

Prioritization Subcommittee

Meeting Agenda

September 7, 2022

9:00 AM

Meeting to be held at Land of Sky Regional Council or 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)

1. Welcome and Introductions	Elizabeth Teague
2. Public Comment	Elizabeth Teague
3. Approval of August, 2022 Meeting Minutes	Elizabeth Teague
4. Business	
A. LAPP Funding Update	MPO Staff
-Cost Estimates Received	
-BL-0008 Engineering Funding	
-EB-5790 Funding Changes	
B. U-6159 Cross-Section Update	MPO Staff
C. FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	MPO Staff
5. News, Events, Updates	Elizabeth Teague
6. Public Comment	Elizabeth Teague
7. Adjournment	Elizabeth Teague

**French Broad River MPO
Prioritization Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
August 3, 2022**

ATTENDANCE

Voting Members

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

Non-Voting Members

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| -Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO | -Stephan Sparks, NCDOT Div 14 |
| -Scott Adams, FBRMPO | -Lucy Crown, City of Asheville |
| -Hannah Bagli, FBRMPO | -Kim Roney, City of Asheville |
| -Jane Pies (Minutes) | -Bill Marley, FHWA |
| -Janna Bianculli, Apple Country | -Tim Love, Buncombe County |
| -Steve Williams, NCDOT Div 14 | -David Wasserman, NCDOT |
| -Troy Wilson, NCDOT Div 14 | -Hannah Cook, NCDOT Div 13 |
| -Teresa Robinson, NCDOT | -George Webb |

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair, Elizabeth Teague started the meeting at 9:00 a.m. with introductions. A quorum was announced, and roll was called.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Elizabeth Teague opened the floor for public comments. No comments were heard.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 2022 MINUTES AND AGENDA

Jerry Vehaun moved to approve the agenda and the June 2022 minutes. Larry Harris seconded the motion, which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

BUSINESS

Safe Streets for All Update

What is Safe Streets for All?

Safe Streets for All is a new grant program offered through USDOT that was created as part of the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law aiming at achieving zero roadway death and serious injuries. It is a discretionary grant, meaning eligible entities may apply directly to USDOT for funding and USDOT makes awards based on the merits of proposals and other factors to ensure some level of geographic equity. \$5 billion is expected to be made available over the next five years for this program.

The Safe Streets for All program makes different types of funding available to help improve safety.

- Develop or update a comprehensive safety action plan (Action Plan).
- Conduct planning, design, and development activities in support of an Action Plan.
- Carry out projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan.

However, jurisdictions may not apply for implementation funding unless there is an Action Plan in place. A couple of jurisdictions have plans that have some parts of an Action Plan, but as of this writing, none have enough to be eligible to apply for implementation funds.

Proposed Application for the Region

The French Broad River MPO staff recommends submitting a joint application for an Action Plan with the Land of Sky RPO. This would create a five-county Action Plan for Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania counties, enabling jurisdictions in those areas to apply for implementation funds.

This plan would include the following general elements:

- Community & Stakeholder Engagement
- Crash and Risk-Based Analysis
- Safety Hot-Spot Identification
- Project Recommendations
- Programmatic Recommendations

The current draft budget is for \$400,000 total. \$320,000 would be covered by the federal share (if successful) and \$80,000 would be required to come from non-federal sources. The NCDOT Safety Unit plans to make some State funding available for local match and MPO staff has been in discussions with other organizations to potentially alleviate or fully provide the local match as well.

Tristan Winkler shared that upon notice of funding opportunities, contracts should be awarded to selected entities within 12 months. Hopefully, the regional plan would be completed after a quick turnaround of between 9 and 12 months. Part of the challenge has been getting quotes from different agencies who have done plans like this. Quotes we received were between \$100K and \$1M. He shared that applications are due by September 15, 2022.

Larry Harris moved to recommend approval of a Safe Streets for All MPO/RPO Action Plan Grant Application. Jerry Vehaun seconded the motion which carried unanimously upon a roll call vote.

Carbon Reduction Program

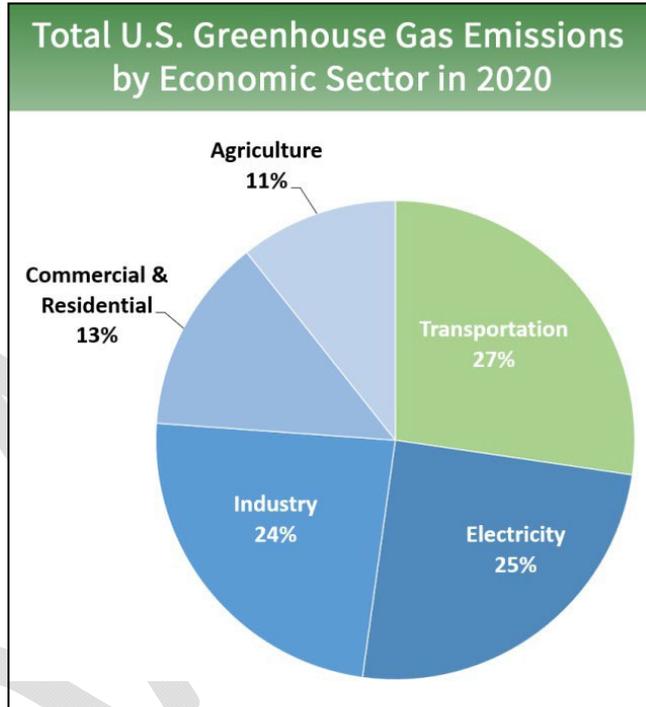
What is the Carbon Reduction Program?

The [Carbon Reduction Program](#) is a new funding source through USDOT that was created as part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law whose primary purpose is to reduce the carbon emissions from the transportation sector which is now the largest contributor of greenhouse gases in the United States.

The Carbon Reduction Program is set to function very similarly to the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) in that funds are allocated to States and States are required to make sub-allocations to large urban, small urban, and rural areas. The French Broad River MPO's annual allocation is **\$628,563/year** between FY 2022 and FY 2026.

Eligible Projects

- CRP funds may be obligated for projects that support the reduction of transportation emissions, including, but not limited to– [except as noted, § 11403; 23 U.S.C. 175(c)(1)]
- a project described in 23 U.S.C. 149(b)(4) to establish or operate a traffic monitoring, management, and control facility or program, including advanced truck stop electrification systems;
- a public transportation project eligible under 23 U.S.C. 142;
- a transportation alternative (as defined under the Moving Ahead for Progress under the 21st Century Act [23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29), as in effect on July 5, 2012]), including, but not limited to, the construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorized forms of transportation;
- a project described in 23 U.S.C. 503(c)(4)(E) for advanced transportation and congestion management technologies;
- deployment of infrastructure-based intelligent transportation systems capital improvements and the installation of vehicle-to-infrastructure communications equipment;
- a project to replace street lighting and traffic control devices with energy-efficient alternatives;
- development of a carbon reduction strategy developed by a State per requirements in 23 U.S.C. 175(d);



- a project or strategy designed to support congestion pricing, shifting transportation demand to nonpeak hours or other transportation modes, increasing vehicle occupancy rates, or otherwise reducing demand for roads, including electronic toll collection, and travel demand management strategies and programs;
- efforts to reduce the environmental and community impacts of freight movement;
- a project that supports deployment of alternative fuel vehicles, including—
- acquisition, installation, or operation of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging infrastructure or hydrogen, natural gas, or propane vehicle fueling infrastructure; and
- purchase or lease of zero-emission construction equipment and vehicles, including the acquisition, construction, or leasing of required supporting facilities;
- a project described in 23 U.S.C. 149(b)(8) for a diesel engine retrofit;
- certain types of projects to improve traffic flow that are eligible under the CMAQ program, and that do not involve construction of new capacity; [§ 11403; 23 U.S.C. 149(b)(5); and 175(c)(1)(L)]
- a project that reduces transportation emissions at port facilities, including through the advancement of port electrification; and
- any other STBG-eligible project, if the Secretary certifies that the State has demonstrated a reduction in transportation emissions, as estimated on a per capita and per unit of economic output basis. (Note: FHWA will issue guidance on how the Secretary will make such certifications.) [§ 11403; 23 U.S.C. 133(b) and 175(c)(2)]

The federal share for projects in this program is “generally” 80%.

Other Requirements

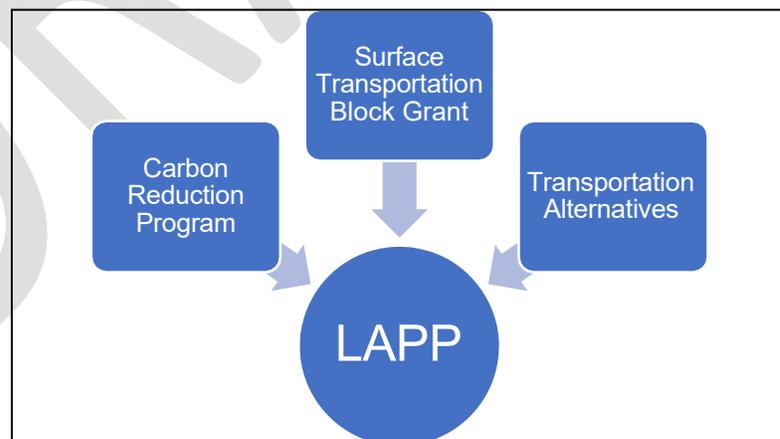
Each state is required to produce a Carbon Reduction Strategy in coordination with MPOs within two years with updates every four years.

FBRMPO Options

Option #1: Consolidate Carbon Reduction Program, Transportation Alternatives, and Surface Transportation Block Grant funds into the Locally Administered Projects Program

PROS: alleviate potential overages to the LAPP program, fewer calls for projects

CONS: no distinct program



Option #2: Hold a Carbon Reduction Program Call for Projects

PROS: Would allow a more distinct program, potentially draw interest for other groups & projects

CONS: LAPP would likely go overbudget and projects could be delayed

Overall, most of the projects currently programmed through the MPO's LAPP would qualify for Carbon Reduction Program funding.

Staff Recommendation: Option #1, Consolidate Carbon Reduction Program, Transportation Alternatives, and Surface Transportation Block Grant funds into the Locally Administered Projects Program

Larry Harris moved to recommend consolidating Carbon Reduction Program, Transportation Alternatives and Surface Transportation Block Grant funds into the Locally Administered Projects Program. Jerry Vebaun seconded the motion which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

BL-0008 Additional Funding Request

BL-0008 Information

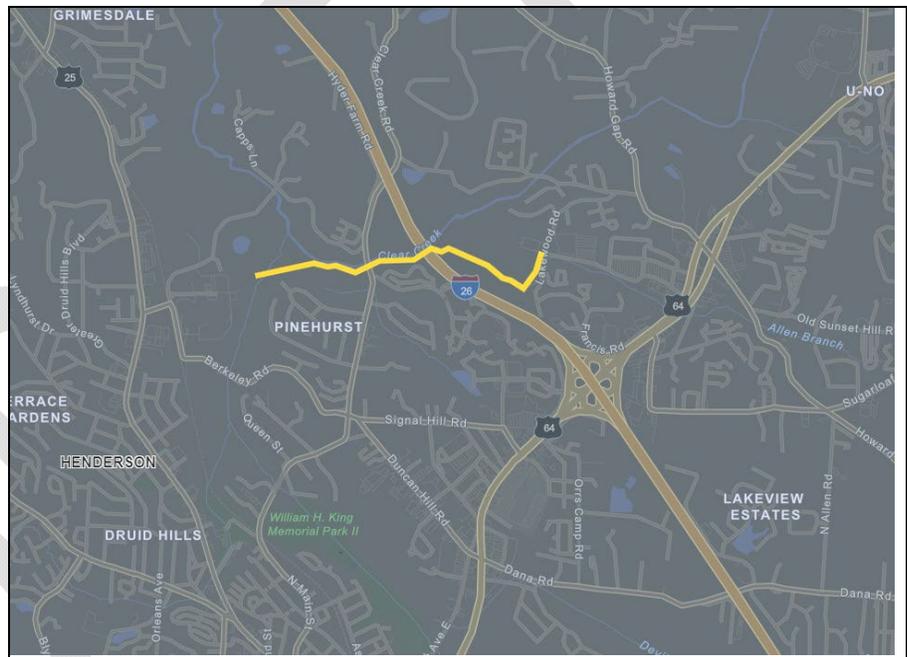
Project Name: Clear Creek Greenway

Managing Entity: City of Hendersonville

Project Limits: Oklawaha Greenway/Berkley Mills Park to Lakewood Road

Project Type: Multi-Use Path

Call for Projects Awarded: 2020



Phase	Initial Cost Estimate	Additional Funds Needed	Total Revised Cost
Preliminary Engineering	\$303,500	\$378,457	\$681,957
Right-of-Way	\$430,000	\$0	\$0
Construction	\$1,737,700	\$3,590,625	\$1,852,925

Total Amount of Additional Funding Requested: \$2,104,882

Federal Share: \$1,683,906

Local Share: \$420,976

Discussion occurred as to whether we should consider allowing additional funding on projects on a first come first served basis. Many projects are over budget as it is, and we have a limited amount of funds. Thought was given to the need to halt and figure out how to reign these projects in by having local jurisdictions submit project overages. Tristan Winkler agreed and noted that revised schedules and cost

estimates are needed on current LAPP projects. This is something that would be helpful if done annually. We were in a pattern of getting more and more money, however now we must make tougher choices as funding isn't as available.

Larry Harris moved to recommend delaying the request to program additional funding for BL-0008 until MPO staff have looked at all the projects and developed a process for allocating additional funds. Autumn Radcliff seconded the motion which carried unanimously upon a roll call vote.

LAPP Programming Update

Where We Left Things: The following projects were approved for funding but have not been programmed as of yet.

Project	Match Provider	Type of Project	Federal Funds
Ecusta Trail Section D	Henderson County	Rail-to-Trail/Multi- Use Path	\$10,467,234
Texas Road Pedestrian Bridge	Town of Montreat	Pedestrian Bridge Upgrades	\$152,800
Swannanoa Greenway	City of Asheville	Multi-Use Path	\$2,500,000
Riceville Road Sidewalks	NCDOT Division 13	Sidewalks	\$830,000
Woodfin Greenway	Buncombe County	Multi-Use Path	\$7,636,457

Programming Logistics

When this call for projects was initially issued, it was projected to have about \$13 million available with the programming of projects likely in FY 27 and FY 28. Since that time, additional funds have been added due to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law adding more funding to the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program as well as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP.) There is now an estimated \$11,664,000 available prior to FY 2027.

MPO staff's suggested general strategy is that projects be prioritized from needing to happen sooner to later with details to be determined later.

MPO staff considers the following aspects of these projects fairly critical in terms of how they should be programmed: local match availability, previous funding, and project score.

Local Match Availability- at least one project (Riceville Road Sidewalks) has local match funding that has limitations on when it is spent (with a resurfacing project.)

Previous Funding- at least one project was considered fully funded until new cost estimates were developed (Woodfin Greenway); adding more funding is considerably different than beginning a new project

Projects Scoring- some consideration should be made for projects that scored higher or lower in the LAPP scoring that was done in the spring to determine what projects were approved for funding or not

Project	Local Match Availability	Previous Funding	Project Scoring
Ecusta Trail Section D	-	Other Sections LAPP Funded	1 st
Texas Road Pedestrian Bridge	-	No LAPP Funding	2 nd
Swannanoa Greenway	-	No LAPP Funding	3 rd
Riceville Road Sidewalks	FY 23 Resurfacing Project	No LAPP Funding	4 th
Woodfin Greenway	-	LAPP Project	5 th

MPO staff would like to offer two options for prioritizing the LAPP projects:

Option #1: Full Project Prioritization (projects listed below can be shifted at the subcommittee’s discretion)

If local match and previous funding are prioritized, the following would be recommended:

Priority 1: Riceville Road Sidewalks

Priority 2: Woodfin Greenway

Priority 3: Ecusta Trail Section D

Priority 4: Texas Road Pedestrian Bridge

Priority 5: Swannanoa River Greenway

*This would not necessarily be the order in which projects would be programmed, due to differing costs, but would enable MPO and NCDOT staff to begin determining programming possibilities.

Option #2: Split Woodfin Greenway & Ecusta Trail

Woodfin Greenway Split: The Woodfin Greenway project was initially funded as two separate projects: the Riverside Greenway (Broadway to Elk Mountain Road) and the Beaverdam Creek Greenway (NC 251 to US 25.) This project could be redivided in coordination with Buncombe County staff.

Ecusta Trail Section D Split: Henderson County staff has noted the project could be split between the current end of the funded section at US 64 to Industrial Drive in Etowah (including the bridge over the French Broad River) and from Industrial Drive to the county boundary.

Pros of Splitting Projects: depending on the amount of funding for each split, this approach *could* enable one section of Woodfin and one section of Ecusta to move forward more quickly while delaying the other section.

Cons: splitting the projects would require more work from project managers due to increased agreements and contracts, potentially increase costs as well.

Potential order of priorities (can be shifted at the discretion of the subcommittee): P

riority 1: Riceville Road Sidewalks

Priority 2: Woodfin Greenway - Part 1

Priority 3: Ecusta Trail Section D – Part 1

Priority 4: Woodfin Greenway - Part 2

Priority 5: Ecusta Trail Section D – Part 5

Priority 6: Texas Road Pedestrian Bridge

Priority 7: Swannanoa River Greenway

*This would not necessarily be the order in which projects would be programmed, due to differing costs, but would enable MPO and NCDOT staff to begin determining programming possibilities.

General Information: the MPO's Locally Administered Project Program Budget

This budget table shows the amount of funding available to the MPO's Locally Administered Project Program between FY 22 and FY 28.

What These Sums Account For:

- Projects currently in the TIP/STIP from the MPO's LAPP
- \$500k/year the MPO sets aside for planning activities
- STBGDA, TAPDA, and CRPDA (Carbon Reduction Program) funds made available to the MPO

What These Sums Do NOT Account For:

- Providing additional funding for BL-0008 or any other project that has recently or plans to request additional federal funding

	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27	FY 28
Unprogrammed Amounts (Funding in \$Thousands)	\$1,906	\$1,285	\$1,285	\$8,740	\$1,593	\$5,993	\$5,993

Total Amount Available Through FY 28: \$26,795,000

Larry Harris moved to recommend LAPP projects to be prioritized using Option 1: (Full Project Prioritization – with Texas Road Pedestrian Bridge being moved to Priority #2.) Also, to include the stipulation that this would not necessarily be the order in which projects would be programmed, due to differing costs, but would enable MPO and NCDOT staff to begin determining programming possibilities. Jessica Morriss seconded the motion which passed upon a roll call vote, with one dissenting vote.

Next Steps: Program projects in the TIP/STI.

2020 Census Data

MPO staff provided a presentation on some of the transportation-related information from the 2020 American Community Survey from the US Census Bureau. There is some margin of error in this data.

TW presented on the census data. This information is about commute to work data and commuting back home. In 2020, 79% of commuters drove alone with 9% working from home and almost 8% carpooling. The remaining 4% of commuters took public transportation, walked, biked, or took a cab or motorcycle to work. Most of this survey was conducted during the Covid epidemic.

Information only. No action required.

Prioritization Update

The Prioritization process for the development of the 2024-2033 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) has had a number of changes take place over the last month.

Financial Changes: The State budget includes a provision to begin transferring a percentage of State sales tax revenues to transportation funds. This is projected to generate \$4-6 billion over the next ten years. This additional funding is likely to bring some projects back into the 2024- 2033 STIP that were initially removed but not all the removed projects.

Schedule Changes: due to the new funds being made available, the Prioritization Workgroup has recommended the deadline for proposing swaps be delayed until March 17, 2023. MPOs that are required to do air-quality conformity analyses as part of the TIP development process will have swaps prepared at an earlier date.

General Schedule Moving Forward:

Revised Draft 2024-2033 STIP Released: next few weeks

Project Swaps Due: March 17, 2023

State Considers 2024-2033 STIP for Adoption: May, 2023

FBRMPO Considers 2024-2033 STIP for Adoption: June/August, 2023

Tristan Winkler mentioned that the funding won't put every project back into STIP, as there are still more than \$8B in projects over programmed. Many projects will be added back, however.

Information only. No action required.

NEWS, EVENTS AND UPDATES

- Tristan Winkler related that the NCDOT Integrated Mobility Division is looking into a micro mobility study for counties in WNC, mainly centered about MPO. The timeline is yet unclear. Wilson, NC has switched to a micro mobility system and tripled their ridership.

- Scott Adams, new member of the MPO staff introduced himself to the committee. He was welcomed by the group.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Elizabeth Teague opened the floor for public comment. No comments were heard.

ADJOURNMENT

Elizabeth Teague called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:22am.

Jerry Vehaun moved to adjourn the meeting. Larry Harris seconded, and the vote carried unanimously.

Item 4A

LAPP Funding Update

Cost Estimates Received

The MPO received updates on the majority of programmed projects, but not all. Several projects are still outstanding.

MPO staff will continue to request additional funding with full breakdown to be provided at the next meeting.

No Action Required

BL-0008 Engineering Funding

BL-0008 Information

Project Name: Clear Creek Greenway

Managing Entity: City of Hendersonville

Project Limits: Oklawaha Greenway/Berkley Mills Park to Lakewood Road

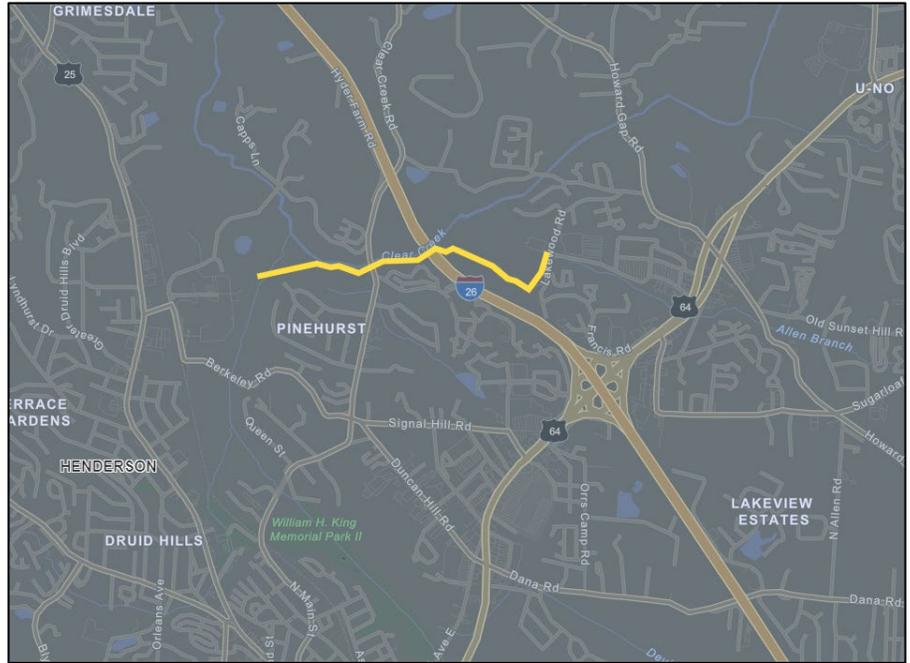
Project Type: Multi-Use Path

Call for Projects Awarded: 2020

At the last Prioritization meeting, the

subcommittee tabled a request from the City of Hendersonville for additional funding for all phases with the intent of reaching out to all project managers for cost and schedule information. However, tabling the request put the PE contract on-hold between the City and a firm to begin preliminary engineering (PE.)

After coordinating with City of Hendersonville staff, we are bringing back this item with only PE funding in order to keep this stage of the project on-schedule.



	Total	Federal (80%)	Local (20%)
Initial PE Estimate	\$303,500	\$242,800	\$60,700
Updated PE Estimate	\$761,998	\$609,598	\$152,400

Action: Consider Approval of Additional PE Funds for BL-0008

EB-5790 Funding Changes

EB-5790 is a LAP project managed by the City of Asheville to help tie together various greenways around the City, including the Wilma Dykeman Greenway, the Nasty Branch Greenway, and the Beaucatcher Greenway. The project has run into cost overruns.

In coordination with the City of Asheville, the MPO recommended deleting EB-5919 (a nearby pedestrian project that was awarded funds in P 3.0) and transferring the \$277,000 in federal funds to EB-5790. NCDOT approved the action and the TIP will be amended this month to reflect the change.

Additional funding will likely be required but will be determined over the next few months.

No Action Required

Item 4B:

U-6159 Cross-Section Update

As part of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the MPO is required to illustrate planned changes to facilities. During the development of the Haywood County Greenway Master Plan and in coordination with the FHWA Bikeway Selection.

U-6159 Information

Route: US 276 (Russ Avenue)

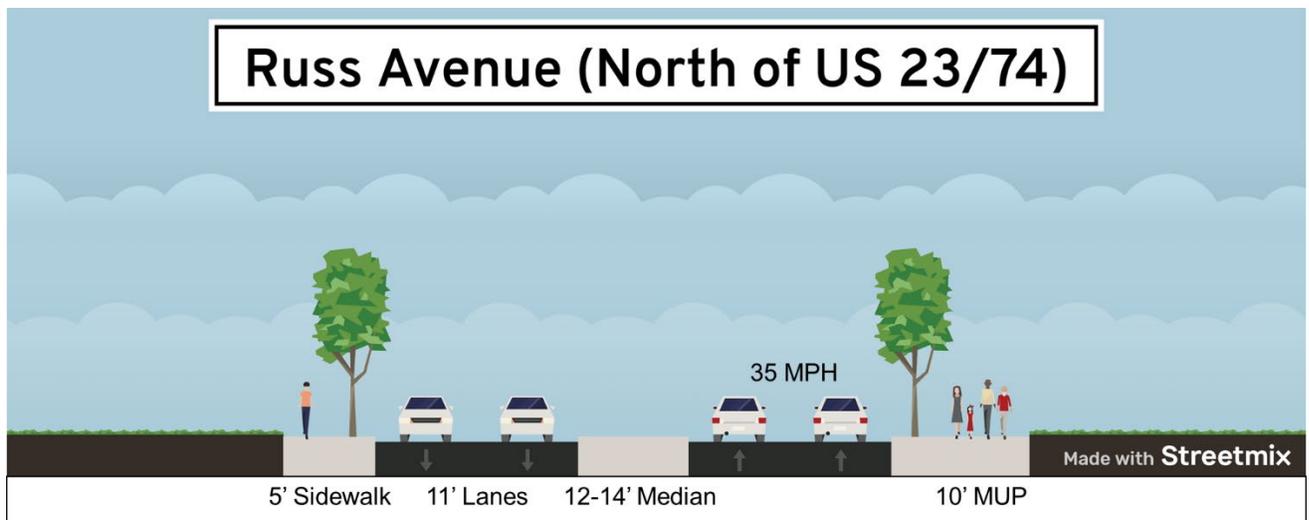
From: US 23/74 (Smokey Mountains Expressway)

To: US 19 (Dellwood Road)

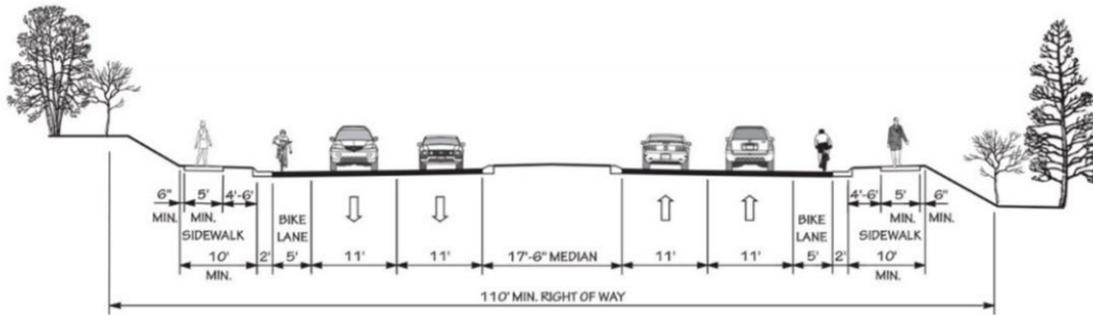
Improvement Type: Access Management

Jurisdictions Impacted: Haywood County, Town of Waynesville

Proposed Updated Cross-Section:

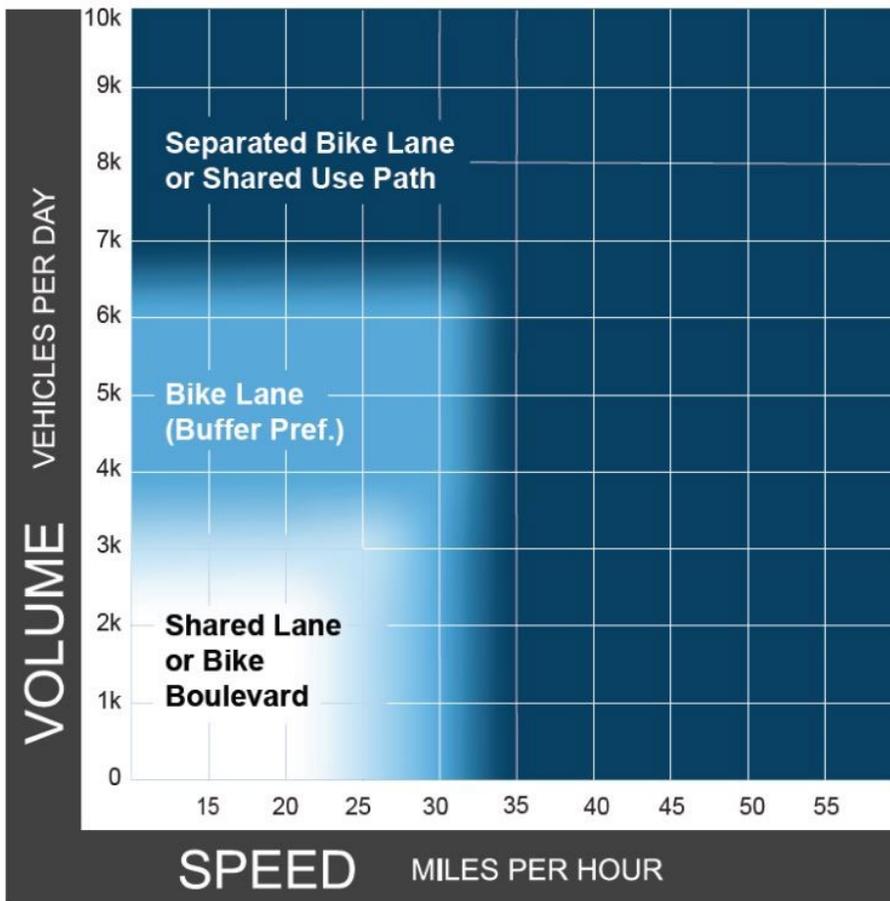


Current MTP Cross-Section:



Anticipated Cross-Section

Additional Information:



Action: Recommend MTP Amendment for Updated Cross-Section

Item 4C:

FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

What is a UPWP?

The UPWP is a federally mandated document for MPOs to produce that serves the MPO's budget. This includes line items of work for MPO staff, planning work planned by the region's designated recipient for FTA 5303 Metropolitan Planning Funds (City of Asheville), as well as studies being carried out using federal planning funds, and any programmatic support or planning being funded by FTA 5307 Support.

Why are We Talking About It Today?

The Draft FY 2024 UPWP is due in January. Tasks to complete to develop the UPWP:

- Determine Special Studies for FY 2024 (if any)
- Determine Transit 5303 Tasks (City of Asheville)
- Determine MPO Staff Tasks (MPO)

In general, the development of the UPWP has been a very internal process in the past. Considerations for developing the FY 2024 UPWP:

- Hold a workshop for MPO members to provide feedback on what they'd like to see developed/emphasized
- Send out a poll to MPO members on what they'd like to see developed/emphasized
- Consider Regional Initiatives:
 - Regional Managed Lane Study
 - Regional Transit Implementation Plan
 - Regional Transportation Resilience Plan
 - Travel Demand Model Update
 - Greenway Branding

-Consider Upgrading Tools

-Whatever Else- feedback is welcome!

No Action Required