



French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization

Minutes from the TCC Hybrid Meeting on January 12, 2023

ATTENDANCE:

In-person and remote via Zoom:

Autumn Radcliff	Tristan Winkler	Eric Rufa
Hannah Cook	Jane Pies (minutes)	Hannah Bagli
Steve Williams	Jodie Ferguson	Joy Garland
Daniel Metcalf	Elizabeth Teague	Jessica Trotman
Stephen Sparks	Troy Wilson	Scott Adams
Jessica Morriss	Harry Buckner	Si Simmons
Nathan Bennett	Logan DiGiacomo	Ricky Hurley
William High	Janna Bianculli	Kaitland Finkle
Steve Cannon	Lucy Crown	Matt Cable
Matt Manley	Erica Anderson	

WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING

Autumn Radcliff called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone at 11:02 AM. A roll call followed, and quorum was established to conduct the business before the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Autumn Radcliff opened the floor for public comments. No public comments were received.

CONSENT AGENDA

Janna Bianculli moved to accept the consent agenda consisting of approval of the minutes from the November 2022 meeting, The Resolutions of Support for the Swannanoa Greenway Feasibility Study, The NC 251 Sidewalks Feasibility Study, the Gabriel & Banjo Branch Greenway Feasibility Study, the NC 215 Greenway Extension Feasibility Study, the Above the Mud Greenway Feasibility Study and the Fonta Flora Trail Feasibility Study, and the TCC agenda. William High seconded the motion which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

BUSINESS

TCC Chair and Vice-Chair Elections

Per the [MPO TCC bylaws](#), the TCC is required to elect leadership positions (a chair and vice-chair) every two years. Positions may be held for no more than two consecutive terms. The current TCC chair, Autumn Radcliff (Henderson County) has served one term as Chair. The current TCC vice- chair, William High (Buncombe County), has served one term as well.

For the most part, the responsibilities of the chair and vice-chair are to lead and facilitate the TCC meetings. In recent years, the chairs and vice-chairs of the TCC and Board have been requested to attend what we've been calling "leadership" meetings to discuss planned meeting items, general strategy, and more internal items.

Both Autumn and William have noted they'd be willing to serve another term in their positions.

Kaitland Finkle moved to re-elect Autumn Radcliff as Chair and William High as Vice Chair. Janna Bianculli seconded the motion which passed upon a roll call vote.

5310 Project Selection

Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities – Section 5310

What is this program?

This program provides formula funding to states for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. Some of these funds are suballocated to urbanized areas and are programmed through MPOs and FTA Direct Recipients.

What are eligible projects under this program?

Traditional Section 5310 project examples include:

- buses and vans
- wheelchair lifts, ramps, and securement devices
- transit-related information technology systems, including scheduling/routing/one-call systems
- mobility management programs
- acquisition of transportation services under a contract, lease, or other arrangement

Nontraditional Section 5310 project examples include:

- travel training

- volunteer driver programs
- building an accessible path to a bus stop, including curb-cuts, sidewalks, accessible pedestrian signals or other accessible features
- improving signage, or way-finding technology
- incremental cost of providing same day service or door-to-door service
- purchasing vehicles to support new accessible taxi, rides sharing and/or vanpooling programs
- mobility management programs

What is an example of a recent local 5310 project?

Haywood Public Transit/Mountain Projects has used 5310 funding to provide transportation for human service agencies, the elderly, people with disabilities, and the general public of Haywood County. Specific services have included expanded Nutrition Access and paratransit with the service area.

5310 Funding Available

FY 2022's Section 5310 Allocation	
FY 2022 FTA Section 5310 Funds Available to Asheville UZA	\$511,257
Section 5310 Admin at 10%	\$51,125
Remaining Section 5310 after Admin	\$460,132
55% of 5310 Funds (Traditional)	\$253,072
35% of 5310 Funds (Other)	\$161,045

5310 Matching Requirements

Project Type	Federal Funds	Local Funds
Capital Projects	80%	20%
Operating Projects	50%	50%
ADA (equipment on vehicles)	90%	10%

5310 Current Project Descriptions

Current project submittals are summarized below.

	Project Description
Buncombe County, RIDE (Other)	Ridership Independence for the Disabled and Elderly (RIDE) Program, is a curb-to-curb, user-side subsidy transportation alternative for eligible County residents (individuals who are elderly and/or who have disabilities) that increases independence, freedom of choice, and transportation options. The program is intended to offer same-day trips, unforeseen trips, and trips unavailable through public transit. Service hours in Buncombe County are 24/7/365.
Buncombe County, SEDTAP (Traditional)	Door-to-door service for seniors/disabled on ADA compliant vans. Provides funds to support medical trips for elderly adults; demand response for customers with disabilities. 5310 funds allow more state and local funds to extend across all programs to cover transportation needs. Service hours in Buncombe County are M - Sa, 5:30 to 7:30, plus holidays.
City of Asheville, Paratransit (Traditional)	ADA complementary paratransit service that allows COA to offer service citywide in Asheville and within 1 mile on routes traveling outside of the City of Asheville. Service hours in the City of Asheville and some areas of Buncombe County are M-Sa, 5:26 to 11:55; Su, 7:30 to 6:35, plus holidays.
LOSRC Senior Companions (Other)	The Senior Companion Program provides transportation and other needed services at no charge to keep frail and elderly senior adults living independently at home. Senior adult volunteers are paired with clients who may not meet the income criteria of traditional transportation providers and seniors who lack a diagnosis/illness that makes them eligible for service. Service hours in Buncombe and Henderson Counties are M-Su, 8 to 5, plus holidays.
Madison County Transportation Authority (Other)	Expand transportation services for elderly and disabled residents of Madison County within the FBRMPO planning area to meal sites, medical appointments, etc. Funds cover the cost of driver and operations. Service hours in Madison County, with connecting service to Buncombe County (medical, etc.) are M-F 8 to 4:30, no current County holiday service.

5310 Current Funding Requests

There are currently more funds being requested than are available. Assuming a 55/35% split, there's a \$14,647 shortfall for Traditional Projects and \$51,469 for Other Projects, shown below.

The 55% allotment for Traditional Projects is a “floor”, not a “ceiling”, so if the two Traditional Projects (Buncombe County SEDTAP and City of Asheville Paratransit) are funded at 100% of their funding requests, this requires a 58/32% split. Current funding availability is shown as a percentage of current funding requests (94.53% capacity for Traditional Requests, 75.78% capacity for Other Requests under the 55/35% scenario; 100% and 68.89% under the 58/32% scenario).

	Total Funds Available	Total Funds Requested	Total Funds DIFF	Percent of Funds Available out of Funds Requested
55% of 5310 Funds (Traditional)	\$253,072	\$267,720	(\$14,648)	94.53%
58% of 5310 Funds (Trad), Transfer of \$14,648 for 100% funding	\$267,720	\$267,720		100.00%
35% of 5310 Funds (Other)	\$161,046	\$212,516	(\$51,470)	75.78%
32% of 5310 Funds (Other), Reduced by \$14,648	\$146,398	\$212,516	(\$66,118)	68.89%

Jessica Morriss moved to recommend approval to fund the 5310 projects at their requested funding levels and allocate the remaining 5310 funds of \$31,021 (6% of total funds) to City of Asheville for administration of 5310 funds to subrecipients and to note that the decrease in administrative funding is not to set a precedent for future years. Steve Williams seconded the motion which passed upon a roll call vote.

JARC Project Selection

Urbanized Area Formula Grants (JARC) – Section 5307

What is this program?

The Urbanized Area Formula Funding program (49 U.S.C. 5307) makes federal resources available to urbanized areas for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation-related planning. Specifically, the **Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC)** grant program is intended to fund the development and maintenance of transportation services designed

to transport welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to their employment. The FBRMPO has a local resolution to use 10% of Section 5307 funds for **Jobs Access Reverse Commute (JARC)** eligible projects.

What are eligible projects under this program?

JARC funds may be used for planning, capital or operating costs of providing access to jobs and employment training for low-income individuals. The City of Asheville, as the Designated Recipient of 5307 and JARC funds in our region, reserves the right to use up to 10 percent of the JARC funding to support program administrative costs. Eligible projects could include:

- Late-night and weekend service;
- Guaranteed ride home service;
- Shuttle service;
- Expanding fixed route public transit routes, including hours of service or coverage;
- Demand-responsive van service;
- Ridesharing and carpooling activities;
- Transit-related aspects of bicycling (e.g., adding bicycle racks to vehicles, providing secure bicycle parking at transit stations, or support for bicycle sharing programs in the vicinity of transit stations).

5307/JARC information continued on next page

What is an example of a recent local JARC project?

Asheville Rides Transit (ART), the City of Asheville’s bus transit system, has used JARC funding for Route 170 which connects downtown Black Mountain to downtown Asheville. The service provides 8 trips per day, Mon. - Sat., 5:30 a.m. - 9:30 p.m. The route offers service to the general public, and also connects to the Black Mountain Trailblazer deviated fixed route service provided by Buncombe County and operated by Mountain Mobility.

5307 (JARC) Funding Available

FY 2022’s Section 5307 (JARC) Allocation	
Regional JARC - FY 2022 at 10% of FTA 5307 Amount allocated to Asheville Urbanized Area	\$408,394

5307 (JARC) Matching Requirements

Project Type	Federal Funds	Local Funds
Capital Projects	80%	20%
Operating Projects	50%	50%

5307/JARC information continued on next page

City of Asheville (COA) Request

The City is requesting continued funding of Asheville Rides Transit (ART) Bus Route 170, which connects downtown Black Mountain to downtown Asheville. The service provides 8 trips per day, Mon. - Sat., 5:30 a.m. - 9:30 p.m. The route offers service to the general public, and also connects to the Black Mountain Trailblazer deviated fixed route service provided by Buncombe County and operated by Mountain Mobility.

This is an Operating Project, so the City is providing 50% matching Local Funds (\$254,720 total; ~~\$205,720 from City of Asheville, \$49,000 from Town of Black Mountain~~) for a total project cost of \$509,440.

1/3/23 correction: City of Asheville and Buncombe County are contributing to \$205,720 amount; Town of Black Mountain contributing \$25,000.

	Total Funds Available	Total Funds Requested (COA)	Total Funds DIFF
Total 5307/JARC Funds	\$408,394	\$254,720	\$153,674

Jessica Morriss moved to recommend approval of the JARC funding request from the City of Asheville. Additionally, coordinate with other potential partners (eg. Friends of Land of Sky, Recovery to Work Vanpool) for programming of remaining JARC funds (\$153,674). Ricky Hurley seconded the motion which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

Safe Routes to School Application

NCDOT released a Non-Infrastructure Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Proposals in late December, 2022 with applications due February 6, 2023.

The purpose of this program:

- Enable and encourage K-12 children and teens, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school
- Make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age
- Facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools

Ineligible Activities:

Although funding for SRTS is flexible to allow for creative partnerships and solutions, there are certain

activities and projects that are ineligible for funding. Ineligible expenses include:

- Programs and activities that do not specifically serve the stated purposes of the SRTS Program (see Purpose of SRTS).
- Projects that focus on pick-up and drop-off areas or procedures in order to make it more convenient for the drivers rather than to improve child safety and/or walking and bicycling access.
- Education programs that primarily focus on bus safety.
- Purchases of promotional or incentive materials that do not serve a training purpose.
- Purchases of bicycles, bike trailers or other equipment that does not comply with the Buy America Act

Local Match Requirements: 0% match is required but may be requested if the amount of funding requested throughout the state exceeds what is available.

Regional Background: the region used to have two Safe Routes to School Coordinators- one that covered Buncombe, Henderson, and Madison counties (in addition to others); another that covered Haywood and Transylvania counties (in addition to others.) The position that coordinated activities in Buncombe, Henderson, and Madison has been vacant since 2018. The position that covered Haywood and Transylvania expired in 2022 and was out of the Jackson County Health Department. Both positions helped to coordinate Walk to School activities, Bike Rodeos, and Safety Audits, among other activities.

Application Proposal: the MPO proposes to apply for a new Safe Routes to School Coordinator position that would provide Education, Encouragement, and Evaluation activities to help improve student biking and walking safety in the French Broad River MPO and Land of Sky RPO Planning Areas. This would include Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania counties. The application would include a request for three years of funding with additional funding to provide for the purchase of materials and attendance at trainings, workshops, and conferences.

Kaitland Finkle moved to approve a recommendation for hiring a regional coordinator for Safe Routes to School. Lucy Crown seconded the motion which passed upon a roll call vote.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Performance Targets

Effective April 14, 2016, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) established five highway safety performance measures in accord with regulations set forth in the Federal MAP-21 and FAST Act transportation funding bills. These performance measures are:

1. Number of fatalities;
2. Rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled;
3. Number of serious injuries;
4. Rate of serious injuries per 100 million vehicle miles traveled; and
5. Number of combined non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious injuries.

Table 1: North Carolina Safety Performance Target Achievement Determination Summary for CY 2020

Performance Measures	5-year Rolling Averages			Target Achieved?	(Actual) Better than Baseline?	Met or Made Significant Progress?
	Target	Actual	Baseline			
	2016 - 2020	2016 - 2020	2014 - 2018			
Fatalities (5 Year Average)	1,227.8	1,458.6	1,392.2	No	No	No
Fatality Rate (5 Year Average)	1.084	1.250	1.206	No	No	
Serious Injuries (5 Year Average)	2,812.8	4,410.2	3,362.4	No	No	
Serious Injury Rate (5 Year Average)	2.462	3.776	2.884	No	No	
Non-motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries (5 Year Average)	426.6	583.0	491.0	No	No	

Table 2 below shows what this determination would look like if the state’s methodology for establishing the CY 2020 goal was applied to crash data specific to French Broad River MPO.

Table 2: French Broad River MPO Safety Performance Target Achievement Determination Summary for CY 2020

Performance Measures	5-year Rolling Averages			Target Achieved?	(Actual) Better than Baseline?	Met or Made Significant Progress?
	Target	Actual	Baseline			
	2016 - 2020	2016 - 2020	2014 - 2018			
Fatalities (5 Year Average)	45.9	49.4	52.2	No	Yes	No
Fatality Rate (5 Year Average)	0.961	0.999	1.076	No	Yes	
Serious Injuries (5 Year Average)	91.1	128.4	102.0	No	No	
Serious Injury Rate (5 Year Average)	1.879	2.593	2.067	No	No	
Non-motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries (5 Year Average)	13.7	18.6	17.2	No	No	

FBRMPO’s 2023 Safety Performance Targets

	Fatalities (5-year Average)	Fatality Rate (5-Year Average)	Serious Injuries (5-Year Average)	Serious Injury Rate (5-Year Average)	Non-Motorized Fatalities & Serious Injuries (5-Year Average)
2022	50.2	1.006	136.8	2.743	19.2
2023	43.7	0.876	105.6	2.096	15.1

INFORMATION ONLY. NO ACTION REQUIRED IN JANUARY.

2020 Urbanized Area

After every decennial census, the US Census Bureau releases data that determines Urbanized and Non-Urbanized areas in the country. This data plays a role in determining a number of things, but to keep it to transportation:

MPO Boundaries- the urbanized area is used as a base for what is part of the MPO and what is not. The MPO Boundary is required to consist of the urbanized area as well as the area that is expected to urbanize in the next 20 years.

Transit Funding- several FTA funding grants determine eligibility and distribution amounts based on the Urbanized Area population. These include 5303, 5307, 5310, 5311, 5339, and 5340. More information from FTA is available here: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/census>

MPO Planning Funds- The MPO’s planning funds are distributed through North Carolina by a base amount of \$130,000 per MPO with the remainder distributed based on the pro-rata share of Urbanized Area Population per the most recent census.

Direct Allotment Funds- Urbanized Areas with a population greater than 200,000 receive Direct Allotment (DA) funds. These include Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG), Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP.)

Changes to the Urbanized Area Criteria Between 2010 and 2020

The US Census Bureau has adopted a number of changes to determine urban areas in 2020. Some of these include:

	2010	2020
Identification of Urban Cores	Census tract and block population density, count, and size thresholds. Use of National Land Cover Database to identify	Aggregation of census blocks with a housing unit density of 425. Use of land cover data to identify territory with a high degree

territory with a high degree of impervious land cover.

of imperviousness; An area will qualify as urban if it contains at least 2,000 housing units or has a

		population of at least 5,000.
Inclusion of Non- Contiguous Urbanized Area via Jumps or Hops	Maximum hop distance 0.5 miles, maximum jump distance 2.5 miles, and no hops after jumps.	Maximum hop distance 0.5 miles, maximum jump distance 1.5 miles, and no hops after jumps. Intervening, low density blocks are not included in the urban area.
Additional Nonresidential Urban Territory	Inclusion of groups of census blocks with a high degree of impervious surface and are within 0.25 miles of an urban area.	Inclusion of groups of census blocks with a high degree of imperviousness and that are within 0.5 miles of an urban area, and have a total area of at least 0.15 square miles. Inclusion of groups of census blocks with at least 1,000 jobs (per Longitudinal Employer- Household Dynamics Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) data) and that are within 0.5 miles of an urban area.
Low-Density Fill	-	Contiguous census blocks added to already qualifying territory with a housing unit density of 200.

Other criteria have changed as well, but what’s shown are the items most likely to impact the “Asheville Urbanized Area” and its boundaries.

Some of the initial information on urbanized areas was released on December 29th but, unfortunately, did not include maps. All the information released so far can be found here: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/guidance/geo-areas/urban-rural.html> What we know so far:

- the country’s urbanized population was reduced from 80.7% to 80.0% of the population, largely as a result of the change in UZA criteria
- 4.2 million US residents formerly classified as “urban” are now “rural”
- Waynesville, NC is a new urbanized area in the region (though not large enough to require its own MPO- that would require an urbanized population of 50,000)
- Canton, NC is new urbanized area in the region (though also not large enough to require its own MPO)

Urbanized Area	Population (2020)	Population (2010)	Square Miles (2020)	Square Miles (2010)
Asheville, NC	285,776	280,648	248.58	264.88
Brevard, NC	13,059	13,121	13.82	12.03

Waynesville, NC	24,285	-	27.60	-
Canton, NC	8,812	-	8.87	-

Maps are expected to be released in January, 2023.

Potential Impacts:

Transit Funding- Haywood County transit will likely see a shift in its funding from large-urban 5307 through the City of Asheville to small-urban 5307 through NCDOT. The MPO’s 5307 Suballocation Formula Study will require revisions if Haywood is no longer a subrecipient to the Asheville UZA’s 5307 allocation.

MPO Dues- the dues structure of the MPO will be updated whether MPO membership changes to reflect 2020 census figures (2010 census figures are currently used.)

MPO Memorandum of Understanding- should the MPO’s membership change, the [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) will need to be updated to reflect the new membership roster. Updating the MOU requires approval of every member government’s council.

INFORMATION ONLY. NO ACTION REQUIRED.

REGULAR UPDATES

- Division 13 Updates: [Project Development Updates](#)
 - [Construction Updates](#)
- Division 14 Updates: [Project Development Updates](#)
 - [Construction Updates](#)
- Transportation Planning Division Updates provided.
- FHWA/FTA Updates: None
- Committee & Workgroup Updates:

Prioritization Subcommittee— met January 4th; next meeting

February 1st Points of Business/Discussion:

- 2020 Urbanized Area
- 5310/JARC Funding-> Recommended to the 5307 Subrecipients Workgroup
- Call for Planning Projects; approved two projects for inclusion in the FY 2024 UPWP
 - Woodfin-Weaverville Greenway Connection Study
 - Fletcher Cane Creek Greenway Study

Transit Operators’ Workgroup—met on November

29, 2022 Points of Business/Discussion:

- FTA 5310/JARC funding applications were due by 12/15/22
- NCDOT/IMD (Integrated Mobility Division) will be working with FBRMPO and Land of Sky RPO on a Coordinated Regional Transit Plan
- MPO Staff’s current understanding of this process is that these documents can act as an update of the existing Locally Coordinated Plan (LCP, required for use of FTA 5310 Program – Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities
- NCDOT/IMD will post a Call for Applications for their Multimodal Planning Grant Program, date as of 11/29/22 was “January 2023”; as of 1/4/23, no current info on NCDOT/IMD website, MPO Staff will check for updates
- Next Transit Operator’s Workgroup meeting: March 2023

5307 Subrecipient Workgroup- met on October

18, 2022 MPO Staff noted:

- Updated Urbanized Areas (UZAs) from US Census, statistics released end of December 2022, maps planned for release end of January 2023
- Discussion of 5307 Sub-Recipients allocation formula; MPO staff and Work Group members noted this could be reexamined once new UZA data and maps are finalized.

Citizens' Advisory Committee- met June 24th; next meeting TBD

Hellbender Trail Stakeholder Group- last meeting October 6th; next meeting TBD

- Regional Trail Forum meeting held on January 4th to continue with the aim of planning for an event in May, 2023.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Autumn Radcliff opened the floor for public comment. No comments were heard.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Radcliff adjourned the meeting at 12:39 PM as there was no further business.