



French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization

Minutes from the TCC Virtual Meeting Via Zoom on May 14, 2020

ATTENDANCE:

Josh O’Conner	Tristan Winkler	Zia Rifkin	Nick Kroncke
Daniel Sellers	Troy Wilson	Eric Rufa	William High
John Ridout	Stephen Sparks	Jessica Morriss	Daniel Heyman
Mariate Echeverry	Joel Setzer	Ken Putnam	Emily Scott-Cruz
Chris Lee	Vicki Eastland	Daniel Cobb	Michael Dawson
Autumn Radcliff	Nathan Bennett	Janna Peterson	WA Krauze
Brian Burch	Jessica Trotman	Matt Cable	Harry Buckner
Erica Anderson	Amna Cameron	Steve Williams	

WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING

Chair O’Conner opened the meeting, welcomed everyone and introductions followed.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chair O’Conner indicated that the Consent Agenda included the March 12, 2020 minutes, the minutes from the TCC/Board Special Joint Meeting on April 28, 2020 and the Resolution of Support for the Mills River Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Application. He requested approval for the Agenda at this time, as well.

Ken Putnam moved to approve the previous minutes, the resolution and the agenda. Vicki Eastland seconded and the motion was approved upon a roll call vote of the member governments (attached) present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one made any public comments.

BUSINESS

Amendments to the 2020-2029 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 North Carolina’s State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The TIP describes each project, a schedule for implementation, funding sources, and estimated costs.

The proposed amendments and modifications for the 2020-2029 FBRMPO TIP requested are listed with a summary below:

- A-0010AA, Future I-26 section from Broadway to US 25, ROW delayed from FY 21 to FY 24 and CST from FY 24 to FY 27
- U-5781 and U-5782, Merrimon Avenue intersection improvements, CST delayed from FY 22 to FY 23
- U-5888, N. Main St. and Walnut intersection improvements, CST delayed from FY 20 to FY 23
- EB-5824, Hominy Creek Greenway, CST delayed from FY 20 to FY 21
- EB-5947, New Haw Creek Road sidewalks, CST delayed from FY 20 to FY 22

Steve Williams moved to recommend the TIP Amendments to the MPO Board for consideration of approval. Autumn Radcliff seconded and the motion carried upon a roll call vote of the TCC members (attached).

MTP 2045 Updated- Project List

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a federally required planning document that MPOs are required to update and maintain to reflect planned transportation investments in the region over the next twenty-five years. The MTP is required to be fiscally constrained, meaning that projects in the MTP have to be reasonably expected to work within projected revenues. The French Broad River MPO is required to update its MTP every five years with the next update due in September, 2020.

Tristan Winkler noted, as per the federal regulations that every project in the TIP is required to be in the MTP. He reviewed public comment opportunities for the MTP. He shared that the financial plan for the 2045 MTP was optimistic and the final MTP anticipates that transportation spending would roughly keep up with inflation and that the prioritization process in the state would continue. He reviewed how the STI works and reviewed the tiers projects might fall into (Statewide, Regional and Division Needs). It is estimated that over \$2 billion should be available over the next 25 years to fund transportation projects. In the prioritization process; transportation planning regions compete for Statewide Mobility funds on a statewide level. Regional Impact is anticipated to be a relatively small pot of funding and Division Needs projects are anticipated to have significantly more funding over the next 25 years. Over \$4 billion in funding for projects is anticipated over the next 25 years for the MTP.

The Prioritization Subcommittee has recommended a financial plan and a fiscally constrained project list to be included in the MTP. These are major elements of the MTP 2045 that is planned to come back to the TCC and Board in Draft form in June with final approval in September. MPO staff plans for public comment on the draft MTP from late June through August with a mandatory 45-day period of public review, per the MPO's Public Involvement Policy.

For the past several months the MPO Prioritization Subcommittee has been working on priority projects for the MTP's 25-year fiscally-constrained project list (i.e. projects we think there will be funding for over the next 25 years.) As a review, the following steps have been taken leading up to this:

- Approval of the MTP 2045 financial plan that is seen as "more optimistic" but still within FHWA guidelines for financial assumptions (revenues would keep up with inflation, STI will still govern transportation improvement decision-making, etc.);
- Approval of priority projects based on scores driven by data and the subcommittee's feedback on goals for each funding tier.

The draft list of projects is below. Projects have been divided based on funding tiers (think of it as a projection of 25 years of outcomes for the prioritization process.) As a summary, below are the funding "tiers" with how much funding was allocated from each "tier" for the MTP:

Tier	Eligible Projects	Funding Allocated in the MTP	Estimated Funding Available Over 25 Years
Statewide Mobility	Interstates & Strategic Highways	\$2,037,417,000	\$2,109,333,000
Regional Impact	US & NC Routes	\$689,654,000	\$691,606,000
Division 13 Needs	Secondary Roads (and anything from Regional Impact)	\$549,428,000	\$549,812,500
Division 14 Needs		\$530,164,000	\$530,812,500
Bike/Ped	Stand-Along Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects	\$178,722,000	\$200,000,000

Stand-Alone Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

BUNCOMBE							
MTP ID	TIP ID	Route	From	To	Cost	Improvement	Current Status
BP134503	U-5019B	French Broad River West Greenway	Haywood Road	French Broad River Park	\$5,000,000	Multi-Use Path	Fully Funded
BP134504	U-5019A	Town Branch Greenway	US 25	Depot Street	\$4,275,000	Multi-Use Path	Fully Funded
BP134505	EB-5965	Deaverview Road	Patton Avenue	Westmore Drive	\$3,205,000	Sidewalks	Fully Funded
BP134506	EB-5822	North RAD Greenway	Hill Street	Broadway	\$3,179,000	Multi-Use Path	Fully Funded
BP134507	EB-5547	Riverwalk Greenway	Flat Creek Greenway	Into the Oaks Trail	\$6,009,000	Multi-Use Path	Fully Funded
BP134509	EB-5831	Coxe Avenue	Patton Avenue	Short Coxe Avenue	\$5,250,000	Complete Streets	Partially Funded
BP134510	EB-5830	Lexington Avenue	Patton Avenue	Southside Avenue	\$6,750,000	Complete Streets	Partially Funded
BP134511	EB-5774	NC 251/Beaverdam Creek Greenway	Broadway	US 25	\$7,530,000	Multi-Use Path	Fully Funded
BP134513	EB-5947	New Haw Creek Road	Beverly Road	Bell Road	\$2,375,000	Sidewalks	Fully Funded
BP134514	EB-5790	Asheville Greenway Connectors			\$1,146,000	Bike Improvements	Fully Funded
BP134515	EB-5944	Johnston Boulevard	Patton Avenue	Iona Circle	\$2,350,000	Sidewalks	Fully Funded
BP134516	EB-5948	Onteora Boulevard	Lincoln Avenue	Raleigh Road	\$1,140,000	Sidewalks	Fully Funded
BP134518	EB-5823	Bent Creek Greenway	Hominy Creek River Park	WNC Farmer's Market	\$4,000,000	Multi-Use Path	Partially Funded
BP134519	EB-5824	Enka Heritage Trail	Sand Hill School Road	Enka High School	\$6,400,000	Multi-Use Path	Fully Funded
BP134521	EB-5919	McDowell Street/Choctaw Street	Southside Avenue	Biltmore Avenue	\$446,000	Pedestrian Improvements	Fully Funded
BP134522	EB-5821	Reems Creek Greenway	Western Weaverville Town Limits	Karpen Soccer Fields	\$6,000,000	Multi-Use Path	Partially Funded

MTP ID	TIP ID	Route	From	To	Cost	Improvement	Current Status
BP134523		Emma Road	North Louisiana Avenue	Boone Street	\$ 2,190,000	Sidewalks	SPOT
BP134524		Fonta Flora Greenway	Yates Avenue	Black Mountain Town Limits	\$ 6,945,000	Multi-Use Path	SPOT
BP134525		North Blue Ridge Road	US 70	Fortune Street	\$ 1,145,000	Sidewalks	SPOT
BP134526		Reed Creek Greenway Connector	Reed Creek Greenway	Clingman Avenue	\$ 3,910,000	Bike Improvements	SPOT
BP134527		Riverside Drive	Hill Street	I-240	\$ 905,000	Bike Improvements	SPOT
BP134528		Old Haywood Road	US 19/23 (Patton Avenue)	US 19/23 (Patton Avenue)	\$ 5,500,000	Sidewalks	SPOT
BP134540		West Asheville Rails to Trails - West Asheville Section	Old Haywood Rd	Emma Greenway	\$ 8,200,000	Multi-Use Path	MTP
BP134541		Depot St Connector	-	-	\$ 2,000,000	Multi-Use Path	MTP
BP134542		Montford Greenway	French Broad River	Montford Ave/Riverside	\$ 4,020,000	Multi-Use Path	MTP
BP134544		Sweeten Creek Road Sidewalks	I-40	Rock Hill Rd	\$ 1,865,000	Sidewalks	MTP
BP134546		Owen Spur Greenway Alternate - River	Brock Park	Owen HS	\$ 11,595,000	Multi-Use Path	MTP
BP134547		West Asheville Rails to Trails - Enka Section	Buncombe County Sports Park	Old Haywood Rd	\$ 6,245,000	Multi-Use Path	MTP
BP134549		Sweeten Creek Road Sidewalks	Fairview Rd	I-40	\$ 5,420,000	Sidewalks	MTP
BP134550		Lake Julian Greenway	I-26	Lake Julian Park	\$ 4,525,000	Multi-Use Path	MTP
BP134552		Smoky Park Highway - South of I-40	I-40	Sand Hill Rd	\$ 3,125,000	Sidewalks	MTP
BP134553		Smoky Park Highway Sidewalks - North of I-40	Old Haywood Rd	I-40	\$ 2,445,000	Sidewalks	MTP
BP134554		Caribou Rd Sidewalks	Sweeten Creek Rd	Shiloh Rd	\$ 1,405,000	Sidewalks	MTP
BP134555		Rock Hill Road Sidewalks	Ridgelawn Rd	Edgewood Dr	\$ 1,010,000	Sidewalks	MTP

HAYWOOD

MTP ID	TIP ID	Route	From	To	Cost	Improvement	Current Status
BP144502	EB-5945	Champion Drive	North Canton Road	Thickety Road	\$ 2,380,000	Sidewalks	Partially Funded
BP144512	EB-5926	US 19 (Soco Road)			\$ 1,975,000	Complete Streets	Fully Funded
BP144520	EB-5859	Hazelwood Avenue	Plott Creek Road	Will Hyatt Road	\$ 183,000	Sidewalks	Fully Funded

BP144529		Champion Drive	North Canton Road	Thickety Road	\$ 3,130,000	Bike Improvements	SPOT
BP144530		Richland Creek Greenway	Waynesville Rec Park	Haywood High-Tech Center	\$ 3,570,000	Multi-Use Path	SPOT
BP144531		Allen's Creek Road	Lickstone Road	Piney Mountain Road	\$ 590,000	Sidewalks	SPOT
BP144532		Old Clyde Highway	Blackwell Drive	Granberry Street	\$ 1,850,000	Sidewalks	SPOT
BP144545		Richland Creek Greenway	Rec Park	Hyatt Creek Rd	\$ 10,885,000	Multi-Use Path	MTP
BP144548		Vance St Sidewalks	W Marshall/Walnut St	Waynesville Rec Park	\$ 1,030,000	Sidewalks	MTP
BP144551		Balsam Drive Sidewalks	Browne Ave	S Main	\$ 1,425,000	Sidewalks	MTP
BP144556		Wall Street Sidewalks	US 276/Pigeon St	N Main St/Assembly St	\$ 870,000	Sidewalks	MTP

HENDERSON

MTP ID	TIP ID	Route	From	To	Cost	Improvement	County	Current Status
BP144501	EB-5946	Mills River Valley Trail	French Broad River	NC 191	\$ 3,000,000	Multi-Use Path	Henderson	Partially Funded
BP144508	EB-5963	Grove Street	US 176	Barnwell Street	\$ 904,000	Sidewalks	Henderson	Fully Funded
BP144517	EB-5860	Blythe Street	US 64	NC 191	\$ 960,000	Sidewalks	Henderson	Fully Funded
BP144533		Allen Branch Greenway	US 64	I-26	\$ 3,755,000	Multi-Use Path	Henderson	SPOT
BP144534		Oklawaha Greenway (Southern Extension)	Jackson Park	Blue Ridge Community College	\$ 4,535,000	Multi-Use Path	Henderson	SPOT
BP144535		Brooklyn Avenue	NC 225	US 176	\$ 2,665,000	Sidewalks	Henderson	SPOT
BP144536		US 64	Orrs Camp Road	Howard Gap Road	\$ 2,675,000	Sidewalks	Henderson	SPOT
BP144537		Ecusta Trail	Kanuga Road	Transylvania County Line	\$ 18,400,000	Multi-Use Path	Henderson	SPOT
BP144543		Greenville Highway (NC 225) Sidewalks	Spartanburg Hwy	Brooklyn Ave	\$ 1,405,000	Sidewalks	Henderson	MTP

MADISON

MTP ID	TIP ID	Route	From	To	Cost	Improvement	County	Current Status
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BP134538		Bailey Street	Bearwood Drive	Forest Street	\$ 955,000	Sidewalks	Madison	SPOT
BP134539		Banjo Branch Greenway	Hickory Drive	Banjo Branch Road	\$ 2,625,000	Multi-Use Path	Madison	SPOT

Tristan Winkler reviewed projects that have been submitted to SPOT (P.6) and he encouraged TCC members to let MPO staff know if any projects were missing or should be added.

No action required at this time.

NCDOT Financial Issues and NC First Commission Update

Amna Cameron, Deputy Director of NCDOT’s Office of Strategic Initiatives and Program Support communicated that NCDOT’s cash-balance has recently dropped below the legislative-mandated “cash-floor,” which means that NCDOT is not currently able to enter into new contracts, purchase new equipment, or acquire right-of-way on projects not already underway. This has also led the Department to lead to develop drastic plans for departmental furloughs, cuts, a hiring freeze, and the cancellation of contracts for ferry services. NCDOT has been grappling with increased project costs, costs related to natural disasters, and payouts for lawsuits related to the MAP Act, but is now also dealing with major revenue declines due to the on-going pandemic and a correlated decrease in the amount that people are driving. For our region, the decline in driving has been dramatic, which means that gas tax revenues have declined as well.

Amna Cameron provided an overview of the on-going financial situation and an update on efforts to provide more sustainable financial resources for the Department in the future. She noted that even without the pandemic, the “cash floor” would have been reached by this summer. Immediate actions to address the shortfall include reducing programs (mowing, storm repairs, non-safety sign repairs, patching pavement, etc.) Next steps include developing plans for staff furloughs and or RIF and additional contractor and temporary layoffs. Active projects may stop if NCDOT expends all funds. Amna Cameron shared about the economic impact of transportation construction, noting that it contributes over \$8 billion to the economy annually in the state. The big issue with transportation revenues is that motor fuel, highway use and DMV revenues all decline due to transportation disruptors (automation, connectivity, shared mobility, CAFÉ standards, demographics, Electric /Hybrids) and as safe, affordable, eco-friendly mobility, that is seamless increases. A big concern is that construction contractors, who receive NCDOT contracts, might be lost as projects are delayed.

Amna Cameron reviewed mobility changes (ride sharing, Electric/Hybrid, etc.) that could affect future NCDOT funding.

The NC First Commission is a public body that includes Henderson County Commissioner and MPO Board Chair, Bill Lapsley. The Commission is charged with evaluating transportation needs across the state and examining potential funding sources for NCDOT. The commission plans to review revenue options at their next meeting in August, which may be controversial. Website <https://www.ncdot.gov/about-us/how-we-operate/finance-budget/nc-first/Pages/default.aspx>

Informational item. No action requested.

REGULAR UPDATES AND INFORMATION ITEMS

Regular updates included NCDOT Division 13 and 14 updates, TPD updates and FHWA/FTA updates. MPO Subcommittees, Legislative, and Staff updates were also presented.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS, SPECIAL UPDATES

MPO Orientation Friday May 22 (Virtual event)

Next Coffee with a Transportation Planner June 5 via Zoom

MPO staff have started tracking VMT in the region (more information in agenda packet). The trend is going back up- Madison County is 20% below normal. Buncombe and Henderson about 40% below normal. Keeping an eye on that along with some other metrics. BLS releases data for states and counties. Somewhat concerning is that the region has taken a large economic hit, in the early stages of this crisis, and employment numbers have gone down over 9% in the region.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were received.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair O'Conner adjourned the meeting, as there was no further business.