

# Prioritization Subcommittee

## *Meeting Agenda*

March 2, 2022

9:00 AM

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

**Voting Members on the Committee:** Jessica Morris (City of Asheville, Vice-Chair), Larry Harris (Black Mountain), William High (Buncombe County), Autumn Radcliff (Henderson County), Anthony Sutton (Town of Waynesville), Elizabeth Teague (Town of Waynesville, Chair), Jerry Vehaun (Town of Woodfin)

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| <b>1. Welcome and Introductions</b>                 | Elizabeth Teague |
| <b>2. Public Comment</b>                            | Elizabeth Teague |
| <b>3. Approval of January, 2022 Meeting Minutes</b> | Elizabeth Teague |
| <b>4. Business</b>                                  |                  |
| A. JARC Project Selection Update                    | MPO Staff        |
| B. CTP Goals & Objectives                           | MPO Staff        |
| C. Planning Call for Projects                       | MPO Staff        |
| D. Prioritization Update                            | MPO Staff        |
| E. 2050 Socio-Economic Projections RFQ              | MPO Staff        |
| <b>5. News, Events, Updates</b>                     | Elizabeth Teague |
| <b>6. Public Comment</b>                            | Elizabeth Teague |
| <b>7. Adjournment</b>                               | Elizabeth Teague |

# Item 3

## **Prioritization Subcommittee Meeting Minutes\* January 5, 2022**

### **Voting Members**

- Jessica Morriss, City of Asheville
- Autumn Radcliff, Henderson County
- Larry B. Harris, Town of Black Mountain
- Elizabeth Teague, Town of Waynesville
- Anthony Sutton, Town of Waynesville
- Jerry Vehaun, Town of Woodfin]
- William High, Buncombe County

### **Non-Voting**

- Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO
- Daniel Cobb, Town of Mills River
- Lucy Crown, City of Asheville
- Steve Williams, NCDOT
- Mark Gibbs, NCDOT
- Emily Scott Cruz, FBRMPO
- John Ridout, FBRMPO
- Hannah Bagli, FBRMPO
- Teresa Robinson
- George Webb
- Matt Cable, Buncombe County
- Janna Bianculli, Henderson County
- Michael Dawson, FHWA
- David Wasserman, NCDOT
- Stephen Sparks, NCDOT
- Troy Wilson, NCDOT
- Hannah Cook, NCDOT
- Daniel Sellers, NCDOT

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

Elizabeth Teague started the meeting with introductions.

2. **Public Comment**

George Webb asked question about the minutes in December about the STIP funding. He also asked about the adoption of the STIP by the state and asked if the projects listed would be following the dates on the STIP as shown—asked for an elevator speech about STIP. Tristan stated that no new STIP has been adopted since 2020, though amendments are passed continuously. Generally speaking, the STIP is overbudget and we'll be rebalancing the STIP, which means some projects will have schedules and funding schedules changed. George asked what the \$11B deficit relates to. Tristan asked Teresa or Mark if they recall the exact numbers—Mark said he thinks the total STIP is \$5B and that means the STIP is 100% over budget. Tristan's silver lining was that by right-sizing the budget, NCDOT's reevaluation will be more flexible and reactive. Elizabeth thanked George for his comments.

3. **Approval of December 2021 Minutes and Approval of Agenda**

The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed. Larry Harris moved to approve and Jessica Morriss seconded.

4. **Business**

a. **5310 Project Selection**

Emily Scott-Cruz presented on the 5310 project selection. She updated the group on the changes after incorporating the group's comments from last month. Larry Harris weighed in and said that Alternative 2B would be equitable after staff noted that Alternative 1 is the preference from a staff perspective. Elizabeth stated that Alternative 2B seems good as far as incorporating scores. She asked Buncombe to speak to how much it would affect the program to only receive 94% rather than 100%. Buncombe County had a higher scoring Traditional Project. Matt weighed in that it is preferred that they receive 100% of their funding request. He noted that they requested only the funds they need rather than the full amount that they could use because he wants to maintain a percentage of cost coverage. Ultimately, the County will spend more on the program to continue operating it, also noting that receiving less than 100% wouldn't threaten the program unless another funding program was reduced. Elizabeth asked the City of Asheville to weigh in. Jessica stated that they are fine with Alternative 2B considering the difference is negligible. Elizabeth thanked them both for their comments then asked the group to take a vote on funding.

**Jessica Morriss motioned to recommend Alternative 2B. Larry Harris seconded the motion. All approved.**

b. **JARC Project Selection**

Emily Scott-Cruz presented on the JARC projects—Friends of Land of Sky and City of Asheville's Route 170 operations.

**Autumn moved to approve Recovery to Career under JARC and Larry seconded. All approved.**

Elizabeth thanked the Friends of Land of Sky for resubmitting their application to JARC. She then discussed what to do with remaining funds and asked for discussion of the options for funding more. Jessica Morriss stated she'd prefer to use the funds for a 5307 related activity with the extra money, alternative 3/c. She thinks that it is needed for a holistic look to be taken at all the transit funding sources. Autumn doesn't think Alternative 2 is necessary—she's okay with Alternative 3 but wants to make sure she isn't committing match by supporting Alternative 3. Larry asked if you went with Alternative 1, could we use the funds for a study regardless. Tristan also threw out another alternative—see if the applicants can ask for more funding. Elizabeth asked if the group wants to vote on it right now or whether we should table this til next month.

Larry moved that we table the discussion. Jessica supported that motion and recommended the Regional Transit Operators group discuss in the meeting next week. **Elizabeth amended the motion to table the discussion and have the Transit Operators Group provide a recommendation—Jerry agreed to the amended motion. Jessica seconded that motion. All approved.**

**c. LAPP: Broadway Sidewalks Cost Increase**

John Rideout presented on the Broadway Sidewalk project. Construction bids exceeded the budget and will require an additional \$211,000. He discussed the portion of the sidewalk that would be funded with the request. Elizabeth asked for clarification—wanted to make sure she understood we'd be extending sidewalk from State Employees Credit Union to Riverside Drive (past the intersection of Ginger's Revenge). Jessica asked if approving this would affect other projects. Tristan said it would reduce the amount available in the next call for STBG call for projects. **Jessica moved to approve. Larry seconded the motion. All approved.**

Elizabeth added a comment that it's important to see how costs continue to increase and noted that the project is important for the greenway system but still is a challenge because it does reduce the project for the next call.

**d. Planning Call for Projects**

Tristan presented on this. Normally, we make \$200,000 available for these projects that come from STGDBA, which we flex to Planning funds for Admin, special study, and MPO operations. The last time we talked, we decided to hold an open call for projects with no set amount to program and see what we receive. We received 4 different applications. Tristan discussed the apps that were received:

- Patton Ave Corridor Study – City of Asheville: The biggest request at \$350,000. As I-26 moves further north, the area of the study which is currently interstate ROW is planned to be changed into more of a local road and have real estate opened up for development, so the City is requesting to look more at the

streetscape elements, preliminary development guidelines, and trying to make sure the City is as prepared as possible for changes that are coming.

- Blue Ridge Road – Black Mountain: \$75,000. For Blue Ridge Road, there's a new interchange planned on I-40 (committed project) which will pull traffic off of the NC-9 interchange and will likely put additional pressures on the Blue Ridge Road corridor overall. This goes along with TCC & Board discussions regarding getting projects more ready so when we get them funded we're at a better starting point.
- Fonta Flora Study – Black Mountain: \$35,000. Fonta Flora State Trail goes from Morganton to Asheville, and a significant section goes through Black Mountain. Town is requesting money to develop a preliminary alignment from eastern town limits to downtown Black Mountain. This is one of those greenways where there's a general concept but having a better idea would be helpful.
- Ridgeway Avenue Parking & Circulation Study – Black Mountain: \$35,000. Ridgeway Avenue is a couple blocks from downtown Black Mountain, so what is being asked for is a study to consider changes to better incorporate Ridgeway Ave into the downtown pedestrian network and help spur development in that area.

He then showed the preliminary scorecard that accounts for active planning projects and whether projects are in existing plans. He then discussed the active planning studies that are ongoing before going in depth about the different projects that were submitted.

Mike weighed in on the City of Asheville's submission—the current regulations would make the project near impossible (repurposing current I-240 right of way to developable land). Jessica added that Asheville wants to examine connections from ramps to the "new" Patton Ave to make sure that the roadway is context sensitive and not just another "Tunnel Road," stating that DOT's plan is more like an arterial and not a local road that is a gateway to Downtown. Daniel Sellers mentioned that the most recent discussion was something more of a city road and not an arterial. Jessica further clarified that Asheville wants more connections into neighborhoods and to disperse traffic but the NCDOT design has 145 foot wide intersections and a high design speed. Tristan clarified it's more a study to revert Patton Ave to a local road and have local developments align with that. Elizabeth also weighed in that she'd hope that Hillcrest Apartments get considered in this process.

Larry Harris talked about Blue Ridge Road's submission for both Blue Ridge Road and Ridgeway Ave, mentioning a fairly significant development on Montreat's campus for a cybersecurity center, which will be serviced by the Blue Ridge Road exchange. As for Ridgeway, Larry mentioned that it will tie into greenway planning in the Town and serve as a connector.

Autumn asked about the Asheville project regarding what they'd be using STBG money for because some of the deliverables listed (updates to plans) and expressed concern that STBG applications should be strictly for bike/ped improvements and perhaps that would lower costs. As for Blue Ridge Road, Autumn wanted clarity on it and received clarification that it will be modernization-focused. Lucy Crown acknowledged that the addition of update to plans was added during application process and should strike it from the application and clarified that they'll be focused on transportation/circulation once you get off Jeff Bowen Bridge into downtown and transitioning from highway speeds into slower speeds downtown and looking at that area from land use perspective. Elizabeth asked if there were any remaining comments then asked how much money we have to program. Tristan said it's at the discretion of this group and affects the funding pot for greenway calls. We already have \$200,000 in studies for next year and anything approved would add to that. He also noted that this call can be used to consider future projects. The deadline for this is March, so we don't need a decision at this meeting. Tristan also said the sum of the funding is less than the workload on staff. Autumn also mentioned how it would be wise to include something in applications if we are programming years out in the future that would help adjust for inflation. Tristan asked that Prioritization members complete the scorecards for the projects and then staff can bring the total updated scores back to the group.

e. **CTP Overview**

Tristan reminded the group that the CTP looks at transportation needs, required to be adopted every 5 years but the last one was updated in 2008. Tristan noted the CTP covers a lot of what the MTP is required to look at and so to make it more efficient, the CTP will focus on identifying needs which will be a starting point for our planning process for the MTP. Daniel Sellers then began presenting on how the CTP is a preamble to the MTP. He provided an overview what the CTP is and noted that the CTP is adopted both by MPO and NCDOT.

Elizabeth asked if there were any questions.

5. **News, Events, Updates**

Tristan mentioned the funding workshop that would be held on Friday, January 21<sup>st</sup>. Also, Strive is starting the planning process, so if members are interested in being involved, Tristan instructed them to contact Hannah with the MPO.

6. **Public Comment**

No public comment at this time.

7. **Adjournment**

Elizabeth adjourned the meeting.