

**French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting**  
Minutes from the Governing Board Meeting on April 28, 2022

**Attendance:**

In-Person and Remote via the Zoom Platform:

Chair Larry Harris (Black Mountain Council)	Michael Dawson (FHWA)
Tristan Winkler (FBRMPO)	Jennifer Hensley (Hendersonville Commission)
John Ridout (FBRMPO)	Anthony Sutton (Town of Waynesville)
Hannah Bagli (FBRMPO)	Shanon Gonce (Mills River Council)
Jane Pies (LOSRC - Minutes)	George Banta (Laurel Park Council)
Kim Roney (Asheville Council)	Gwen Wisler (Asheville Council)
Anne Coletta (Flat Rock Council)	Hannah Cook (NCDOT Division 13)
Bill Lapsley (Henderson Commission)	John Chase (Weaverville Council)
Bob Davy (Fletcher Council)	Bill Marley (FHWA)
Rebecca McCall (Henderson Commission)	Tom Widmer (Montreat Commission)
Kevin Ensley (Haywood Commission)	Steve Cannon (NCDOT Division 13)
Matt Wechtel (Madison Commission)	Erica Anderson (LOSRC)
Brownie Newman (Buncombe Commission)	Brendan Merithew (NCDOT Division 13)
Daniel Sellers (NCDOT TPD)	Mark Gibbs (NCDOT Division 13)
Steve Williams (NCDOT Division 14)	Marshall Williams (NCDOT Division 13)
Stephen Sparks (NCDOT Division 14)	Autumn Radcliff (Henderson County)
Troy Wilson (NCDOT Division 14)	Lucy Crown (City of Asheville)

**WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & ROLL CALL**

Vice Chair Anthony Sutton called the meeting to order at approximately 1:13 PM and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Vice Chair Sutton read the Ethics Statement and inquired if there were any conflicts of interest to note for today's meeting. No conflicts were noted with the business before the body.

Quorum was announced to conduct the business of the Board.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Larry Harris opened the floor for public comment. ***No public comments were received.***

**CONSENT AGENDA**

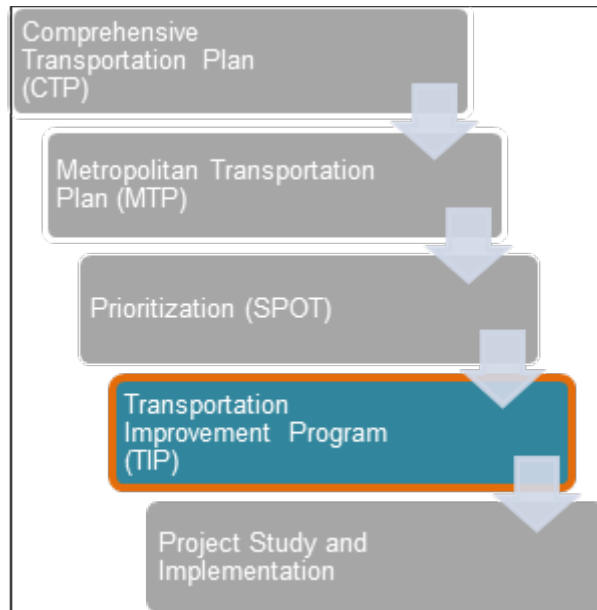
***Kim Roney moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of the March 2022 meeting minutes, the Amendments to the FY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the consent agenda as presented. Bob Davy seconded the motion which carried unanimously upon a roll call vote, and without further discussion.***

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Amendments to the 2020-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

**Very Brief Overview**

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.



**TIP Amendments #10 Overview**

This round includes amendment delays allowing for additional time for right-of-way and construction, add delays for planning and design and construction, delays for additional time for preliminary engineering, delay construction, add utilities not previously programmed, cost increases in excess of \$2 million (\$2,000,000) threshold. In addition, there are amendments for additional funds for transit projects, modify funds for transit projects as well as program bridge repair projects. New projects are current being added in this round.

These amendments are currently posted for public review and comment on the [TIP page](#) of the MPO website.

***Gwen Wisler moved to approve the amendments to the 2020-2029 Transportation Improvement Program. Bill Lapsley seconded the motion which carried upon a roll call vote.***

### **Amendments to the FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

#### **What is a UPWP?**

The UPWP is a federally mandated document for MPO's 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.

#### **Amendment Summary**

This amendment to the FY 2023 UPWP would add two special studies at the recommendation of the Prioritization Subcommittee:

- Patton Avenue Corridor Study (City of Asheville, \$222,000 in federal funds)
- Fonta Flora Greenway Study (Town of Black Mountain, \$28,000 in federal funds)

These studies would be in addition to other special studies already programmed:

- 2050 Regional Socio-Economic Projections (FBRMPO)
- Buncombe County Multimodal Master Plan (Buncombe County)
- Reed Creek Greenway Extension Study (City of Asheville)
- Haywood County Greenway Master Plan (already started)

NOTE: NCDOT has requested additional conversations about the Patton Avenue Corridor Study take place before initiating the study. Approval of these amendments should not conflict with that request.

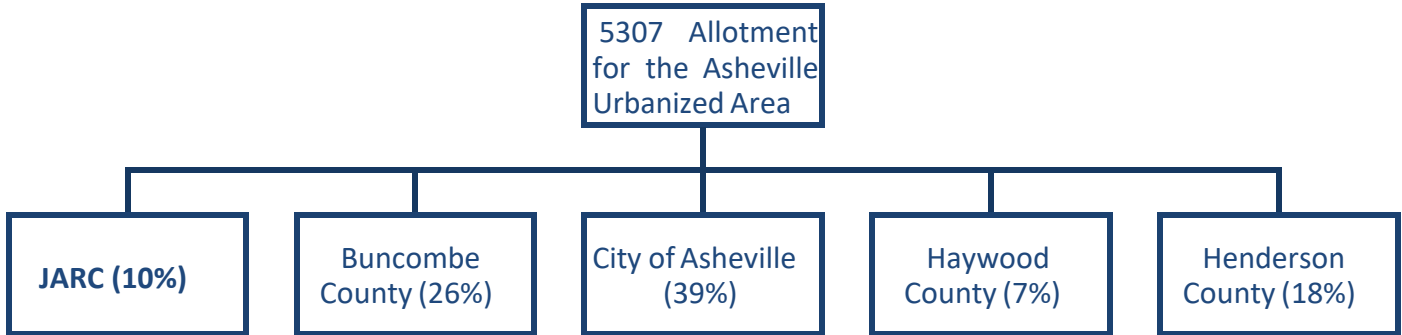
***Gwen Wisler moved to approve the FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program. Tom Widmer seconded, and the motion carried upon a roll call vote, and without further discussion.***

### **Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) – Additional Funding**

#### **What is JARC?**

Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) is a former stand-alone FTA program that provided transit funding for projects connecting urban workers with suburban and rural employment opportunities via transit. The JARC program was consolidated with FTA 5307 (Urban Transit Formula Funds) as part of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21) transportation law that was passed in 2012. Since then, the French Broad River MPO has elected to set-aside 10% of the region's 5307 allotment to hold a call for JARC projects.

**5307 Transit Funding Distribution in the French Broad River MPO**



**Funding Item**

The MPO TCC and Board previously passed the allotment of JARC funds for projects requested from the City of Asheville for its Route 170 to Black Mountain as well as another project from Friends of Land of Sky to start a Recovery to Work Vanpool program that would provide rides from halfway homes and recovery centers to employment opportunities not currently on a transit line.

However, what was approved did not program the full amount of JARC that was available. The Prioritization Subcommittee and Regional Transit Operators met and recommended that the remaining funding be programmed to the two projects to the extent they could be utilized. At its April meeting the Prioritization Subcommittee recommended the MPO’s JARC funding be programmed as follows:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Initial Award</b>	<b>Additional Award</b>	<b>Total Allotment</b>
City of Asheville JARC Program	\$231,558	<b>\$72,404</b>	\$303,962
Friends of Land of Sky Vanpool Program	\$30,000	<b>\$10,000</b>	\$40,000

This programming would allow Friends of Land of Sky to purchase additional insurance coverage for the vanpool program and provide greater flexibility for the City of Asheville to utilize the funding for qualifying routes rather than one specific route.

***Kim Roney moved to approve the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) additional funding. Jennifer Hensley seconded and to motion passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.***

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**Draft 2024-2033 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)**

The Draft 2024-2033 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) was made available to MPOs and RPOs on Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. The portion of the STIP that includes projects in the French Broad River MPO is available here: <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/D13-Construction-May-2022-combined.pdf>

**General Background**

The 2024-2033 STIP reflects the need to right-size the State’s transportation budget, currently more than \$8 billion overprogrammed. This process involves determining what projects would remain committed within the STIP and what currently committed projects would be de-committed and subject to future rounds of prioritization. This approach should facilitate a more reliable STIP and enable more funding to be available for future rounds of prioritization.

**Project Breakdown by Funding Tier**

**Statewide Mobility**

<b>Statewide Mobility Committed</b>	\$967,483,000
<b>Statewide Mobility Decommited</b>	\$241,976,000

<b>Projects In</b>		<b>Projects Out</b>	
<b>TIP ID</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>TIP ID</b>
I-2513B	I-26 Connector (Haywood to Broadway)	I-26 Connector (I-26/I-40/I-240 Interchange Final Improvements)	I-2513C
I-4759	Liberty Road (New Interchange on I-40)	I-26/US 64 Interchange	I-4400BA
I-2513AA	I-26 Connector (I-40 Improvements & Maintenance)		

### Regional Impact

<b>Regional Impact Committed</b>	\$293,719,000
<b>Regional Impact Decommited</b>	\$730,992,000

Projects In		Projects Out	
TIP ID	Project	Project	TIP ID
I-2513AB	I-26 Connector (Partial I-26/I-40/I-240 Interchange Improvements)	Future I-26 Widening	A-0010AA
I-2513AC	I-26 Connector (Widening from I-40 to Haywood)	US 25A (Sweeten Creek Road) Widening	U-2801A
U-5783	US 64 Improvements (Laurel Park)	NC 191 (Brevard Road) Widening	U-3403B
U-6049	South Main Street Bridge Widening (Hendersonville)	NC 63 (New Leicester Highway) Access Management	U-5972
		NC 63 (New Leicester Highway) and US 19 (Patton Avenue) Intersection Improvements	U-5971B
		NC 280 (Boylston Highway) Access Management	U-6124
		US 25 (Weaverville Highway) and New Stock Road Intersection Improvements	U-5973

### Division Needs (Division 13)

<b>Division 13 Needs Committed</b>	\$302,024,000
<b>Division 13 Needs Decommited</b>	\$136,801,000

Projects In		Projects Out	
TIP ID	Project	Project	TIP ID
I-4409	I-40/Blue Ridge Road New Interchange	NC 81 (Swannanoa River Road) Improvements (Biltmore to S Tunnel)	U-5832
I-2513D	NC 251 (Riverside Drive) Improvements (Hill Street to Broadway)	Riceville Road Improvements	U-5837
U-5834	Mills Gap Road Widening	NC 81 (Swannanoa River Road) Improvements (S Tunnel to	U-6046

		Tunnel)	
U-6163	Mills Gap Road @ Cane Creek Road Intersection Improvements	N Louisiana Avenue Improvements (Patton to Emma)	U-6162
U-4739	Amboy/Meadow Road Improvements		
U-6047	Sand Hill/Sardis Road Widening		
EB-5919	McDowell/Choctaw Pedestrian Improvements		
EB-5822	North RAD Greenway		
EB-5965	Deaverview Road Sidewalks		

**Division Needs (Division 14)**

<b>Division 14 Needs Committed</b>	\$267,674,000
<b>Division 14 Needs Decommitted</b>	\$100,751,000

Projects In		Projects Out	
TIP ID	Project	Project	TIP ID
R-2588B	NC 191 Widening (NC 280 to Mountain Road)	South Main Street Widening (HyattCreek to US 276 (Pigeon St))	U-4712
U-5839	US 276 (Russ Avenue) Improvements(Main Street to US 23/74)	US 276 @ Crymes Cove Road Intersection Improvements	U-6158
U-5888	N Main @ Walnut Intersection Improvements	US 276 (Russ Avenue) Access Management (US 23/74 to US 19 (Dellwood Road))	U-6159
U-5886	White Street Improvements	US 19/23 Improvements (ChestnutMountain to Wiggins Road)	U-6048
R-5921	US 276 (Jonathan Creek Road) Improvements	US 23/74 Improvements (BalsamView to Old Balsam)	U-6172
R-5748	Kanuga Road Improvements		
EB-5860	Blythe Street Sidewalks		
EB-5963	Grove Street Sidewalks		

**Changes in Construction Start-Dates**

STIP ID	Route	Project Description	County(ies)	Division(s)	STI Funding Category	Previous CON Start Year	Updated CON Start Year
U-5888	US 23 BUSINES S	INTERSECTION OF US23 BUSINESS (NORTHMAIN STREET) AND WALNUT STREET. CONSTRUCT INTERSECTION	HAYWOOD	14	DIV 14	2022	2022



		IMPROVEMENT S.					
U-6163	SR 3116 (MILLGAP ROAD)	SR 3136 (CANE CREEK ROAD) INTERSECTION. REALIGN INTERSECTIONAND ADD LEFT TURN LANES.	BUNCOMB E	13	DIV 13	2023	2023
U-5839	US 276 (RUSS AVENUE)	US 23/74 TO US 23 BUSINESS (MAIN STREET). UPGRADE CORRIDOR.	HAYWOOD	14	DIV 14	2023	2023

STIP ID	Route	Project Description	County(ies)	Division(s)	STI Funding Category	Previous CON Start Year	Updated CON Start Year
U-5019E	RIVERWAY MULTI-MODAL NETWORK	CRAVEN STREET BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS OVERTHE FRENCH BROAD RIVER	BUNCOMBE	13	DIV 13	2024	2024
U-5834	SR 3116 (MILLSGAP ROAD)	US 25 (HENDERSONVILLE ROAD) TO SR 3157 (WESTON ROAD). UPGRADE EXISTING ROADWAY.	BUNCOMBE	13	DIV 13	2024	2024
EB-5919	MCDOWEL L STREET CHOCTAW STREET	SOUTHSIDE AVENUE TO CHOCTAW STREET AT BILTMORE AVENUE. CONSTRUCT PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS.	BUNCOMBE	13	DIV 13	2024	2024
I-2513D	SR 1477 (RIVERSIDE DRIVE)	SR 1517 (HILL STREET) TO SR 1781 (BROADWAY STREET)	BUNCOMBE	13	DIV 13	2024	2024
I-2513B	I-40, I-26	SR 3548 (HAYWOOD ROAD) TO US 19/23 AT SR 1781 (BROADWAY)	BUNCOMBE	13	SW	2024	2024
I-2513AC	I-26/I-240	WIDEN TO SIX LANE FREEWAY.	BUNCOMBE	13	REG G	2024	2024

R- 2588 B	NC 191	SR 1381 (MOUNTAIN ROAD) TO NC 280 SOUTH OF MILLS RIVER.	HENDERSO N	14	DIV 14	2024	2024
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STIP ID	Route	Project Description	County(ies)	Division(s)	STI Funding Category	Previous CON Start Year	Updated CON Start Year
U-5783	US 64	SR 1180 (BLYTHE STREET) TO SR 1173 (WHITE PINE DRIVE)/SR1186 (DANIEL DRIVE). WIDEN ROADWAY.	HENDERSON	14	REG G	2024	2024
R-5921	US 276 (JONATHAN CREEK)	US 19 TO I-40 UPGRADE. MODERNIZE ROADWAY.	HAYWOOD	14	DIV 14	2024	2025
EB-5822	NORTH RAD GREENWAY	CONSTRUCT MULTI-USEPATH ALONG RIVERSIDE DRIVE FROM HILL STREET TO US 19/23/70AT BROADWAY	BUNCOMBE	13	DIV 13	2025	2025
I-4409	SR 2500 (BLUERIDGE ROAD)	CONVERT I-40/SR 2500 (BLUE RIDGE ROAD) GRADE SEPARATION TO INTERCHANGE. WIDEN SR 2500 (BLUE RIDGE ROAD) TO THREE LANES FROM US 70 TO SOUTH OF I-40 AND UPGRADE ROADWAY SOUTH OF I-40 TO SR 2713.	BUNCOMBE	13	DIV 13	2025	2025

I-4759	I-40	I-40/SR 1228 (LIBERTY ROAD). CONVERT GRADE SEPARATION TO AN INTERCHANGE AND CONSTRUCT TWO LANE ROADWAY NORTH OF I-40 TO SR 1224 AND FOUR LANE ROADWAY SOUTH OF I-40 TO US 19/US 23/NC 151 WITH	BUNCOMBE	13	SW	2025	2025
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STIP ID	Route	Project Description	County(ies)	Division(s)	STI Funding Category	Previous CON Start Year	Updated CON Start Year
		PARTS ON NEW LOCATION.					
EB-5860	BLYTHE STREET	BLYTHE STREET, US 64(BREVARD ROAD) TO NC 191 (HAYWOOD ROAD). CONSTRUCT SIDEWALKS.	HENDERSON	14	DIV 14	2026	2027
EB-5963	GROVE STREET	BARNWELL STREET TO US 176 (SPARTANBURG HIGHWAY). CONSTRUCT SIDEWALK.	HENDERSON	14	DIV 14	2026	2027
EB-5965	DEAVERVIEW ROAD	US 19/23/74A (PATTON AVENUE) TO WESTMORE DRIVE IN ASHEVILLE. CONSTRUCT SIDEWALK.	BUNCOMBE	13	DIV 13	2027	2027
U-4739	SR 3556 (AMBOY ROAD / MEADOW ROAD)	I-240 TO NC 81/SR 3214(BILTMORE AVENUE). WIDEN TO MULTI-LANES WITH NEW BRIDGE OVER THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER.	BUNCOMBE	13	DIV 13	2029	2028

U-5886	SR 1170 (WHITE STREET )	SR 1171 (WILLOW ROAD) TO US 176 (SPARTANBURG HIGHWAY). REALIGNAND EXTEND ROADWAY.	HENDERSO N	14	DIV 14	2026	2029
U-6049	NC 225 (SOUTH MAIN STREET)	SOUTH MAIN STREET AT SOUTH KING STREET TO US 176. WIDEN BRIDGE 440143 TO 5-LANES.	HENDERSO N	14	REG G	2026	2029

STIP ID	Route	Project Description	County(ies)	Division(s)	STI Funding Category	Previous CON Start Year	Updated CON Start Year
U-6047	NC 112 (SARDIS ROAD/SANDHILL ROAD)	NC 191 (BREVARD ROAD) TO US 19/23(SMOKEY PARK HIGHWAY). WIDEN ROADWAY.	BUNCOMBE	13	DIV 13	2028	2031
R-5748	SR 1127 (KANUGAROAD)	US 25 BUSINESS (CHURCH STREET) TO SR 1123 (LITTLE RIVERROAD). UPGRADE ROADWAY.	HENDERSON	14	DIV 14	Beyond 2029	2031
U-4712	US 23 BUSINESS (SOUTH MAIN STREET)	SR 1164 (HYATT CREEKROAD) TO US 276 (PIGEON STREET). WIDEN TO MULTI-LANES.	HAYWOOD	14	DIV 14	2027	-
U-2801A	US 25A (SWEETEN CREEK ROAD)	US 25 (HENDERSONVILLE ROAD) TO SR 3081(ROCK HILL ROAD)	BUNCOMBE	13	REG G	2027	-
U-5973	WEAVERVILLE	US 19 BUSINESS (WEAVERVILLE HIGHWAY) AND SR 1740 (NEW STOCK ROAD). CONSTRUCT INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT	BUNCOMBE	13	REG G	2029	-



		S.					
I-2513C	I-26/I-240	I-26/I-40/I-240 FINAL INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS	BUNCOMBE	13	SW	2029	-

STIP ID	Route	Project Description	County(ies)	Division(s)	STI Funding Category	Previous CON Start Year	Updated CON Start Year
U-6158	US 276	SR 1134 (CRYMES COVERROAD) AND RACCOON ROAD. INTERSECTION REALIGNMENT.	HAYWOOD	14	DIV 14	Beyond 2029	-
U-6162	SR 1332 (NORTH LOUISIANA AVENUE)	US 19/23 (PATTON AVENUE) TO SR 1338(EMMA ROAD). MODERNIZE ROADWAY.	BUNCOMBE	13	DIV 13	Beyond 2029	-
U-5832	NC 81 (SWANNANO RIVER ROAD)	SR 3214 (BILTMORE AVENUE) TO US 74A(SOUTH TUNNEL ROAD). WIDEN EXISTING ROADWAY.	BUNCOMBE	13	DIV 13	Beyond 2029	-
U-5837	SR 2002 (RICEVILLE ROAD)	US 70 (TUNNEL ROAD) TO SR 2285 (CLEAR VISTA LANE). UPGRADEROADWAY.	BUNCOMBE	13	DIV 13	Beyond 2029	-
U-6046	NC 81 (SWANNANO RIVER ROAD)	US 70 (TUNNEL ROAD)TO US 74 (SOUTH TUNNEL ROAD). UPGRADE ROADWAY.	BUNCOMBE	13	DIV 13	Beyond 2029	-
A-0010A A	I-26 (US 19/US23)	SR 1781 (BROADWAY STREET) TO US 25/70	BUNCOMBE	13	REG G	Beyond 2029	-

I-4400B A	I-26	US 64 INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS	HENDERSON	14	SW	Beyond 2029	-
U-3403 B	NC 191 (BREVARD ROAD - OLD HAYWOOD ROAD)	SR 3498 (LEDBETTER ROAD) TO NORTH OF BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY.	BUNCOMBE	13	REG G	Beyond 2029	-

STIP ID	Route	Project Description	County(ies)	Division(s)	STI Funding Category	Previous CON Start Year	Updated CON Start Year
U-5971 B	ASHEVILLE	US 19 (PATTON AVENUE) AND NC 63(NEW LEICESTER HIGHWAY). CONSTRUCT FINAL INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS.	BUNCOMBE	13	REG G	Beyond 2029	-
U-5972	ASHEVILLE	NC 63 (NEW LEICESTER HIGHWAY), US 19/23 (PATTON AVENUE) TO NEWFOUND ROAD. CONSTRUCT ACCESS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENTS.	BUNCOMBE	13	REG G	Beyond 2029	-
U-6159	US 276 (RUSS AVENUE)	US 23-74 (GREAT SMOKEY MOUNTAIN EXPRESSWAY) TO US 19(DELLWOOD ROAD). ACCESS MANAGEMENT.	HAYWOOD	14	DIV 14	Beyond 2029	-
U-6048	US 19, US 23	SR 1836 (CHESTNUT MOUNTAIN ROAD) TOSR 1200 (WIGGINS ROAD). UPGRADE ROADWAY.	HAYWOOD , BUNCOMBE	13, 14	DIV 14	Beyond 2029	-

U-6172	US 23/US 74 (GREAT SMOKEY MOUNTAIN EXPRESSWAY)	SR 1777 (BALSAM VIEWDRIVE) TO SR 1158 (OLD BALSAM ROAD) MODERNIZE ROADWAY.	HAYWOOD, JACKSON	14	DIV 14	Beyond 2029	-
U-6124	NC 280 (BOYLSTON HIGHWAY)	NC 191 (HAYWOOD ROAD) TO NC 191 (OLDHAYWOOD ROAD). CONSTRUCT ACCESS MANAGEMENT AND INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS.	HENDERSON	14	REG G	Beyond 2029	-

STIP ID	Route	Project Description	County(ies)	Division(s)	STI Funding Category	Previous CON Start Year	Updated CON Start Year
U-6048	US 19, US 23	SR 1836 (CHESTNUT MOUNTAIN ROAD) TOSR 1200 (WIGGINS ROAD). UPGRADE ROADWAY.	HAYWOOD, BUNCOMBE	13, 14	DIV 13	Beyond 2029	-

### Schedule and Considerations Moving Forward

For the MPO's process, the following tasks and general dates are planned:

Task/Event	Date	Lead Agency
Local Meetings (by County)	May/June, 2022	MPO
Public Engagement	June/July, 2022	MPO w/ NCDOT
Draft Project Swaps (if any)	August, 2022	MPO, NCDOT
Final Project Swaps (if any)	September, 2022	MPO, NCDOT
Revised STIP Released	Winter, 2022/2023	NCDOT
Public Comment	Spring/Summer, 2023	MPO, NCDOT
Final STIP Adopted	Summer, 2023	MPO, NCDOT

**Information only. No action required.**

### Changes to TIP/STIP Projects

As a result of TIP/STIP projects being overprogrammed, NCDOT engaged the MPO and local partners last fall to determine any projects that could be scaled back in scope or segmented in order to reduce costs and potentially give projects a better chance of remaining committed in the upcoming 2024-2033 TIP/STIP. NCDOT is currently in the process of getting approvals and/or updated cost estimates to proceed with scope changes and segmentation for consideration in developing the new (S)TIP.

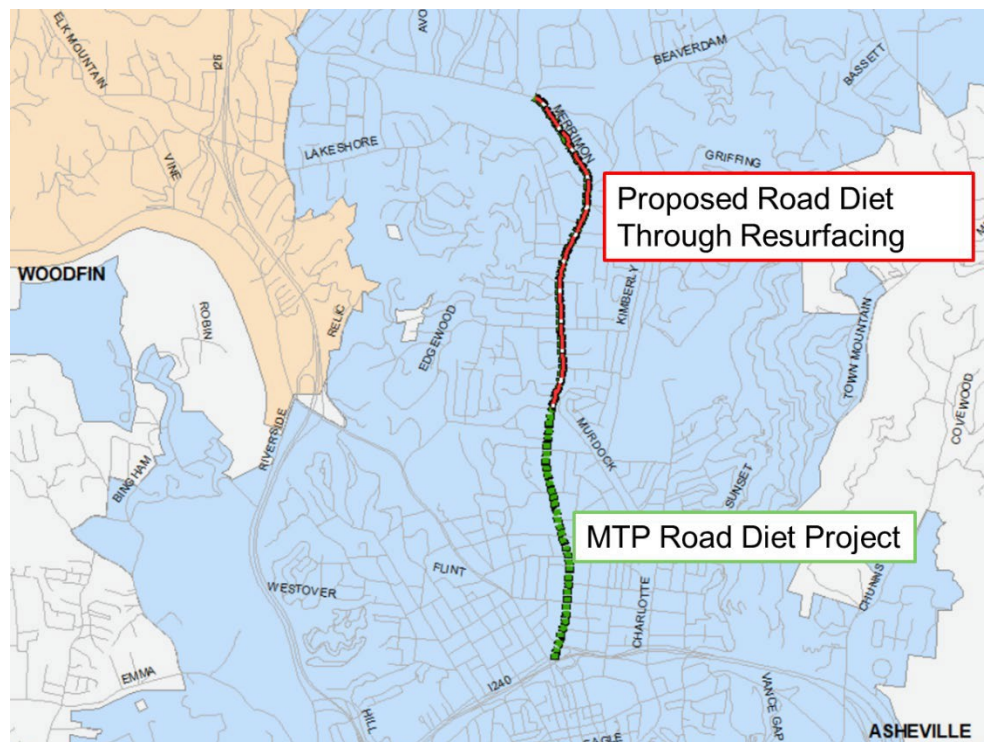
NCDOT staff provided an update and overview of proposed changes to TIP/STIP projects.

**Informational item only. No action required.**

### Merrimon Avenue Proposed Road Diet

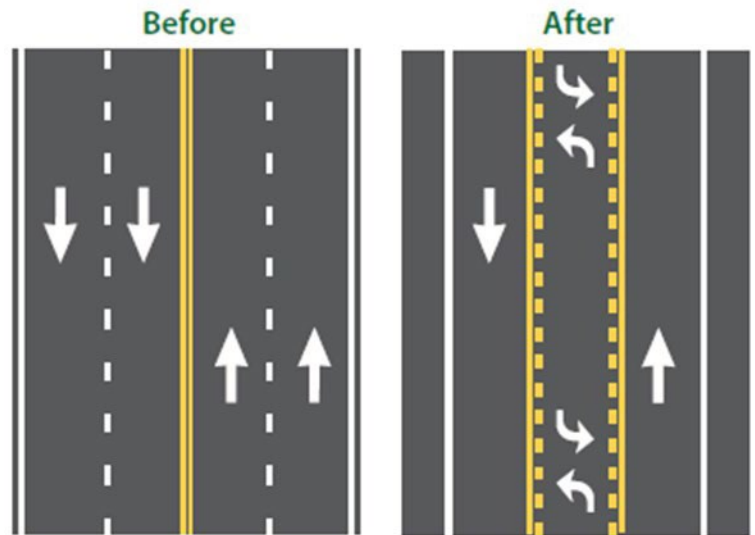
#### Summary

- NCDOT plans to resurface US 25 through Asheville from Southside Avenue to Midland Drive
- A road diet is being considered to be implemented as part of the resurfacing from WT Weaver Boulevard to Wembley Drive (the current termini of the four-lane cross-section.)



### Road Diet Benefits & Considerations

- Generally, a reduction in vehicular travel lanes to make room for other purposes or modes
- FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasure
  - 19-47% reduction in total crashes
  - Reduction of rear-end and left-turn crashes due to the dedicated left-turn lane
  - Reduced right-angle crashes
  - Fewer lanes for pedestrian to cross
  - Opportunity to add bike lanes, parking, additional pedestrian space
  - More consistent speeds
  - Mitigate queues associated with left turning
- Typically implemented on roads with 25,000 AADT or less



### FHWA Roadway Information Guide

#### Context

- Volumes
  - North of WT Weaver Boulevard (2020)
    - 11,500 - 20,000
  - South of WT Weaver Boulevard
    - 18,500 - 21,000
  - 2019 volumes 12-18% higher than in 2020
- Crashes
  - 31 recorded bicycle and pedestrian crashes between 2002-2019, per NCDOT, from WT Weaver to Wembley
  - 155 crashes/year
  - 150% higher crash rate than similar roads in North Carolina
- Walkability/Bike ability
  - Neighborhoods surrounding Merrimon Avenue are considered “walkable”

- FBRMPO Congestion Management Process
- [EPA Smart Location Database](#)
- NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Demand Estimation Map

## Planning Background

- 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan
  - HR4519- Road Diet on Merrimon Avenue from I-240 to Wembley Drive
  - 2045 Travel Demand Model includes Merrimon Avenue as a three-lane roadway
  - Adopted in 2020
- Congestion Management Process
  - Recommends improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure for Merrimon
  - Recommends a relaxed level of service for evaluating congestion (Level of Service E)
  - Identifies the area around Merrimon Avenue as a “Walkable Urban Place”
  - Adopted in 2018
- Safety Performance Targets
  - The MPO and NCDOT are not meeting targets for reducing roadway fatalities, roadway fatality rate, roadway serious injuries, roadway serious injury rates, or non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries
  - (Re)adopted in 2022

## Background & History

Two intersection improvement projects were funded at WT Weaver Boulevard and Edgewood Drive (U-5781 & U-5782) in 2014 as part of SPOT 3.0. These projects were initially programmed to add and extend turn lanes to each of the intersections to alleviate congestion. Public meetings were held in 2018 that revealed a need to extend turn lanes from Edgewood and WT Weaver Boulevard that essentially created a five-lane cross-section between the two intersections. The public response was not positive, and the projects were later removed from the (S)TIP in 2020.

Out of the two deprogrammed intersection improvement projects, NCDOT initiated a study to look at the feasibility of a road diet on Merrimon Avenue, engaging City of Asheville staff, MPO staff, members of the Asheville Multimodal Commission, and other community stakeholders to look at issues and opportunities. An [express design](#) and [traffic forecast](#) were completed as part of the study.

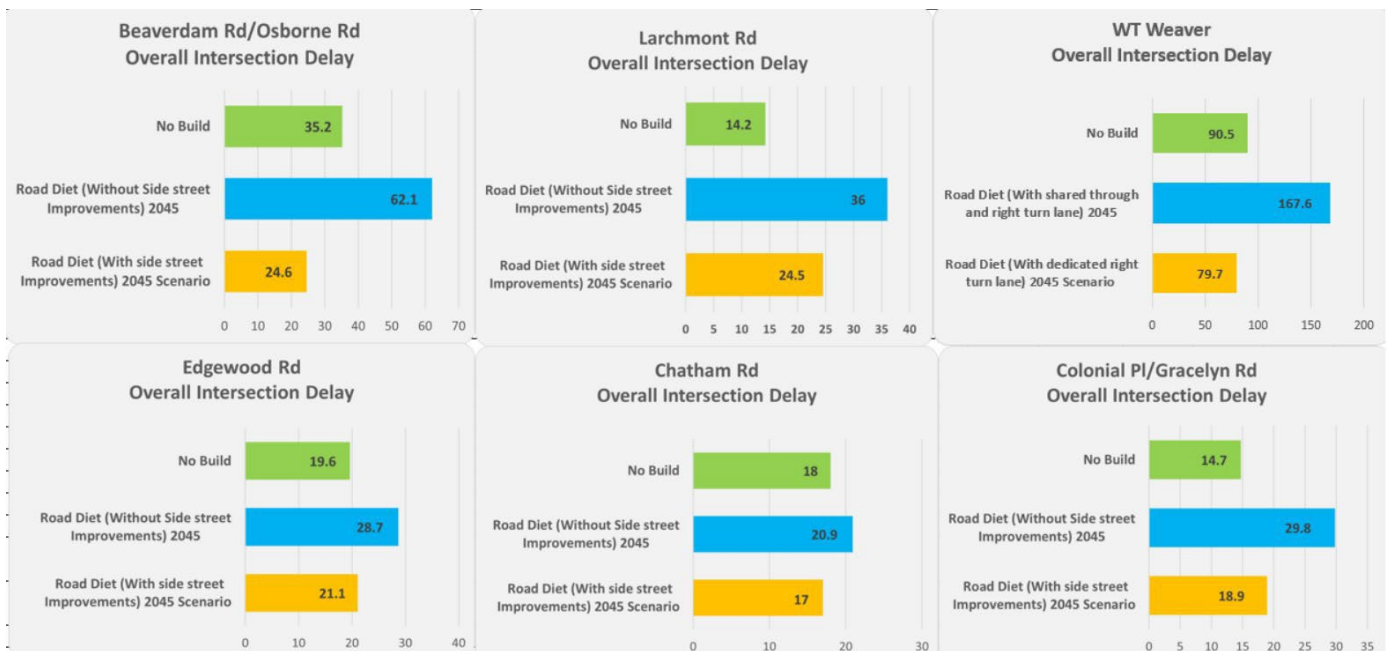
For public information and feedback, a public meeting was held by City of Asheville staff and NCDOT in March 2022. An online survey was provided as well. In total, the feedback was generally split with somewhat more positive than negative feedback for implementing a road diet.

Discussions are continuing between NCDOT and the City of Asheville regarding funding needs and other considerations to implement a road diet on Merrimon as part of a resurfacing project.



## Potential Delay

As part of the traffic forecast completed by NCDOT, estimated intersection delay was evaluated with three different scenarios: no-build, road diet without additional improvements, and a road diet with additional improvements (to be completed at a later time.) Below shows the estimated overall intersection delay at key intersections along the corridor (in seconds) for traffic in 2045.



Source: [Storymap via City of Asheville](#).

## Next Steps

NCDOT and the City of Asheville have reviewed the public input received from the online survey and public meeting. NCDOT has notified the City of Asheville of financial contributions that would be required from the City for signal work that would be needed for the conversion as well as other requirements. These are expected to be discussed at the City of Asheville's Council meeting in early May.

***Informational item only. No action required.***

## REGULAR UPDATES

- Division 13 Updates: <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/D13-Construction-April-2022-combined.pdf>
- Division 14 Updates: [https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/042022\\_Div14\\_FBRMPO\\_ComprehensiveProjDev-combined.pdf](https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/042022_Div14_FBRMPO_ComprehensiveProjDev-combined.pdf)
- Transportation Planning Division Update provided.
- FHWA/FTA updates provided. Bill Marley was introduced as the new FHWA Representative
- FBRMPO Committee & Workgroup Updates:
  - Prioritization Subcommittee – Met April 6<sup>th</sup>, next meeting May 4<sup>th</sup>
  - Transit Operators Workgroup – met January 11<sup>th</sup>
  - 5307 Subrecipient Workgroup – next meeting TBD
  - Citizens’ Advisory Committee – met January 12<sup>th</sup>; next meeting April 13<sup>th</sup>
  - Hellbender Trail Stakeholder Group – last meeting February 3<sup>rd</sup>, next meeting TBD
- Legislative Updates:

### *Additional Items:*

- USDOT Multimodal Discretionary Grant Open Through May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Information here: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/multimodal-project-discretionary-grant-notice-funding-opportunity>
- USDOT Raise Grant Open Through April 14<sup>th</sup>. Information here: <https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-nofo>
- USDOT Safe Streets for All Program expected to open in May. Preliminary information here: [https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2022-03/Safe-Streets-and-Roads-for-All-Fact-Sheet\\_March-2022.pdf](https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2022-03/Safe-Streets-and-Roads-for-All-Fact-Sheet_March-2022.pdf)
- FHWA Provided a Report to Congress on Complete Streets. The report is available here: <https://highways.dot.gov/sites/fhwa.dot.gov/files/2022-03/Complete%20Streets%20Report%20to%20Congress.pdf>
- USDOT released the National Roadway Safety Strategy in January. The guidance is available here: <https://www.transportation.gov/NRSS>
- FTA FY 2022 Funding Apportionments available here: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/apportionments/current-apportionments>

## PUBLIC COMMENT

*Chair Harris opened a second public comment period. No comments were received.*

## ADJOURNMENT

*Chair Harris adjourned the meeting at 3:21 PM, as there was no further business.*