

Item 3A:

September, 2022 Board Minutes

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting
Minutes from the Governing Board Meeting on September 22, 2022

Attendance:

In-Person and Remote via the Zoom Platform:

Chair Larry Harris (Black Mountain Council)
Tristan Winkler (FBRMPO)
Hannah Bagli (FBRMPO)
Shanon Gonce (Mills River Council)
Kim Roney (Asheville Council)
Anne Colletta (Flat Rock Council)
Bill Lapsley (Henderson Commission)
Bob Davy (Fletcher Council)
Rebecca McCall (Henderson Commission)
Matt Wechtel (Madison Commission)
Daniel Sellers (NCDOT TPD)
Steve Williams (NCDOT Division 14)
Elizabeth Teague (Town of Waynesville)
John Chase (Weaverville Council)
Sam Cullen (Town of Maggie Valley)
Janna Bianculli (Apple Country Transit)
Chuck McGrady (NCBOT)

Jennifer Hensley (Hendersonville Council)
Scott Adams (FBRMPO)
Gwen Wisler (Asheville Council)
Martha Register (NCDOT Rail Division)
Logan DiGiacomo (FBRMPO)
Tom Widmer (Montreat Commission)
Eddie McFalls (NCDOT Rail Division)
Tim Anderson (NCDOT Division 13)
Bill Marley (FHWA)
Brandon Rodgers (Urban Transit)
Daniel Cobb (Town of Mills River)
Stephen Sparks (NCDOT Division 13)
George Banta (Laurel Park Council)
Kevin Ensley (Haywood Commission)
Autumn Radcliff (Henderson County)
Matt Manley (City of Hendersonville)

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & ROLL CALL

Chair, Larry Harris called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM and welcomed everyone. He 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.

FRENCH BROAD RIVER

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Staff Report & Recommendations

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Harris opened the floor for public comment. No comments were heard.

CONSENT AGENDA

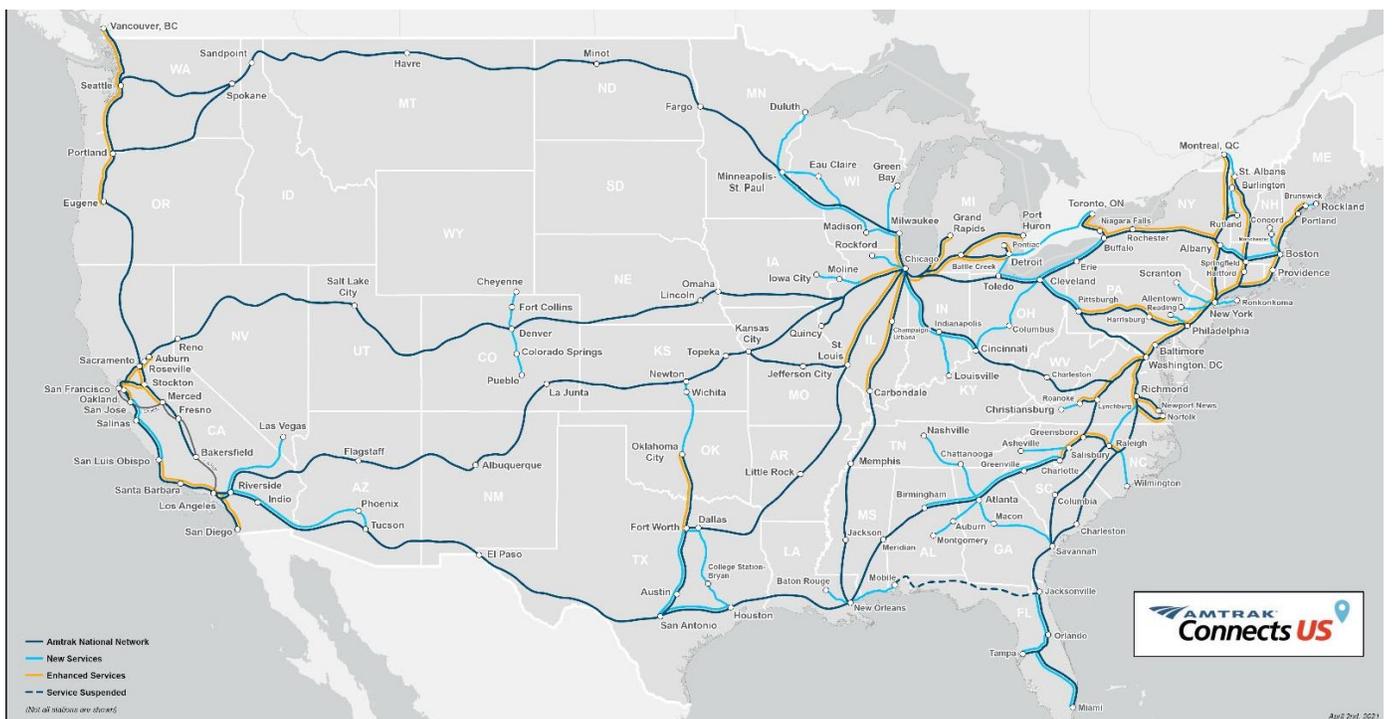
Shanon Gonce moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of the August 2022 meeting minutes as amended (to include that funding was discussed under the Clean Transportation item), the Modification to the 2020-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Letter of Support for Apple Country Transit 5310 Application, the Letter of Support for NDOT Bridge Improvement Program Application, the Amendments to the FY 2023 United Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the TAC agenda. Gwen Wisler seconded the motion which carried unanimously upon a roll call vote.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

WNC Passenger Rail Study

The NCDOT Rail Division has started work on a study to look at the feasibility of reintroducing passenger rail to Western North Carolina and potentially take advantage of additional rail funding being made available through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA.)

Eddie McFalls, PE, of the NCDOT Rail Division provided an update on the study and potential next steps for bringing back passenger rail to WNC.



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Amtrak Proposed Future Connections, Including Asheville

Eddie McFalls shared that this study is focused on passenger rail service from Salisbury, NC to Asheville, NC. Previous feasibility studies were conducted in 1997, 2001 and 2002. These concluded that service was feasible, particularly when connected with other services.

Discussion occurred about the need for short term as well as long term options, while we are connecting to Salisbury.

Information only. No action required.

I-2513 (I-26 Connector) Update

Project Background: I-2513 is actually a series of interstate and related roadway improvements that are in various stages of TIP/STIP development.

I-2513A (now split into AA, AB, AC)- Funding Committed,

I-2513AA- Reconstruct Pavement from Sand Hill Road to Monte Vista Road (\$31.7 Million)

I-2513AB- I-26/I-40 AND I-40/US 19/23 (SMOKEY PARK HIGHWAY) INTERCHANGES. CONSTRUCT THE FOLLOWING IMPROVEMENTS: WIDEN I-40 EASTBOUND TO I-26 EASTBOUND RAMP, WIDEN I-26 WESTBOUND BETWEEN I-40 RAMPS, CONSTRUCT NEW I-40 WESTBOUND TO US 19/23 (SMOKEY PARK HIGHWAY) (\$23.6 Million)

I-2513C- NORTH OF I-40 TO SR 3548 (HAYWOOD ROAD). WIDEN TO SIX LANE FREEWAY. (\$220.8 Million)

Right-of-Way: 2023

I-2513B- Funding Committed, Widening with New Bridges over the French Broad River from Haywood Road to Broadway Street (\$686.6 Millions)

Right-of-Way: 2024

I-2513C- Funding NOT Committed, Final Interchange Improvements to I-26/I-40/I-240 FUNDING NOT

COMMITTED

I-2513D- Funding Committed, Improvements to Riverside Drive from Hill Street to Broadway Street (\$31.5 Million)

Right-of-Way: 2024



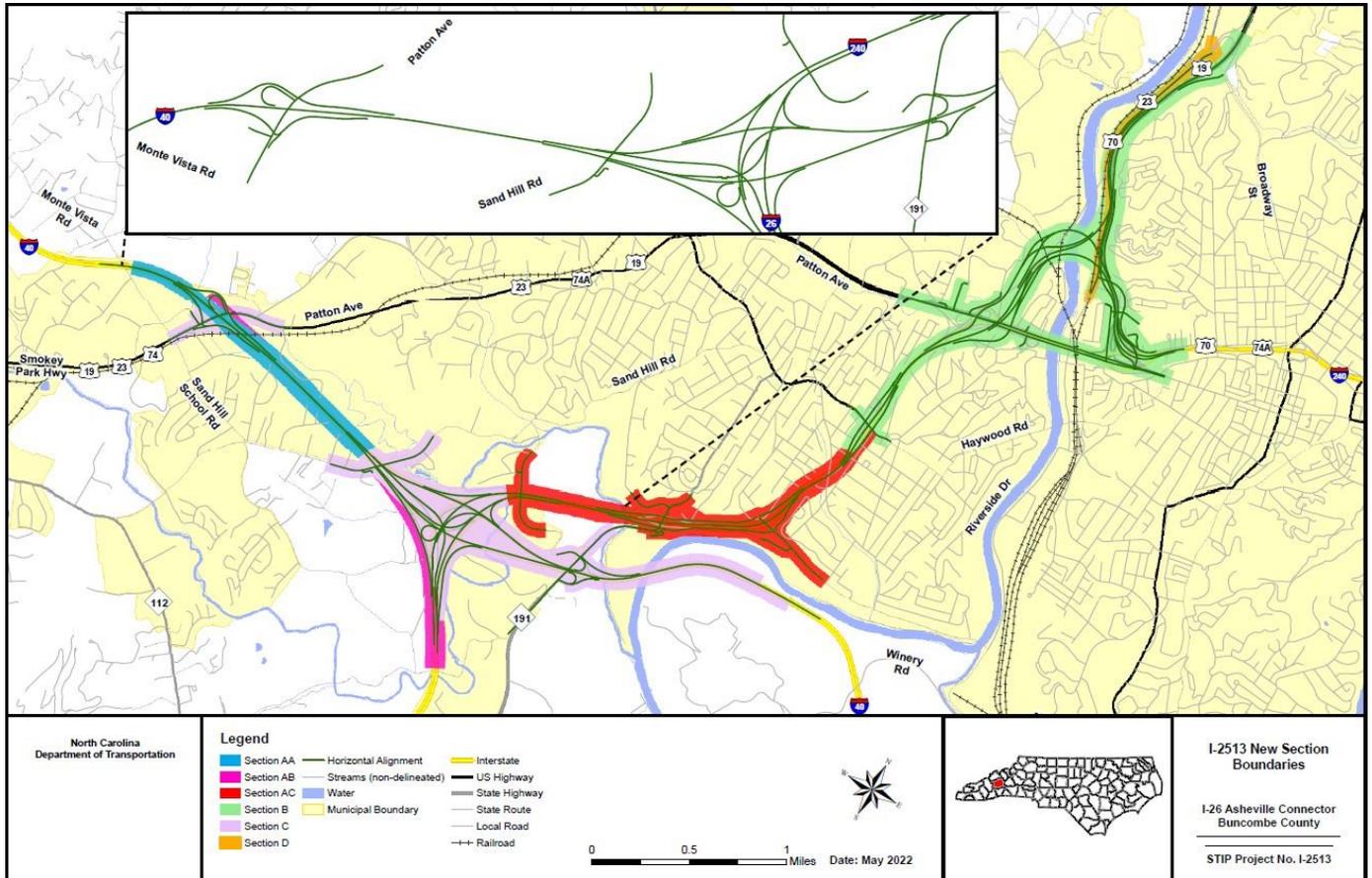
Staff Report & Recommendations

Kevin Moore, PE, the project manager at NCDOT provided an update on the project's timeline, recent changes in designs, and the "betterments" that were developed between the City of Asheville and NCDOT.

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Discussion occurred about how to keep graffiti off the connector. Kevin Moore shared that anti-graffiti coatings are being discussed for the retaining walls. Kim Roney mentioned the recommendation to the Aesthetics Committee that east of the bridge on Patton Ave be reduced to 25 mph and questioned how this would affect the design.

Information only. No action required.

Locally Administered Project Program (LAPP) Update

Tristan Winkler offered a presentation on two topics related to the Locally Administered Project Program:

- 1) Current Finances- MPO staff recently requested a full breakdown of updated project schedules and cost estimates at the request of the Prioritization Subcommittee to determine potential near-term requests for additional funding as well as projects whose timelines may change. MPO staff will provide an update.

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- 2) NCDOT LAPP Workgroup(s)- NCDOT is currently leading an effort to determine potential policy changes to enable more efficient and successful delivery of LAPP projects. MPO staff is taking part in the workgroup along with City of Asheville Capital Projects staff. MPO staff will provide a short update.

About the Locally Administered Projects Program (LAPP)

LAPP funding through the MPO is currently the largest source of funds for bicycle and pedestrian projects in the region. The program is made up of Surface Transportation Block Grant- Direct Allotment (STBGDA), Transportation Alternatives Program- Direct Allotment (TAPDA), and Carbon Reduction Program funds through FHWA. All of these programs have different eligibilities and requirements but have funding programmed through the MPO. The current list of projects funded through this program include (note: this list does not include recently approved projects.)

Project	TIP ID	Sponsor	Route	From	To
NC 251 (Riverside Drive)/Beaverdam Creek Greenway	EB-5774	Buncombe County	NC 251 (Riverside Drive)	Broadway	Elk Mountain Road
Hominy Creek Greenway	EB-5824	Buncombe County	Hominy Creek Greenway	Hominy Valley Park	Enka High School
Reems Creek Greenway	EB-5821	Buncombe County	Reems Creek Greenway	Western Edge of Weaverville	Karpen Soccer Fields
Bent Creek Greenway	EB-5823	Buncombe County	Bent Creek Greenway	Hominy Creek River Park	WNC Farmer's Market

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Project	TIP ID	Sponsor	Route	From	To
Coxe Avenue Complete Streets	EB-5831	City of Asheville	Coxe Avenue	Patton Avenue	Short Coxe Avenue
North RAD Greenway	EB-5822	City of Asheville	NC 251 (Riverside Drive)	Hill Street	US 19/23/70 at Broadway
Nasty Branch Greenway	U-5019A	City of Asheville	Nasty Branch (Formerly Town Branch) Greenway	Dr. Wesley Grant Sr. Southside Center	McDowell/Southside Intersection
French Broad River West Greenway	U-5019B	City of Asheville	French Broad River West	French Broad River Park	Haywood Road
NC 63 (New Leicester Highway) Sidewalks Project	U-5190	City of Asheville	NC 63	Patton Avenue	City Limits
New Haw Creek Road Sidewalks	EB-5947	City of Asheville	New Haw Creek Road	Beverly Road	Bell Road
Johnston Boulevard Sidewalks	EB-5944	City of Asheville	Johnston Boulevard	Patton Avenue	Iona Circle
Onteora Boulevard Sidewalks	EB-5948	City of Asheville	Onteora Boulevard	Lincoln Avenue	Raleigh Road
Greenway Connectors	EB-5790	City of Asheville	Various on-street bicycle and pedestrian connections between planned greenways in the East of the Riverway District	-	-
School Zone Safety	BL-0006	City of Asheville	Various (primarily within school zones)	-	-
Lexington Avenue Complete Streets	EB-5830	City of Asheville	Lexington Avenue	Patton Avenue	Southside Avenue

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Biltmore Ave at White Fawn Drive Signal	HL-0014	City of Asheville	SR 3214 (Biltmore Avenue)	White Fawn Drive	-
Clear Creek Greenway	BL-0008	City of Hendersonville	Clear Creek Greenway	Berkeley Mills Park	Lakewood Road

Project	TIP ID	Sponsor	Route	From	To
Ecusta Trail Phase I	BL-0007A	Henderson County	Ecusta Multi-Use Path	Kanuga Road	US 64/Battle Creek Road
Haywood Road Resurfacing	HL-0003	NCDOT Division 13	US 19/23 Business (Haywood Road)	Patton Avenue	Ridgelawn Drive
Charlotte Street Ramp	HL-0012	NCDOT Division 13	US 70 (Charlotte Street) at I-240	-	-
Broadway Sidewalks	BL-0005	NCDOT Division 13	Broadway Avenue/NC 251	US 19/23 Northbound Exit Ramp	Riverside Drive
Riverwalk Greenway Section B	EB-5547A	Town of Black Mountain	Riverwalk Greenway Section A	Black Mountain Avenue	Flat Creek
Bridge Replacement	HL-0013	Town of Black Mountain	9th Street	-	-
Champion Drive Multi-Use Path	EB-5945	Town of Canton	Champion Drive	North Canton Road	Thickety Road
US 19 Bike/Ped Improvements	EB-5926	Town of Maggie Valley	Us 19 (Soco Road)	US 276	Fie Top Road
Mills River Valley Trail	EB-5946	Town of Mills River	NC 280	French Broad River	NC 191 (Haywood Road)
Riverwalk Greenway Section A	EB-5547B	Town of Black Mountain	Riverwalk Greenway Section B	Into the Oaks Trail	Black Mountain Avenue

Tristan Winkler shared that \$61M in federal funds are currently programmed to projects (\$76M in investments, including local match). This does not include the additional \$21M approved but not programmed from the 2022 Call for Projects.

Roughly \$10M in completed LAPP projects include Hendersonville Road Sidewalks, Heart of Fletcher Transportation Improvements, Asheville Replacement Buses and the French Broad River West Greenway. Many

jurisdictions in the MPO have been awarded projects. Larger jurisdictions include Buncombe County, the City of Asheville, and Henderson County. Smaller Jurisdictions include City of Hendersonville, Town of Black Mountain, Town of Canton, Town of Maggie Valley, Town of Montreat, Town of Fletcher, Town of Mills River, the Village of Flat Rock, and the Town of Clyde. 95% of the funds are used for bike/ped projects (the other 5% are for buses, a bridge and a traffic signal.)

Tristan Winkler shared that the major LAPP issues are that costs are increasing, projects are falling behind, there are inconsistencies in updates/oversight and understanding/training. Of the over \$76M in programmed project funding, \$7-11M is expected to go to NCDOT for oversight and management. These issues are not just evident in this MPO, but throughout the State. NCDOT has formed a work group including MPO and RPO representatives to recommend policy changes to improve LAPP success rates. FBRMPO staff supports changing the 15% of construction cost cap for contract administration/CEI for locally administered projects to reflect actual standard costs.

The Prioritization Subcommittee will review updated costs and schedules and potentially recommend changes to projects. NCDOT's LAPP Workgroup is developing a survey for project managers and other stakeholders. MPO and NCDOT will look at potential policy and process changes (change 80/20 to 50/50 or some other ration, require feasibility studies before funding and implementing more requirements for updates and oversight.

Information only. No action required.

REGULAR UPDATES AND INFORMATION ITEMS

Division 13 Updates: <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/D13- Construction-September-2022-combined.pdf>

Division 14 Updates: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/092022_Div14_FBRMPO-Const_Update-combined.pdf

TPD Updates:

FHWH/FTA Updates:

FBRMPO Committee & Workgroup Updates:

- Prioritization Subcommittee – Met September 7th, next meeting October 5th
- Transit Operators Workgroup – next meeting TBD
- 5307 Subrecipient – next meeting TBD
- Citizen's Advisory Committee – met June 24th, next meeting TBD
- Hellbender Trail Stakeholder Group – last meeting May 24th, next meeting TBD

Legislative updates provided by MPO Staff

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

ADJOURNMENT

Larry Harris adjourned the meeting at 2:34 PM as there was no further business.