

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
Minutes from the Governing Board Meeting on August 17, 2023

Attendance: In Person and via Zoom

Anthony Sutton (Chair)	Waynesville Council
Jennifer Hensley	Hendersonville Council
Bob Davy	Fletcher Council
Kevin Ensley	Haywood Commission
Kim Roney	Asheville Council
Steve Williams	NCDOT Division 14
Daniel Sellers	NCDOT TPD
Hanna Cook	NCDOT Division 13
Amanda Edwards	Buncombe Commission
Vicki Eastland	Land of Sky RPO
Suzette Morales	FHWA
Dylan Casper	Buncombe County Transit
Chuck McGrady	NCBOT 14
Matt Wechtel	Madison Commission
Archie Pertiller	Black Mountain
Tom Widmer	Town of Montreat
Stephen Sparks	NCDOT Division 13
Mike Eveland	Town of Maggie Valley
Parker Sloan	Buncombe County
David White	Rural Transit
Anne Coletta	Flat Rock Council
Bill Lapsley	Henderson Commission
Troy Wilson	NCDOT Division14

Members Without Representation Present:

Town of Biltmore Forest
NCBOT 13

Town of Canton
Town of Clyde
Town of Laurel Park
Town of Mars Hill
Town of Weaverville
Town of Woodfin
Town of Mills River
Urban Transit

Additional Attendees:

Tristan Winkler	Scott Adams	Jon Barsanti
Logan DiGiacomo	Hannah Bagli	Asha Rado (Minutes)
Mark Barret		

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & ROLL CALL

Anthony Sutton called the meeting to order at 1: 04 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.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Anthony Sutton opened the floor for public comment. Logan DiGiacomo read the one public comment that was received via online.

“I don't understand why this plan only commits 2.4% of the total spend to Bike/Ped/Public Transit (\$102 million out of \$4.2 billion). We know that due to the “induced demand”; effect, when new and larger roadways are built people will increase their trips, or move farther away from population centers and require more driving, and the roads will immediately fill up again. Why are we spending such a huge percentage on roadways instead of transportation alternatives that actually have a positive impact on the region, especially in this area with so many beautiful natural resources? I urge the committee to reject this plan and have the courage to radically rethink what transportation can look like in Western NC. As a start, no new roadway projects should be approved that do not meet the Complete Streets guidelines, and there should be at least a 50/50 match between roadways and public transit funding. Public Transit in Western NC is a complete embarrassment to the community, and this funding proposal only furthers that embarrassment.”

Anthony Sutton called for roll call vote to close public comment.

Anthony Sutton moved to approve the closing of public comment. Chuck McGrady Seconded the motion which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

Anthony Sutton proposed we amend the agenda to have one motion for items 4A & B and then 4C&D&E and then do F and G separately, to lessen the amount of roll calls.

Anthony Sutton called for roll call vote to approve consent agenda and the amended agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Jennifer Hensley moved to approve the amended agenda, the consent agenda including the June 2023 Board Minutes and the Amendments to the FY 2024 UPWP. Chuck McGrady seconded the motion which passed upon a roll call vote.

BUSINESS

Letter of Support- NCDOT Protect Program Grant Application

What is the Protect Program?

The Protect Program was established in 2021 by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL.) The BIL established the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Formula Program to help make surface transportation more resilient to natural hazards, including climate change, sea level rise, flooding, extreme weather events, and other natural disasters through support of planning activities, resilience improvements, community resilience and evacuation routes, and at-risk coastal infrastructure.

What is NCDOT Proposing in their Grant Application?

The proposed project is BLUE RIDGE (Bridge Longevity Upgrades to Enhance Resiliency, Increase Dependability, and Grow Equity). BLUE RIDGE includes replacement of (3) bridges in Buncombe County, replacement of (1) bridge in Madison County, and lining (3) culverts in Madison County.

August 17, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I would like to express my strong support for the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT's) Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Program Grant application titled BLUE RIDGE (Bridge Longevity Upgrades to Enhance Resiliency, Increase Dependability, and Grow Equity) for the rehabilitation or replacement of five structures in Buncombe and Madison Counties.

These structures serve as critical connections for rural communities and residents to vital services such as employment hubs, educational institutions, and medical centers. Each structure is in critical need of rehabilitation or replacement due to reoccurring natural hazards such as flooding caused by climate change. Major structure improvements are necessary to increase the resiliency of the region, restore the natural environment, and ensure necessary accessibility to vital community services.

Should any bridge need to be closed due to its structural deficiencies or impacts from flood events, there are very few viable detour options to ensure continued access. The detours for these bridges are not all suitable for truck traffic, contain functionally obsolete bridges, and increase travel distance by an average 17 miles. This would significantly impact the nearby communities due to increased travel times and decreased access to vital services.

Western North Carolina and the French Broad River MPO's transportation network is constrained by the Appalachian Mountains as well as numerous rivers and streams, leading to a network with limited redundancy and connectivity. Many communities throughout the region rely on single or limited access points. With increasing extreme weather events impacting our region, these communities are at an elevated risk of being isolated in the event of weather- or other- events. Providing more resilient infrastructure is key to adapting our region to increasing natural challenges.

As a regional transportation priority, the improvements to the five structures will provide reliable connectivity and increase the resiliency of the surrounding communities and the region, while repairing the surrounding natural environments. Thank you for your favorable consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,
Anthony Sutton
Chair, French Broad River MPO Board

Letter of Support- NCDOT Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Application for HE-0001

What is the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Program (MPDG)?

The MPDG is actually three programs from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law combined into one process. These include:

- \$1.8 billion for the National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Mega) program: The Mega program supports large, complex projects that are difficult to fund by other means and are likely to generate national or regional economic, mobility, or safety benefits. Eligible projects could include highway, bridge, freight, port, passenger rail, and public transportation projects of national or regional significance. Per the law, 50 percent of funds are available for projects above \$500 million in total cost, and 50 percent are available for projects between \$100 million and \$500 million in total cost.
- \$3.1 billion for the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) program: The INFRA program awards competitive grants to multimodal freight and highway projects of national or regional significance to improve the safety, accessibility, efficiency, and reliability of the movement of freight and people in and across rural and urban areas. Eligible projects will improve safety, generate economic benefits, reduce congestion, enhance resiliency, and hold the greatest promise to eliminate supply chain bottlenecks and improve critical freight movements.
- \$675 million for the Rural Surface Transportation Grant (Rural) program: The Rural program supports projects that improve and expand our nation's surface transportation infrastructure in rural areas in order to increase connectivity, improve the safety and reliability of the movement of people and freight, and generate regional economic growth and improve quality of life. Eligible projects for Rural grants include highway, bridge, and tunnel projects that help improve freight, safety, and provide or increase access to agricultural, commercial, energy, or transportation facilities that support the economy of a rural area. 90% of rural funding must be awarded in \$25 million or greater amounts.

What is NCDOT applying for?

NCDOT is requesting \$25.5 million for an application through the Rural STBG program for the HE0001 project or the new interchange on I-26, just to the north of the Blue Ridge Parkway. More details on the project are provided in the attached fact sheet.

[August 17, 2023]

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Subject: Letter of Support for North Carolina Department of Transportation Multimodal Project
Rural Discretionary Grant Application, I-26 Interchange Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Please accept this letter as French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization's strong support for the North Carolina Department of Transportation Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant application for the subject project. This project includes a new interchange on I-26 (future Exit 35) and connecting road to NC 191, approximately six miles south of Asheville. This transportation investment capitalizes on private investments and will fulfill priority regional priorities: access to long-term, high-quality jobs, access to federal, state and county recreational resources, and reduced congestion and commuting times within the Asheville/Hendersonville corridor.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation has shown that this project is crucial. By supporting the investment by Pratt & Whitney, a division of Raytheon, Inc, in southern Buncombe County, the USDOT Rural Grant would contribute to the creation of 800 jobs with an average salary of \$68,000, \$39,000 higher than the current median income.

Further, Pratt & Whitney is partnering with Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College to train the highly skilled workforce. A new 20,000-square-foot educational facility near the manufacturing plant will increase the region's educational capacity and technical knowledge. This education partnership will eliminate barriers to opportunities and continue to enhance racial equity in the region.

The interchange project on I-26, HE-0001, is programmed in the MPO's 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and is critical to help alleviate the projected impacts of the new development along the corridor, enable freight access, and provide improved connectivity to our region.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for considering this strategic investment. It demonstrates how a federal-state-local partnership can greatly impact a region's economic vibrancy and transportation mobility.

USDOT staff should feel free to contact me to discuss our support for the project.

Sincerely,
Anthony Sutton
Board Chair
French Broad River MPO

Anthony Sutton had conflict of interest and will refrain from voting on Letter of Support- NCDOT Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Application for HE-0001.

Discussion occurred before the motion and roll call to clarify if the votes for both Letters of Support were being made together as one or if they could be separated. After discussion it was concluded that the vote for the Protect Program Grant would go through and then discussion of the NCDOT Multimodal letter would occur before a vote on that letter.

Kim Roney moved to Approve the Letter of Support: NCDOT Protect Program Grant Application 1. Chuck McGrady seconded the motion and it passed upon a roll call vote.

Discussion occurred on the Letter of Support for NCDOT Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Application. Discussion focused on if the grant was majority Rural use and what the MPO contribution was. Tristan Winkler stated that this was something that would need to be asked to NCDOT directly as this information was not available at the time of the meeting as it was a late addition to the agenda. More discussion occurred clarifying some details on the exact roads/interchanges and additions that were proposed in this grant.

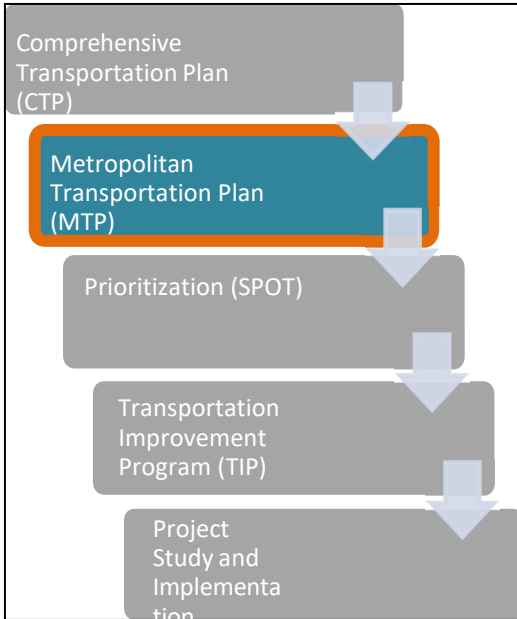
Matt Wechtel moved to approve the Letter of Support- NCDOT Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Application for HE-0001. Chuck McGrady seconded the motion and it passed upon a roll call vote.

Anthony Sutton called for roll call vote. The motion passed upon a roll call vote.

Amendments to the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Very Brief Overview

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a federally-required planning document that MPOs are required to update and maintain to reflect planned transportation investments in the region over the next twenty-five years. The MTP is required to be fiscally constrained, meaning that projects in the MTP have to be reasonably expected to work within projected revenues. The French Broad River MPO is required to update its MTP every five years with the last update completed in September, 2020 (not including amendments.)



Amendment Summary

The amendments being proposed move horizon year dates for seventeen projects. Horizon year dates are added to the MTP to reflect projects that are expected to be completed between 2020-2030, 2031-2040, and 2041-2045. Due to cost increases reflected in the Draft 2024-2033 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), a number of projects in the 2045 MTP expected to be completed by 2030 are now being pushed back to 2040, 2045, or even further out (what are called “Outer Years.”) The projects being moved from Horizon Year 2030 are listed in Agenda.

Tristan Winkler also stated where we get into fiscal constraint. Regional impact tier that is one of the tiers that got hit with cost increases. A10 AA, widening of future 26, Original cost est \$116,900 updated cost is \$323,500.

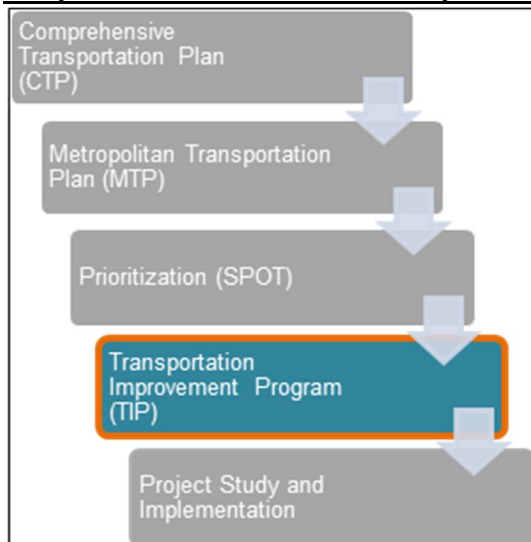
MTP 2045 Amendments- Summary of Changes												
MTP ID	TIP ID	Route	From	To	Improvement Type	County	Change	Previous Horizon Year	Current Horizon Year	Previous Cost	Current Cost	Funding Tier
HS4506	I-2513C	I-26/I-240	I-40	-	Final Interchange Improvements	Buncombe	Horizon Year Changed from 2030 to 2040	2030	2040	\$217,602,000	\$206,476,000	Statewide Mobility
HR4502	A-0010AA	Future I-26	Exit 25	Exit 19	Widening and Modernization	Buncombe	Horizon Year Changed from 2030 to 2040	2030	2040	\$116,900,000	\$323,500,000	Regional Impact

Discussion occurred regarding the cost of projects and if it was relevant to discuss these now when the projects date out 3-10 years. Suzette Morales brought up that it was necessary to have these amendments because it helps with future funding requests.

Further discussion occurred about discrepancies on MTP and Draft P 7.0. Specifically, Kanuga Rd project(R5748). Kanuga Rd going to Little River Rd, change on draft 7 change at different street. Tristan Winkler stated that it was a good catch, and it should be Price Rd not Little River Rd.

Chuck McGrady moved to approve the Amendments to the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and adoption of 2024-2033 TIP and to approve amendment to the 2020-2029 TIP. Anne Coletta seconded, and the motion passed upon a roll call vote.

Adoption of the 2024-2033 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)



What is the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)?

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is our region's document that reflects planned transportation investments over a ten-year period. The TIP describes each project, a schedule for implementation, funding sources, and estimated costs. The TIP is a subset of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Development of the 2024-2033 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The cycle to update the STIP for 2024-2033 began in fall 2019. Due to rising costs for the projects funded in the currently adopted 2020-2029 STIP, little to no funding was projected to be available for new projects in the next STIP. Therefore, in August 2021, the Prioritization Workgroup and

the N.C. Board of Transportation decided that the current prioritization cycle (P 6.0) would be halted and the 2024-2033 STIP would be developed using existing projects from the currently adopted 2020-2029 STIP.

2024-2033 TIP Adoption Timeline

DATE	EVENT
June 2023	2024-2033 STIP Adopted by North Carolina Board of Transportation
July, 18 th , 2023 – August 17 th 2023	French Broad River MPO 2024-2033 Public Comment Period Opens
August 17 th , 2023 1:00 pm Board Meeting	2024-2033 TIP presented to MPO Board for Adoption

Public Comment Period

The public comment period prior to the adoption of the 2024-2033 TIP is NOW OPEN! Those who wish to give public comments may do so via the following options:

1. Via a comment submittal form on the MPO website (<https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/2024-2033-transportation-improvement-program-tip/>) before 5 pm on August 16th
2. By email at mpo@landofsky.org before 5 pm on August 16th
3. By phone at (828)-251-6622 before 5 pm on August 16th

4. At the MPO Board meeting (virtually or in-person) held at the Land of Sky Regional Council Office on August 17th at 1:00 pm.

Accessing the 2024-2033 TIP

A .pdf version of the 2024-2033 TIP is available on the MPO website

[\(https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/2024-2033-transportation-improvement-program-tip/\)](https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/2024-2033-transportation-improvement-program-tip/)

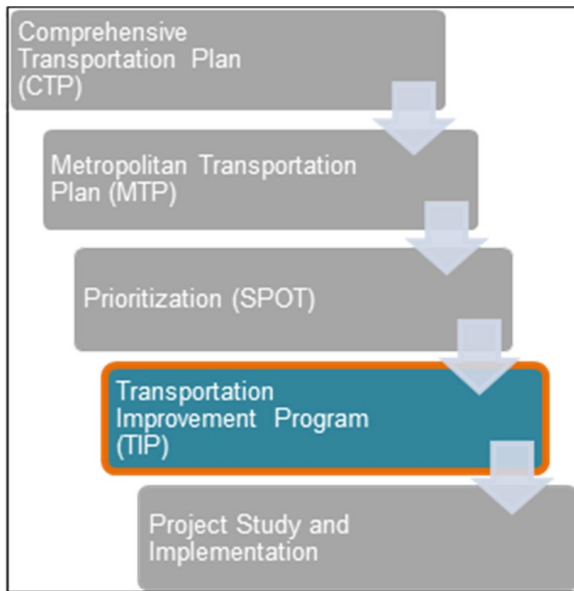
On the same page, an interactive version of the TIP is also available. This tool allows for in-depth exploration of each project's timeline and funding, along with an interactive map of projects. This project can be used to search for projects by TIP ID, Route, Division, County, Lead Agency, and more.

Logan DiGiacomo presented.

Discussion occurred around the process of building the interactive website and appreciation was given to the LOSRC MPO staff for putting it together. Some additional discussion around addressing public comments was also made.

Chuck McGrady moved to approve the Amendments to the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and adoption of 2024-2033 TIP and to approve amendment to the 2020-2029 TIP. Anne Coletta seconded, and the motion passed upon a roll call vote.

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



What is the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)?

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is our region's document that reflects planned transportation investments over a ten-year period. The TIP describes each project, a schedule for implementation, funding sources, and estimated costs. Current items are for modification of existing projects. No new projects or amendments are included for March, 2023.

Modifications Summary

Modifications to the TIP primarily consist of various Vulnerable Road User studies. Beyond that, highway safety project HS-2014O will add \$20,000 for right-of-way that was not previously programmed, and EB-5945 will be removed from the TIP at the request of the division.



FBRMPO 2020-2029 TIP Amendments

August 2023

TIP/STIP No.	Jurisdiction/Project Name/Limits	Category	Amendment Description	Funding Type	Current Phase	Funding Amt	FY
EB-5945	Champion Drive - Construct multi-use path. (North Canton Rd - Thickety Rd)	Non-Highway (Bike & Ped)	REMOVE PROJECT AT THE REQUEST OF THE DIVISION.	BGDA Local Match	Right-of-Way Right-of-Way	\$307,000 \$77,000	2023 2023
HS-2014O	US 64, Install Traffic Signal (SR 1586 (South Mills Gap Rd) - Tuttle Road)	Highway & Intersection	ADD RIGHT-OF-WAY NOT PREVIOUSLY PROGRAMMED.	HSIP HSIP	Right-of-Way Construction	\$20,000 \$55,000	2023 2023

HS-2028DIV	VARIOUS, VULNERABLE ROAD USER PEDESTRIAN / BICYCLE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.	ADD PROJECT BREAK AT THE REQUEST OF THE TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY AND SAFETY DIVISION.	VRU	Construction	\$300,000	2023
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7/24/2023

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**Federal*



FBRMPO 2020-2029 TIP Amendments

August 2023

TIP/STIP No.	Jurisdiction/Project Name/Limits	Category	Amendment Description	Funding Type	Current Phase	Funding Amt	FY
HS-2028REG	VARIOUS, VULNERABLE ROAD USER PEDESTRIAN / BICYCLE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.		ADD PROJECT BREAK AT THE REQUEST OF THE TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY AND SAFETY DIVISION.	VRU	Construction	\$30,000	2023

HS-2028SW	VARIOUS, VULNERABLE ROAD USER PEDESTRIAN / BICYCLE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.		ADD PROJECT BREAK AT THE REQUEST OF THE TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY AND SAFETY DIVISION.	VRU	Construction	\$400,000	2023
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PROGRAM.

HS-2029DIV	VARIOUS, VULNERABLE ROAD USER PEDESTRIAN / BICYCLE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	ADD PROJECT BREAK AT THE REQUEST OF THE TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY AND SAFETY DIVISION.	VRU	Construction	\$300,000	2023
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**Federal*



FBRMPO 2020-2029 TIP Amendments

August 2023

TIP/STIP No.	Jurisdiction/Project Name/Limits	Category	Amendment Description	Funding Type	Current Phase	Funding Amt	FY
HS-2029REG	VARIOUS, VULNERABLE ROAD USER PEDESTRIAN / BICYCLE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.		ADD PROJECT BREAK AT THE REQUEST OF THE TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY AND SAFETY DIVISION.	VRU	Construction	\$300,000	2023

HS-2029SW	VARIOUS, VULNERABLE ROAD USER PEDESTRIAN / BICYCLE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM		ADD PROJECT BREAK AT THE REQUEST OF THE TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY AND SAFETY DIVISION.	VRU	Construction	\$400,000	2023
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Discussion occurred, Tristan Winker stated that he felt that we needed more time to discuss EB-5945 and that because of last minute notice on this he advises we remove this item for this month and we wait on this particular item a little bit longer. He was seeking a motion to remove this.

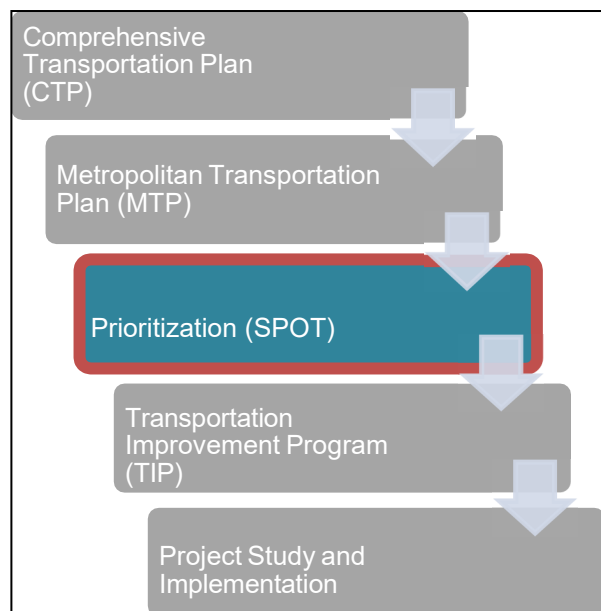
Tristan Winkler: Looking for a motion of approval of the 2024-2033 tip along with corresponding amendments to the 2045 metropolitan transportation plan and amendments to the existing 2020-2029 TIP with exception of EB5945 and change to Kanuga Rd to reflect Price Road.

Chuck McGrady moved to approve the Amendments to the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and adoption of 2024-2033 TIP and to approve amendment to the 2020-2029 TIP. Anne Coletta seconded, and the motion passed upon a roll call vote.

Draft P 7.0 Project Submittals

What is P 7.0 and the Prioritization Process?

The Prioritization Process (aka SPOT) is the process that determines the majority of capital improvement projects funded through NCDOT and NCDOT's allotment of federal funds. The process is governed by the Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) Law of 2012 that provides the framework for a more data-driven and transparent process that also utilizes local input from NCDOT Divisions, MPOs, and RPOs. In relation to other aspects of transportation planning, the prioritization process serves as the bridge to determine what long-range needs are funded in the TIP/STIP for implementation.



P 7.0 refers to the seventh iteration of the prioritization process in North Carolina and will be the process that determines what new projects are funded in the 2026-2035 TIP/STIP.

What's Changed Between P 6.0 and P 7.0?

In sum, not a lot. The process is still very much the same with some modifications or “tweaks” that have changed how some projects will be scored and opened the process to more project types. Some of the more substantive changes include:

- Microtransit is now an eligible submittal for transit funding
- Rail modernization is now an eligible submittal for

rail funding

- A minimum of 6% of funding will be programmed to non-highway (the previous minimum was 4%); 90% minimum for highway funding remains the same

What is the Schedule for Events in P 7.0?

Date	Event
July, 2023	Local Government Discussions on Potential Submittals
August, 2023	Draft Submittal List (Board Action Required)

August- September, 2023	Public Comment on Draft Submittal List
September, 2023	Final Submittal List (Board Action Required)
February, 2024	Data Review
March, 2024	Local Input Point Methodology Adoption (Board Action Required)
April, 2024	Statewide Mobility Projects Programmed
May, 2024	Draft Local Input Point Assignment for Regional Impact Projects
May-June, 2024	Public Comment on Draft Local Input Point Assignment for Regional Impact Projects
June, 2024	Final Local Input Point Assignment for Regional Impact Projects
August, 2024	Regional Impact Projects Programmed
October, 2024	Draft Local Input Point Assignment for Division Needs Projects
October- November, 2024	Public Comment on Draft Local Input Point Assignment for Division Needs Projects
November, 2024	Final Local Input Point Assignment for Division Needs Projects
February, 2025	Draft 2026-2035 TIP/STIP Released
August, 2025	Final 2026-2035 TIP/STIP (Board Action Required)

TIP	Route / Facility / Project Name	From / Cross Street / Location	To / Cross Street	Specific Improvement Type	County(ies)
R-5748	SR 1127 (KANUGA ROAD)	US 25 Business (Church Street)	Price Road	16 - Modernize Roadway	Henderson

Modification of carryover projects:

- Kanuga Road (R-5748) modified southern termini from Little River Road to Price Road to avoid impacts to the Flat Rock Historic District
- No projects requested to be removed

Tristan Winkler presented.

Discussion occurred with excitement for rail updates.

Chuck McGrady moved to approve the Draft Submittals for P 7.0. Kim Roney seconded, and the motion passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

French Broad River MPO Planning Area

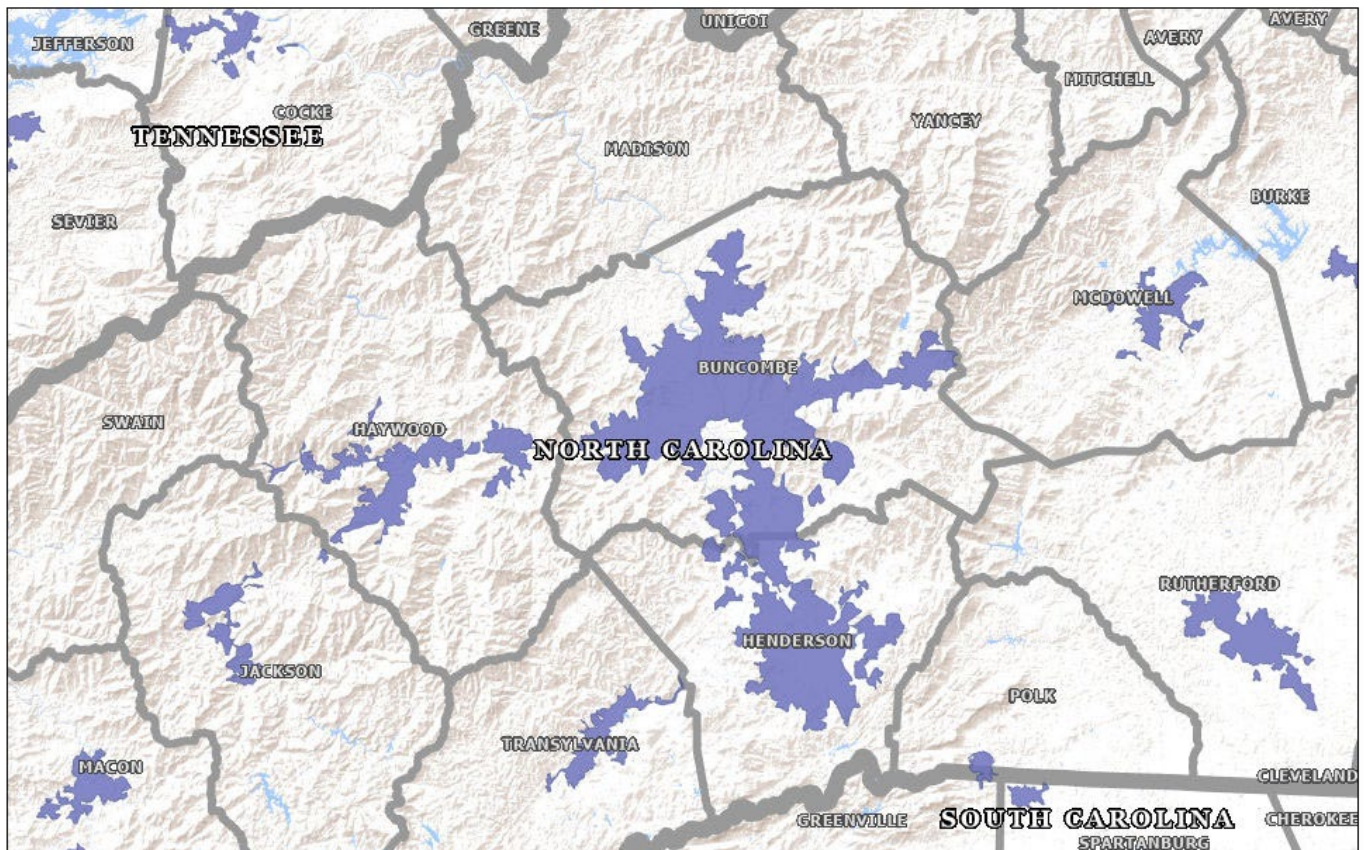
MPO Planning Area Boundaries

In follow up to the discussion on the US Census Bureau's Urban Areas as determined by the 2020 Decennial Census, MPO staff has developed what an updated Draft Planning Area for the French Broad River MPO.

What Changed with the 2020 Census Urban Area?

A number of criteria used for determining the urban area were changed. For our area, the most significant change involved hops and jumps, which are considerations for bridging areas or urbanization. The hops and jumps were reduced and large areas of the 2010 Asheville Urban Area, including Haywood County and parts of Madison County, were removed from the 2020 Asheville Urban Area.

WNC Urban Areas



July 24, 2023

Counties 2020 Urban Areas States
States Counties

0 5 10 20 mi
0 5 10 20 km
1:755,944
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA

Created with: TIGERweb
(c)Copyright 2023 - US Census Bureau

How Are MPO Planning Areas Determined?

The regulations require that the MPO Planning Area include the Urban Area as well what is anticipated to urbanize in the next 20 years. Beyond that, there are not many requirements. In discussions with other MPOs from across the country, most MPO's tend to determine their planning boundaries by taking any census tract or census block group intersecting the urban area and make those census tracts/block groups their boundary.

How Was the Draft Planning Area Drawn for the French Broad River MPO?

Each of the counties in the region have been approached somewhat differently based on unique considerations but generally the planning area was determined pulling in any block group that intersects the Asheville Urban Area, Canton Urban Area, or Waynesville Urban Area (within Haywood County.)

Buncombe County

Situation: Buncombe County is primarily within the urban area but is a member of both the MPO and RPO.

Boundary Development: any block group intersecting the urban area was made part of the Draft Planning Area.

Changes: some territory was added in Eastern Buncombe due to a simplified methodology. The current boundaries are somewhat arbitrary and not built on any census geography. One block group in NW Buncombe was removed from the MPO and added to the RPO due to a lack of urban area. No changes in member jurisdiction.

MPO Population: 258,694

Haywood County

Situation: Haywood County, after being part of the Asheville Urban Area since 2000, has no part of the Asheville Urban Area due to changes in the 2020 Census. Instead there are two small urban areas- Canton and Waynesville. However, there is a very high likelihood Haywood County will rejoin the Asheville Urban Area within the next 20 years.

Boundary Development: MPO staff met with County and municipal representatives and they requested to stay within the MPO. All block groups that intersected Canton or Waynesville Urban Areas were brought into the MPO Planning Area (note: part of the Waynesville Urban Area goes into Jackson County. This was not considered or discussed with Jackson County.) One block group that intersected Waynesville Urban Area was not added at the request of Land of Sky RPO.

Changes: a significant amount of land south of Canton and Clyde with roughly 3,600 residents will change from MPO to RPO but some land north and south of Waynesville with roughly 1,100 residents will change from RPO to MPO. No change in member jurisdictions.

MPO Population: 51,673

Henderson County

Situation: Henderson County elected to be fully within the MPO in 2010. The urbanized area changed somewhat within Henderson but the County retains a significant amount of Asheville Urban Area.

Boundary Development: all of Henderson County is considered part of the MPO Draft Planning Area.

Changes: No Changes

MPO Population: 116,281

Madison County

Situation: Madison County joined the MPO and Asheville Urban Area after the 2010 Census but fell out of the Asheville Urban Area in 2020.

Boundary Development: Madison County and the Town of Mars Hill requested to stay within the MPO. All block groups that intersect the Town of Mars Hill were added as well as an additional block group (371150106021) in order to keep P 7.0 submittals within the MPO.

Changes: three block groups will move from MPO to RPO and the population within the MPO will be reduced by roughly 3,600. No changes in member jurisdictions.

MPO Population: 5,834

Transylvania County

Situation: Transylvania County is currently a non-voting member of the MPO due to a small enclave from the Asheville Urban Area in the 2010 Census. This enclave was removed from the Asheville Urban Area in 2020.

Boundary Development: Transylvania County was removed from the MPO Planning Area.

Changes: no part of Transylvania County is part of the MPO Planning Area. One block group with approximately 1,100 residents will switch from MPO to RPO.

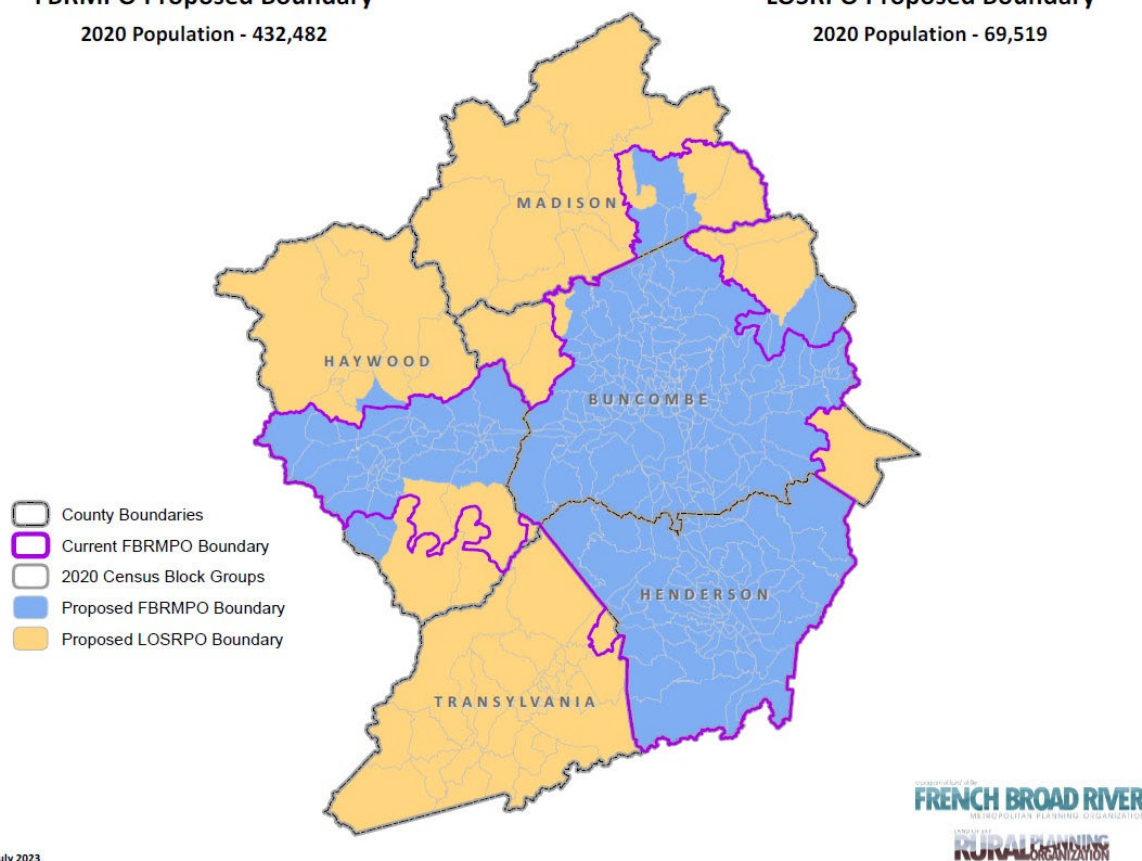
MPO Population: 0

FBRMPO Proposed Boundary

2020 Population - 432,482

LOSRPO Proposed Boundary

2020 Population - 69,519



Tristan Winkler Presented

Discussion occurred around if Henderson County brought all of itself into this was there discussion about bringing all of Buncombe County in too. There was a staff level discussion but it will remain in both RPO and MPO due how the discussions went within each organization and that the main reasoning was prioritization submittals.

Chuck McGrady moved to approve the New MPO Planning Area. Matt Wechtel seconded, and the motion passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

Regular Updates

Division Project Updates:

Division 13: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wpcontent/uploads/2023/07/Div13_August_Updates.pdf

Division 14: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wpcontent/uploads/2023/07/Div14_August_Updates.pdf

TPB: Daniel Sellers presented.

FHWA/FTA Updates presented by Suzette Morales

FHWA Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Website: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructurelaw/>

FTA Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Website: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/BIL>

Committee & Workgroup Updates

Prioritization Subcommittee— met on August 3rd

Points of Discussion:

- P 7.0 Submittal List
- MPO Boundaries
- Environmental Justice

Transit Operators' Workgroup— last met on May 15th;

Points of Business/Discussion:

- **May 15 Agenda:**
 - **5307 funding updates**
 - For 5307 funding, Haywood County leaving Urbanized Area in FY 2024.
 - For FY 2022, FY 2023, Haywood County is still eligible for 5310, 5307 funds.
 - FY 2024 funds are the start of 5311 (Rural) funds, plus state Rural Operating

Assistance Program (ROAP) funds for Haywood County.

- FY 2025 and beyond, new State formula for 5311 funds? (NCDOT-IMD to discuss, no committee at this time)
- **Henderson County Transit Plan update**
- **Joint City of Asheville-Buncombe County Transit Plan update** (\$300,000 from each entity, for \$600,000 total study)
- **NCDOT-IMD, Coordinated Regional Transit Plan**, for French Broad River MPO and Land of Sky RPO, status (Bryan Lopez, NCDOT-IMD and AECOM)

5307 Subrecipient Workgroup- met on April 4, 2023

Points of Business/Discussion:

- Updated Urbanized Areas (UZAs) from US Census finalized and published January 9, 2023
- Asheville UZA land area shrank from 262 to 250 sq. mi., population increased from 279,201 to 285,495; new UZAs: Waynesville, 24,285 pop.; Canton, 8,812 pop., Brevard, 13,059 pop.
- FY 2023 allocations:
 - City of Asheville, 42.6%
 - Buncombe County, 28.6%
 - Haywood County, 8.3%
 - Henderson County, 20.4 %
- FY 2024 allocations (proposed):
 - City of Asheville, 46.8%
 - Buncombe County, 32.0%
 - Haywood County, n/a
 - Henderson County, 21.2%
- Discussion of 5307 Sub-Recipients allocation formula; MPO staff and Work Group members agreed to the following approach:
 - No new funding formula study at this time in light of Henderson County and Asheville-Buncombe County transit studies underway.
 - Keep the formula the same, albeit with updated FTA National Transit Database (NTD) operational data, but not population data from ESRI Community Analyst; only official US Census population data is the preferred source for population data.

Citizens' Advisory Committee- next meeting TBD

Hellbender Trail Stakeholder Group/Regional Trail Forum Updates- last meeting October 6th; next meeting TBD

MPO Studies Status

Study	Managing Entity	Year Programmed	Status
Asheville Bike/Ped Counters	City of Asheville	2016	Closed- Q4, 2023
Reed Creek Greenway Feasibility Study	City of Asheville	2023	Underway
2050 Socio-Economic Projections	FBRMPO	2023	Consultant Selected
CTP/MTP Update	FBRMPO	2024	RFLOI Being Drafted
Safe Streets for All Regional Action Plan	FBRMPO	2024	RFLOI Being Drafted
Patton Avenue Corridor Study	City of Asheville	2023	Consultant Selected
Ridgecrest Connector Greenway Feasibility Study	Town of Black Mountain	2023	Consultant Selected
Cane Creek Greenway Study	Town of Fletcher	2024	Agreement Being Drafted
Woodfin-Weaverville Greenway Study	Town of Woodfin	2024	Agreement Being Drafted
Buncombe County Multimodal Master Plan	Buncombe County	2024	Agreement Being Drafted
Hellbender Implementation Plan	FBRMPO	2024	Not Started
Regional ITS Plan	FBRMPO	2024	Not Started
Travel Survey/Model Upgrades	FBRMPO	2024	Not Started
Staffing & Implementation Study	FBRMPO	2024	Not Started

Tristan Winkler presented.

Park & rides, final submittal for spot projects are upcoming

Legislative Updates: Chuck McGrady presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Anthony Sutton opened the floor again for public comment. No comments were heard.

ADJOURNMENT

Anthony Sutton adjourned the meeting at 3:05 PM as there was no further business before the Board.