

Citizens' Advisory Committee

January 8th, 2024 – 1:00 P.M
In Person: 339 New Leicester Hwy Ste 140, Asheville, NC 28806

OR

Virtual: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88197241040?pwd=uK2R7CKhb7hICKFKagecQ3JY1yF9rs.1>
Passcode: 969369

1. Welcome and Housekeeping
 - A. Welcome and Introductions, Approval of Agenda

2. Public Comment

3. Informational
 - A. MPO 101 & Public Involvement Strategies
 - B. Environmental Justice - Communities of Concern Next Steps
 - C. SPOT 7.0 Survey Development

4. Announcements, News, Special Updates
 - A. Upcoming Public Input Meetings/Opportunities
 - B. Events

5. Topics for Next Meeting?
 - A. April 8th, 2024

6. Public Comment II

7. Adjournment

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Item 3A: MPO 101 & Public Involvement Strategies

MPO Staff will provide a brief overview of what the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) is, what purpose it serves, and how it functions. This will be followed up by a discussion of the FBRMPO's current public involvement practices, and ways to improve.

Item 3B: Environmental Justice – Communities of Concern Next Steps

What are communities of concern, and what is their role in the planning process?

Identifying communities of concern is a vital step in the transportation decision making process. It is important to understand the needs and limitations of all populations that may be affected by transportation projects so we can ensure that historically underrepresented populations are not receiving disproportionate burdens from future transportation projects in our region as well as guarantee proportionate benefits of future transportation projects to disadvantaged communities. Historically, transportation planning projects have disproportionately impacted disadvantaged communities. This is something that the environmental justice movement seeks to address. Environmental Justice is a social movement that aims to address disproportionate exposure of poor and marginalized communities from hazardous waste, resource extraction, and various land uses. It is important to acknowledge that environmental justice is, among other things, a planning issue.

In 1994, Executive Order 12898 set the requirement for an environmental justice interagency workgroup that provides guidance to Federal agencies on criteria for identifying disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and/or low-income populations. It also required each agency to develop a strategy for implementing environmental justice.

More recently, the Federal government announced its Justice40 goal: an aim for 40% of the overall benefits of Federal investments to go to disadvantaged communities. The U.S. DOT looks at the Justice40 initiative as an opportunity to address gaps in transportation infrastructure by increasing affordable transportation options and improving access to resources.

It is important that the MPO gains a comprehensive understanding of disadvantaged communities in the region, acknowledges how past projects have impacted them, and assesses how future projects can benefit them.

Citizens' Advisory Committee

FBRMPO's process to identify communities of concern:

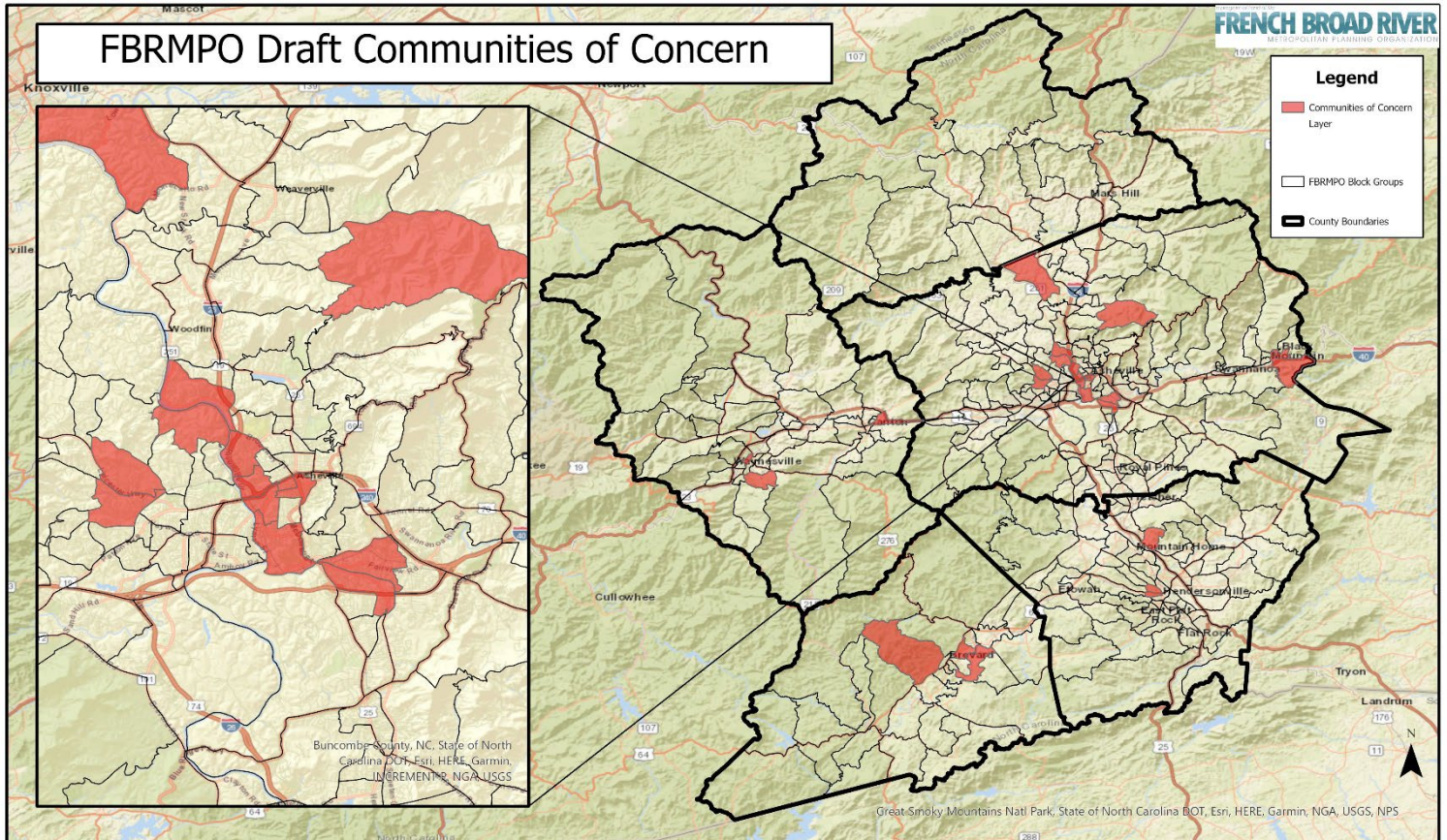
- Step 1: Analyze 2020 census data at the block group level and delineate block groups that exceed the 65th percentile in the following categories:
 - o *Non-White Population*
 - o *Zero-Vehicle Households*
 - o *Households with Person(s) Over 65*
 - o *Below Poverty Line*
 - o *Persons with Disabilities*
 - o *Limited English Proficiency*
- Step 2: Identify block groups which meet the threshold in 4 or more categories as moderate-level to high-level communities of concern.
- Step 3: We do not want to overlook qualitative data. In certain instances, census blocks can encompass neighborhoods of vastly different privileges and demographics. Because of this, we intend to reach out to various community stakeholders to collect qualitative data in our region, including the locations of homeless encampments, food and health resources, culturally significant neighborhoods, etc. to contribute to our assessment of communities of concern in the region.
- Step 4: Finally, we will identify the benefits and burdens of future transportation projects in our region so we can better understand how equitable the distribution of benefits and burdens will likely be

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Findings:



Next Steps for the MPO:

1. **Identify qualitative data**
2. Identify how past transportation projects have positively/negatively impacted communities
3. Use established methodology (or reevaluate and define a new one) to identify benefits and drawbacks to programmed TIP projects to help analyze what projects will likely be burdensome and what are beneficial

Citizens' Advisory Committee

Item 3C: SPOT 7.0 Survey Development

What is SPOT 7.0?

The Strategic Prioritization Process is a data-driven, transparent method for prioritizing transportation projects and is used to develop the State Transportation Improvement Program/ Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (STIP/MTIP), which identify the projects that will be funded during a 10-year period. Prioritization scores all roadway, public transportation, bicycle & pedestrian, rail, ferry, and aviation projects based upon approved criteria.

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 is the Timeline of SPOT 7.0

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
October, 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

Citizens' Advisory Committee

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)

SPOT 7.0 Survey

MPO Staff will present a draft example survey and lead a discussion to gauge initial impressions and brainstorm ways to improve the survey.