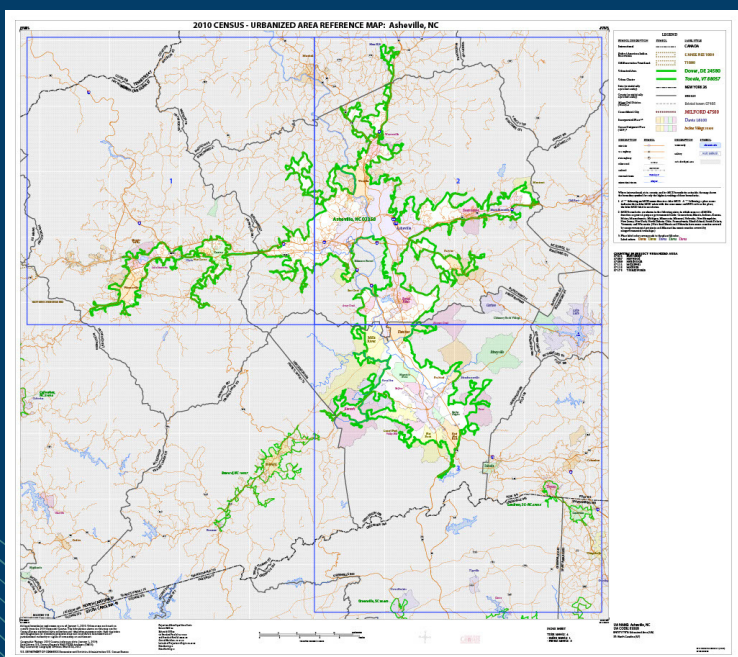


# Transportation Matters: FBRMPO Quarterly Update

## Urbanized Area Boundaries Release Update

After every decennial census, the Census Bureau releases data on Urbanized Areas that determines urban vs. rural areas in the United States. The data for 2020 is planned to be released on December 29, 2022. This information has significant implications on federal funding both in terms of what type of funding may come to an area and how much. In this iteration, the Census Bureau has made several changes to the criteria for urbanized areas, including raising the minimum threshold for an urbanized area to 5,000 residents or 2,000 housing units, using housing unit density instead of population density to determine urban areas, and reducing "jumps" from the urban core to other blocks urban blocks from 2.5 miles to 1.5 miles. We anticipate these changes may result in some significant changes to what is currently delineated as the Asheville Urbanized Area but until that data is released, we won't know exactly what those changes are.

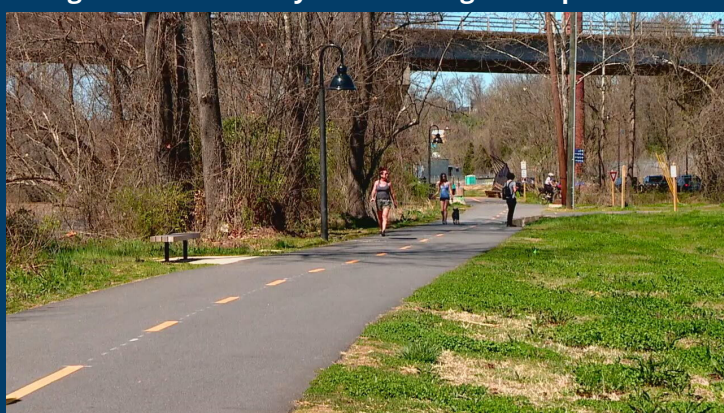


## Paved Trail and Multimodal Grants

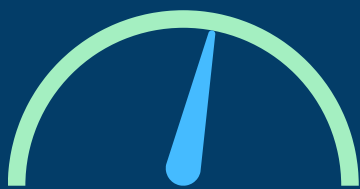
The N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has established a new Paved Trails and Sidewalk Feasibility Study Grant program to evaluate proposed paved trails, greenways, sidewalks and side paths. Feasibility studies examine the viability of a transportation project, complete initial stages of design and environmental review, and develop implementation strategies. The feasibility study further enables communities to examine route alternatives, develop cost estimates, and advance projects to compete for additional funding for design and construction.

This grant hopes to bridge the gap between conceptual planning and programming of projects. \$2 million will be available for paved trails and \$500k for traditional sidewalk and shared use paths. Currently, the MPO is assisting multiple municipalities in applying for this funding. NCDOT also plans on releasing their Multimodal Planning Grants in January. More information about the Paved Trail Grant can be found here:

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/municipalities/PlanningGrants/Pages/IMD-Feasibility-Studies-Program.aspx>

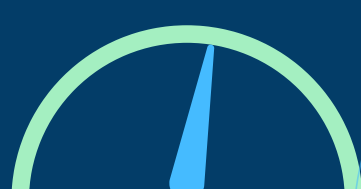


## I-26 Construction Update



I-4400BB and I-4400C : from .05 miles N of US-64 to NC-280 (exit 40)

56% Complete -- 11/30/24 Completion



I-4700 : from NC-280 (exit 40) to I-40

55% Complete -- 7/13/24 Completion

## Around the Region

### VTM Reduction/Mode Shift Event

At the end of October, the FBRMPO, in partnership with the Clean Vehicles Coalition and the Land of Sky RPO hosted a VMT Reduction event to educate the public on different ways they can change their commuting habits. The presentations included an overview of the VMT Reduction Toolkit by NCDOT's Heather Hildebrandt, a deep-dive into pedestrian mode choice by Dr. Robert Schneider of University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and information on how to increase transit ridership from ITRE's Kai Monast. All the presentations and a full recording of the workshop can be found on the MPO's website under Recent events.

<https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/recent-events/>

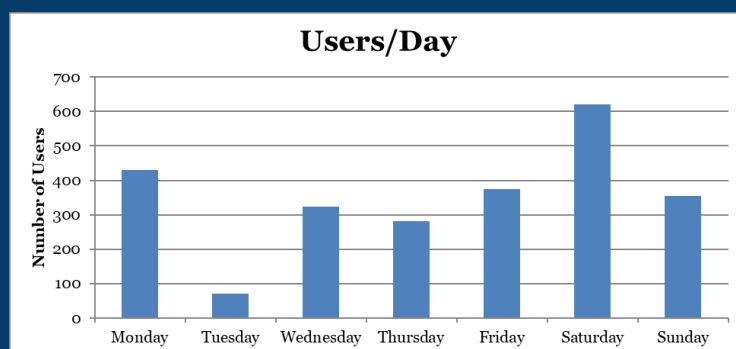
### Woodfin Greenway Public Meeting

The Town of Woodfin held a public meeting this past October to get public input on the Woodfin Greenway/Blueway plans. The multi-use pedestrian path will run North from I-26/US-19 exit 25 to Elk Mountain Road and will connect to the North Rivers Arts District Greenway when both projects are complete. Along with the paved greenway, the project scope includes two parks, one with a recreational whitewater wave facility adjacent to it.

At the meeting, attendees were able to weigh in on alternative routes and different facilities that each of the two parks could have. There was also a presentation on the status of the project, its goals, and its timeline. Throughout the meeting, employees of the Town were stationed around the room to answer questions and assist people in understanding the scope of the project. There was a large turnout to the meeting, with many people enthusiastic about providing input and invested in the project. More information about the project can be found here: [https://woodfin-nc.gov/woodfin\\_greenway\\_and\\_blueway.php](https://woodfin-nc.gov/woodfin_greenway_and_blueway.php)

### French Broad River West Pedestrian Count

Typical chilly weather sometimes deters people from getting out and enjoying greenways but with a warm end to November, citizens enjoyed getting out and moving along trails, greenways, and downtown areas despite shorter days! As always, our trusty Eco-Counter is used on greenways and downtown areas for weeklong periods to gauge usage on these pathways. This count was done on the new section of the French Broad River West Greenway, by the dog park. This count was completed in early November during a chilly but sunny week! With around 2,400 users, this count provided insight on the number of users on this new connection. Check out the graphic below, showing number of users a day during that week. If you ever see our ped counter on your greenway adventures, snap a selfie and tag us @StriveBeyondDrive!



## Upcoming Meetings

- **Prioritization Subcommittee:** January 4th, 9:30am - 11:30am
- **MPO TCC:** January 12th, 11am - 1pm
- **MPO Board:** January 19th, 1pm - 3pm

Contact us:

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