document that reflects planned transportation investments over a ten-year period and is required to be in conformity with state STIP. The TIP describes each project, a schedule for implementation, funding sources, and estimated cost.

Nick Kroncke reviewed the projects requested to be amended in the TIP. He noted that there was also a language update for the TIP regarding project safety, etc.

Larry Harris moved to approve the resolution approving an amendment to the 2018-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Brian Caskey seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

5307 Urban Transit Funding Allocation Formula Amendment

FTA 5307 funds are for transit capital and operations that are distributed to large urbanized areas to be administered by eligible transit operators. The FBRMPO is required to develop and maintain a formula and agreement for the use of funds in the region by all eligible parties. In other words, the MPO works to determine how these funds are distributed. The FBRMPO previously completed a study in 2017 that passed a formula allowing Buncombe and Haywood counties to officially become subrecipients. The change requested is to the resolution that determines the sub-allocation of funds that has been requested by multiple subrecipients in order to encourage more collaboration and coordination between subrecipients. The City of Asheville and Buncombe County have requested language be added to the original resolution to allow for more collaboration among the subrecipients of these funds. MPO staff has also added language that all recipients should be aware of these funding transfers.

Gwen Wisler moved to approve the resolution amending the 5307 Urban Transit Funding Allocation Formula for use in the French Broad River MPO Region. Brownie Newman seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

Presentation on the 2020-2029 STIP

David Wasserman, PE, NCDOT STIP Western Region Manager, shared with the FBRMPO Board about the State Transportation Improvement Program. He presented information about the funding distributions in the Draft 2020-2029 STIP. The Draft STIP is scheduled to be adopted by the Board of Transportation at their September 2019 meeting. He shared about the STI law and how it sets the framework for prioritization and project submittal. The funding comes from state dollars, and includes legislative appropriations for various uses, on an annual basis, in the budget. Funds are allocated between highway maintenance, transit and project development, among other uses. A little over \$1 billion is received annually from Federal Highways, too. Developing the STIP means looking into the future: fees are expected to grow slightly as are other funding sources. Due to the FAST Act expiration in 2020, funding scenarios would change due to changes in the funding structure. Expenditures in the STIP include highway funds and PE funding, among other funding categories. Some funds are used for debt service, mitigation and transition projects. Funding is also allocated for the three project tiers: Statewide, Regional Impact, and Division Needs. Funding is further defined in the project tiers. After all funding obligations are met; the remaining funds are available for projects submitted by the transportation regions and NCDOT (Statewide tier).

Mr. Wasserman shared that the STIP has many types of projects including Statewide Mobility projects, Regional Impact projects and Division Needs projects, selected through the prioritization process. It is roughly an even split between highway and non-highway projects in the STIP; however, funded projects are mainly highway projects, in terms of the level of dollars committed. Challenges are being seen across the state with cost increases for committed projects. NCDOT is working on improving cost estimation for projects. It was shared that projects, which have ROW or PE in the first six years of the STIP are considered committed.

Discussion occurred about projects that are delayed, for one reason or another, and whether those would be funded in future rounds of prioritization, which was confirmed. Discussion also occurred regarding NCDOT having access to "Rainy Day Funds" to help relieve the backlog of projects. It was communicated that bond monies are assigned to specific projects.

Chairman Lapsley mentioned his appointment to the NC FIRST Commission, which occurred after he voiced concerns about the funding available in the FBRMPO region for highway projects.

David Wasserman provided a brief presentation on Federal-Aid funding. He shared that these funds are distributed to many multiple funding pots. Federal-Aid funding is approved during the appropriations process in Congress. Along with the funding, stipulations are also provided on the level of funding that may be expended in a given year (obligation authority). The FAST Act specifically states that in 2020 a rescission would occur for FAST Act funds. This means that the state would have some of these funds rescinded in July of 2020. The state's goal is to spend down as much of these funds by September 30, 2019 or risk losing the funding. He shared that TAP-DA and CMAQ funds also need to be spent down or face rescission by September of this year. He shared about August Redistribution, which are those funds that congress redistributes. The state is going after a portion of these funds by working with MPOs in the state to be able to do funding swaps, which at the end of the day, brings the state more funding for use on projects across the state.

Informational item only – no action needed at this time.

SPOT6.0 Updates and Changes

Tristan Winkler provided an overview of the FBRMPO process for producing the draft submittal list. He noted that initial steps include submittal of projects, projects given quantitative score, Regional Impact points assigned, draft STIP released, and Division Needs points assigned. He shared that local meeting would begin soon with member governments (and the Henderson County TAC). Once the MPO Board approves the draft projects list, MPO staff begin submitting projects to the SPOT tool. Draft projects would be due in October and after the public comment period, back to the MPO TCC and TAC in November. He communicated that changes to be aware of include Modernization Projects would get their own scoring criteria; projects with ROW and PE in the first six years of the STIP are considered committee; aviation and bike/ped data and criteria were overhauled; and, significant changes in scope or cost will lead to projects being reviewed; and, other changes as noted.

Discussion occurred about which plans have the highway projects and Tristan noted that it is the MPO's MTP and the CTP. Many communities have adopted bike/ped plans, too. Member governments could send requests to the MPO to have projects added to the planning documents. Tristan shared that plans are updated on a regular basis as planning is a continuous process. He noted that maintaining a plan where deficiencies are noted is important, too.

Chairman Lapsley shared about the development of the Henderson County TAC, as the venue for raising issues about deficiencies and potentially necessary projects. Tristan communicated the importance of focusing on problems that have potential support in the community to be addressed. He also pointed out that the MPO's public involvement process has been very robust. Bob Davy raised the issue of the use of technical jargon and wondered if information could be provided at the lowest level of the people being dealt with. It was also shared that Social Media could be a valuable tool to engage the residents of the various communities.

Informational item. No action required at this time.

REGULAR UPDATES

- Hannah Cook provided Division 13 updates and Steve Williams provided Division 14 updates.
- Daniel Sellers provided Transportation Planning Branch updates.
- FBRMPO Committee & Workgroup Updates:
 - Prioritization – Meeting held May 7 to discuss P 6.0 and Congestion Analysis.
 - Regional Trail Workgroup – May meeting canceled. Next meeting to be held in June.
 - Transit Operators Workgroup – No meeting held. Next meeting date TBD.
 - Citizens' Advisory Committee – Next meeting date TBD.
- Legislative Updates – Tristan shared that the state budget is under development with a change being considered to provide funding for bike/ped projects, thereby making local match rates mostly lower. In addition, some of the light rail caps are under review. The Marshall DMV is set to reopen for very limited hours and Madison County is working to bring the service back to full time.

Announcements

Coffee with a Transportation Planner at the Flat Rock Village Bakery on May 30 at 10am.

Complete Streets training in Sylva on May 30.

Strive Not to Drive event on May 31 at Sierra Nevada Brewery.

ADJOURNMENT

Matt Wechtel moved to adjourn the meeting, which received a second and the meeting adjourned.