

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
Minutes from the Governing Board Meeting on January 18th, 2024

Attendance:

In-Person and Remote via the Zoom Platform:

Anthony Sutton	Town of Waynesville
Jennifer Hensley	City of Hendersonville
Steve Williams	NCDOT Div 14
Jim Player	Town of Fletcher
Vicki Eastland	LOS RPO
Matt Wechtel	Madison County
George Banta	Town of Laurel Park
Kim Roney	City of Asheville
Betsy Ervin	Town of Woodfin
Daniel Sellers	NCDOT TPD
Shannon Gonce	Town of Mills River
Bill Lapsley	Henderson County
Larry Harris	Urban Transit
Hannah Smith	NCDOT Div 13
Archie Pertiller	Town of Black Mountain
Anne Coletta	Village of Flat Rock
Catherine Cordell	Town of Weaverville
Dr Ralph Hamlett	Town of Canton
Mike Eveland	Town of Maggie Valley
George Banta	Town of Laurel Park
Tom Widmer	Town of Montreat
Kim Roney	City of Asheville
Brian Murphy	NCDOT
Stephen Sparks	NCDOT
Suzette Morales	FHWA

Maggie Ullman	City of Asheville
Angela Reece	Town of Black Mountain

Members without Representation present:

Town of Biltmore Forest
BOT 13
BOT 14
Town of Clyde
Buncombe County
Town of Clyde
Town of Mars Hill
Haywood County
Rural Transit

Additional Attendees:

Tristan Winkler (FBRMPO) Hannah Bagli (FBRMPO) Logan DiGiacomo (FBRMPO)
Jon Barsanti (FBRMPO) Asha Rado (LOSRC, Minutes) Ada Sloop (FBRMPO)
Sethe Poole (Public) JMoore (Public)

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & ROLL CALL

Anthony Sutton called the meeting to order at 1:00 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. No comment was made.

CONSENT AGENDA

November 2023 Combined TAC/TCC Board Minutes: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2023_11_16_MPO.DRAFT_CombinedMinutes.pdf

Discussion occurred in regards to a correction needed for Anne Coletta's name and that it should read Village of Flat Rock on the November meeting minutes.

Citizens Advisory Committee Application:

The MPO maintains a Citizens Advisory Committee made up of interested citizens from around the region. This committee's primary function is to provide recommendations to staff and the MPO TCC & Board on public engagement policies and strategies as well as social equity planning, including the MPO's Title VI Plan and Environmental Justice practices. The MPO is currently revamping the roster and held a meeting on January 8th.

Susan Bean submitted an application to join the committee. Approval from the TCC and Board is required to become an official member of the committee.

The bylaws of the Citizens Advisory Committee are available here:

https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/CAC_Bylaws_201511.pdf

Interested citizens may find a form to fill-out and submit to MPO staff if interested in joining the Citizens Advisory Committee (rolling application): <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/citizensadvisory-committee-cac/>



Citizens Advisory Committee Application

The French Broad River MPO's Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) plays a key role in getting the public involved in the transportation planning process. The CAC plans to meet quarterly during regular business hours to discuss the transportation planning process and public engagement strategies.

NAME: Susan Bean

PLACE OF RESIDENCE: 12 Lookout Dr, Asheville, NC 28804

ORGANIZATION REPRESENTED: MountainTrue

EMAIL: susan@mountaintrue.org

PHONE NUMBER (OPTIONAL): 828-450-4543

HAVE YOU PREVIOUSLY SERVED ON ANY FRENCH BROAD RIVER MPO OR LAND OF SKY REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEES? IF YES, WHAT COMMITTEE AND OVER WHAT TIME PERIOD?

no, I have never served in such a role with the MPO or Land of Sky

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR INTEREST IN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND WHAT UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE YOU WILL BRING TO THE CAC:

I am the housing and transportation director for MountainTrue since January of 2023. I work to advocate for multimodal transportation investments in all of WNC and to reduce vehicle miles traveled where possible through supporting good planning and design. I am very new to the world of transportation planning, but have access to a great depth of knowledge and expertise at MountainTrue and am our new point person for communicating with our many members and supporters about how to engage in public processes to support multimodal transportation investments and good road and highway design.

Thank you for your application!

Please send your application to mpo@landofsky.org or mail it to:

French Broad River MPO
339 New Leicester Highway, Suite 140
Asheville, NC 28806



Current CAC Member Roster

January 2024

Name	Email
Alexandra Binns-Craven	a.binns.craven@gmail.com
Bill Erickson	berickson@frontier-knowledge.com
George Webb	gtwebb@bellsouth.net
James Sisk	jameswsisk@gmail.com
Jay Egolf	jayegolf@gmail.com
Jay Orfield	jborfield@gmail.com
LeeAnne Tucker	leeanne@landofsky.org
Rachael Bronson	rachael.bronson@gmail.com rskns1@icloud.com
Robert Parrish	<a href="mailto:<Rskns1@icloud.com>"><Rskns1@icloud.com>
Jazmin	jazmin@eaglemarketsts.org
Steady Collective	Steady@thesteadycollective.org

Matt Wechtel moved to approve the consent agenda including the November 2023 Combined Board Minutes, Susan Bean's application for the CAC and the TAC agenda. Larry Harris seconded the motion which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

Business

I-40 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lane Study Resolution of Support

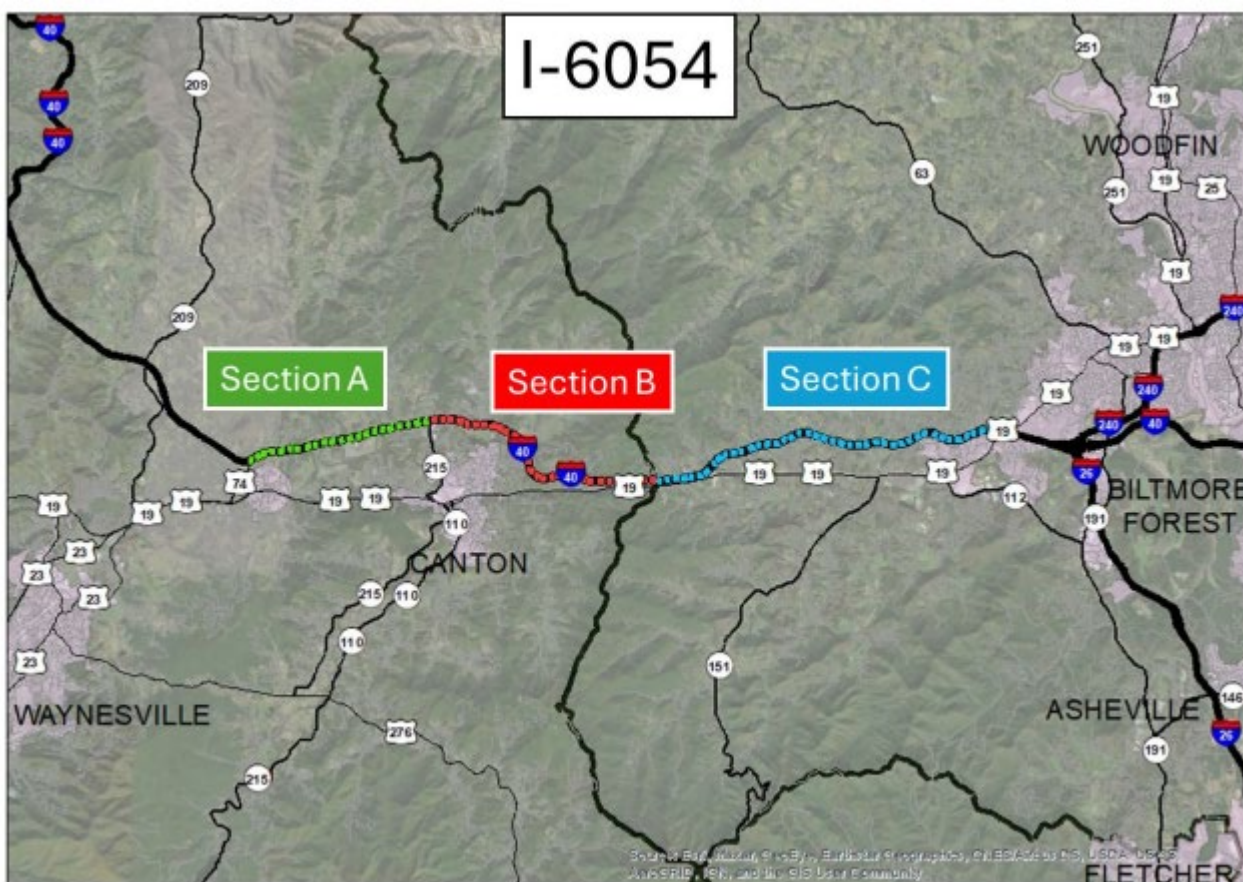
NCDOT has requested a letter of support for a study to look at the potential for High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes to be added as part of the planned (currently unfunded) widening of I-40 to the west of I-26.

There are three sections of the I-6054 project:

Section A: US 23/74 (Smokey Mountain Expressway) to NC 215 (Champion Drive)

Section B: NC 215 (Champion Drive) to Exit 37 (Wiggins Road)

Section C: Exit 37 (Wiggins Road) to Monte Vista Road



Topic for Discussion

Each of these projects are currently in P 7.0 as carryover widening projects. NCDOT has requested a letter of support from the RPO to conduct a study on adding HOT lanes. Conducting the study does not make any commitment to managed lanes but just looks at the feasibility of including them as part of the planned widening.

Information from FHWA:

What Are HOT Lanes?

Traditional high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes require passenger vehicles to have a minimum number of passengers. “HOT” lanes is short for “high-occupancy toll” lanes. HOT lanes are HOV lanes that allow vehicles that don’t meet occupancy requirements to pay a toll to use the lane. Variable pricing is used to manage the lane so that reliable performance is maintained at all times. HOT lanes have proven to be more efficient than traditional HOV lanes. In addition, in many cases the adjacent General Purpose lanes also benefit from the resulting reallocation of vehicles in the corridor. While communities may call them by different names, such as Fast Lanes or Express Lanes, the basic operation is the same—HOT lanes encourage carpooling and other transit alternatives while offering vehicles that do not meet standard occupancy requirements another option.

What Are the Benefits of HOT Lanes?



Future I-495 Express Lane, Virginia

HOT lanes provide mobility options for individual drivers while encouraging the use of transit and carpooling. Tolls collected from HOT lanes can supplement the operations, enforcement, and maintenance costs for the facilities. Even buses benefit from HOT lanes—research shows that communities with HOT lanes are often able to increase transit service as was the case with I-15 in San Diego. Solo drivers know they can count on getting where they need to be on time.

For example, Minneapolis has increased the number of vehicles using the I-394 MnPASS lanes by 33 percent since the facility’s opening in 2005 without degrading transit and HOV use. Furthermore, travel speeds of 50 to 55 mph have been maintained for 95 percent of the time in the lanes. Denver originally projected 500 toll payers during the peak hour travel along I-25 but in fact achieved 1,400 in the first year of operation. Use of the I-25 HOT lanes has grown by almost 18 percent since the HOT lanes opened in 2006 and the lanes remain uncongested. Additionally, transit ridership in the HOT lanes has remained high.

Why Charge Travelers for Using Roadways?

By charging travelers for use of roadways, agencies can help mitigate traffic congestion while generating revenues to supplement operating costs. Common sense dictates that for a user to be willing to pay for a service, then he/she must benefit in some way from it. For priced facility users, this benefit is most likely travel-time savings or reliable travel. Often, a priced facility will offer a more reliable trip than an adjacent or nearby route. Drivers can choose to use the priced facility if they judge the travel-time savings worth paying the requisite toll.

Do HOT Lanes Help the Environment?



I-25 Express Lane, Denver

Like their HOV counterparts, HOT lanes have the potential to help improve air quality where they are implemented. High-occupancy lanes might help to reduce harmful impacts to the environment associated with congestion, especially by encouraging the use of multi-passenger vehicles or mass transit systems. On SR 167 in Seattle, general purpose lane speeds increased 10 percent and HOT lane speeds increased 7-8 percent and transit ridership increased 16 percent from the year before implementation of the HOT lane. As a result, the federal government allows HOV lanes to be considered a transportation control measure (TCM) for air quality conformity analysis.

Why Are Variable Tolls Used for HOT Lanes?

Congestion pricing, or “variable pricing,” changes the amount charged for road use based on demand. On a typical roadway, a flat toll would not be the optimal toll throughout the day. During off-peak periods it may be too high for drivers to benefit from paying it. Conversely, during times of peak demand, the toll may not be high enough to make optimal use of the facility. Variable pricing offers a solution to this problem by increasing the toll

during periods of peak demand and reducing it during off-peak times.

Who Is Implementing HOT Lanes?

Communities around the nation are installing HOT lanes in response to increased congestion. There are 10 HOT lanes currently operating in eight states:

- I-15 FasTrak in San Diego, California
- US 290 Northwest Freeway QuickRide HOT Lanes in Houston, Texas
- I-394 and I-35W MnPass in Minneapolis, Minnesota
- I-25 Express Lanes in Denver, Colorado
- I-15 Express Lanes in Salt Lake City, Utah
- SR 167 HOT Lanes Pilot Project in Seattle, Washington
- I-95 Express Lanes in Miami, Florida
- I-680, Alameda County, California
- I-85, Atlanta, Georgia

Where are HOT Lanes Operating?



HOT lanes have been implemented in eight states.

There are currently ten operating HOT lane projects for a total of over 100 miles in the U.S., and many states have projects in the planning stages. All of the operating projects were conversions of HOV lanes to HOT lanes, although some have extended the HOT lanes. The average length is approximately 12 miles.

How are the Current Projects Operating?

The operating projects are either one- or two-lane facilities in each direction. Most strive to maintain speeds of at least 45 miles per hour. The variable toll ranges from \$0.25 in the off-peak to \$9.00 in heavily congested periods.

What does the Public Think about HOT Lanes?

The operating projects enjoy support from both users and non-users. While most people don't use the HOT lane every day, research shows that travelers like having a choice in their travel options. On I-25 in Denver, 62 percent of survey respondents say they use the Express Lanes because it saves time. Likewise in Houston, focus group respondents thought that using the HOT lane saved them as much as 50 percent of total commute travel time. Reliability is also often cited as a benefit of the HOT lane. In San Diego and Miami, users there want the projects expanded.

What about Equity? Are HOT Lanes More of a Burden on Lower-Income Drivers?



I-394 MnPass

Research on I-394, SR 167, and I-15 indicates that drivers of all socioeconomic backgrounds support HOT lanes. In fact, data from the San Diego Association of Governments indicate that the lowest income group expressed stronger support from the project than the highest income group. Research shows that people of all income levels support HOT lanes. Users of all incomes see the value in having a reliable trip when they need it. A 2004-2006 longitudinal panel survey of I-394 residents in Minnesota found support levels at over 60 percent for the congestion priced HOT lane. This number varies only slightly when sorted by income levels, gender, and education levels, suggesting that the arrangement is perceived as equitable. I-15 in San Diego had a 77 percent approval rating after opening with nominal differences between high- and low-income users. Specific focus groups of low-income travelers in Washington found that low-income drivers are typically as supportive, if not more supportive, of the HOT lanes concept than other drivers.

Other Examples on I-40

One point of discussion at the MPO's Prioritization Subcommittee was the fact that there are currently no managed lanes on I-40 in the United States. However, there are several projects currently under development or consideration, including projects in North Carolina, Tennessee, Arizona, and California.

a program of Land of Sky

FRENCH BROAD RIVER

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

RESOLUTION REQUESTING A STUDY TO EXAMINE HIGH OCCUPANCY TOLL LANES ON THE PLANNED I-40 WIDENING PROJECT (I-6054)

WHEREAS, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) include the widening of I-40 from I-26 to US 23/74 in the TIP and STIP as I-6054 as a non-committed project; and

WHEREAS, the MPO's 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) includes the widening of I-40 as part of I-6054; and

WHEREAS, the French Broad River MPO's Congestion Management Process (CMP) recommends the consideration of Managed Lanes on I-40; and

WHEREAS, I-40 in Haywood County and Buncombe County have seen a decrease in reliability as illustrated in the MPO's 2023 CMP Report; and

WHEREAS, managed lanes could help make I-6054 more competitive in the prioritization process, increasing its potential timeline and viability;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization hereby requests NCDOT to conduct a study to examine the potential to adding managed lanes as part of the I-6054 project.

ADOPTED: This the 18th Day of January, 2024

Anthony Sutton, FBRMPO Board Chair

Attest, Tristan Winkler, Director
French Broad River MPO

339 New Leicester Highway, Suite 140 • Asheville, NC 28806 • www.fbrmpo.org
Long-Range Transportation Plan • Transportation Improvement Program
Highway Planning • Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning • Transit Planning • Air Quality
Public Involvement

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Public Involvement

Discussion occurred on how commuters change their behavior to more local roads. A lot of these studies look at a no build mentality and we can ask for a potential for managed lanes as well. Part of the study should include diversions. Discussion around why the 17 mile stretch was selected, a big thing was revenues with the department of transportation.

Shannon Gonce moved to approve the Letter of Support for HOT Lanes on I-40 study. Matt Wechtel seconded, and the motion passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

Draft FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The French Broad River MPO is required to develop a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and adopt a draft in January with the final version approved in March.

What is a UPWP?

The UPWP is a federally mandated document for MPO's to produce that serves the MPO's budget. This includes line items of work for MPO staff, planning work planned by the region's designated recipient for FTA 5303 Metropolitan Planning Funds, selected by the MPO (City of Asheville), as well as studies being carried out using federal planning funds, and any programmatic support or planning being funded by FTA 5307 Support. The Draft UPWP's adoption is a necessary step for the application of FTA 5303 funds, due at the end of January.

Major Changes between the FY 2024 and FY 2025 UPWP

- increase in local dues: this is being done to maintain current staff and technical capacity with the increased cost of living, salaries, and general costs.
- increase in Special Study management and coordination due to the increased number of MPO-supported projects currently on the books
- major focus on 2050 MTP, P 7.0, Special Studies management
- less of a focus on data collection and management

Discussion occurred on the dues and when the dues are expected to go up.

Larry Harris moved to adopt the Draft FY 2025 UPWP. Kim Roney seconded, and the motion passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

5310 and JARC Calls for Projects

Section 5310

Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) funds are allocated to the Asheville Urbanized Area, with the City of Asheville serving as the designated recipient for these funds. The 5310 Grant has two categories for funding:

- Traditional/Capital Projects: **At least 55%** of the total funding amount must go to “traditional” projects
- Other/Operations Type Projects: **no more than 45%** of the total funding amount can go to these projects

Additional information about Section 5310 is available at: <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/5310-and-jarc/>

Funding Available:

FY 2023's Section 5310 Allocation	
FY 2023 FTA Section 5310 Funds Available to Asheville UZA	\$504,739
Section 5310 Admin at 10%	\$50,474
Remaining Section 5310 after Admin	\$454,265

Evaluation Criteria:

SCORECARD FOR 5310 PROJECTS		
	Possible Points	
Project Needs and Goals	35	0
Is the project consistent with 5310 program? (i.e. do goals and objectives align with 5310 program)	0-10	
To what degree will the project increase or enhance availability of transportation for the Asheville urbanized area's elderly and disabled populations?	0-5	

Does applicant include map of service area and requested demographic data and number of people served? Does the project address a need identified in the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan?	0 or 10	
To what degree does the project demonstrate the most appropriate match of service delivery to need? To what degree does project address unmet needs?	0-5	
Does the project align with organizational mission? To what degree?	0-5	
Project Budget and Organizational Preparedness	25	0
Did applicant submit a clearly defined project budget? Does applicant provide proof of local match?	0 or 5	
Does the budget accurately estimate project cost? Does it identify direct costs and other requested portions of the budget?	0 or 5	
To what extent does the proposal address long-term efforts and identify potential funding sources for sustaining service beyond grant period?	0-5	
To what extent will project be affected if it does not receive funding?	0-10	
Project Implementation	25	0
Does the proposal outline an implementation and evaluation plan?	0 or 5	
Does the application identify key personnel?	0 or 5	
To what extent does the applicant demonstrate their institutional capability to carry out service delivery of project as described? Does applicant describe process of evaluating service?	0-5	
How experienced is the agency with financial responsibilities like quarterly reporting, annual audits, and/or other forms of financial reporting?	0-10	
Equity, Coordination, and Outreach	15	0
Does the project include coordination and/or partnerships with transportation providers or other relevant stakeholders?	0-5	
To what extent does the applicant include plans to market to target group and promote awareness of the project?	0-5	
Does applicant include their Title VI Plan or description of equity work/commitment to equity?	0 or 5	
Bonus for Alternative Fuels/Fuel Efficiency	5	
Does the project demonstrate use of high-efficiency or alternative fueled vehicles/transportation methods?	0 or 5	
TOTAL (Out of 100, with 5 additional bonus points)	105	

JARC – Jobs Access Reverse Commute

JARC (Jobs Access Reverse Commute) is a competitive pot of funds set aside from Section 5307 Urban Transit Formula funds to encourage regional connectivity, to fund the development and maintenance of transportation services designated to transport welfare recipients and eligible low income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to their employment. The FBRMPO holds a call for projects for federal funding, and the City of Asheville is the Designated Recipient for these funds.

Additional Information about the program is available at: <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/5310-and-jarc/>

FY 2022's Section 5307 (JARC) Allocation	
Regional JARC - FY 2022 at 10% of FTA 5307 Amount allocated to Asheville Urbanized Area	\$408,379

Project Evaluation Criteria for JARC	Possible Points
Project Needs/Goals and Objectives	30
Is the project consistent with JARC program? (i.e. do goals and objectives align with JARC program)	0-10
To what degree will the project increase or enhance service to low-income individuals? Does the project address unmet needs?	0 – 5
Does the project address a need identified in the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan? Does applicant include map of service area?	0 or 5
To what extent will the project be affected if it does not receive JARC funds? 0=unaffected, 10=unable to exist	0 – 10
Implementation Plan and Evaluation	20
Does the proposal outline an implementation and evaluation plan? Does implementation plan identify key personnel?	0 or 5

To what extent does the applicant demonstrate their institutional capability to carry out service delivery of project as described?	0 – 5
How experienced is the agency with financial responsibilities like quarterly reporting, annual audits, and/or other forms of financial reporting?	0-5
Does the project appear to be the best way to meet the need identified? Does it align with the organizational mission?	0 – 5
Project Budget	20
Did applicant submit a clearly defined project budget? Did applicant provide proof of local match?	0 or 5
To what extent does the proposal address long-term efforts and identify potential funding sources for sustaining service beyond grant period?	0 – 5
To what extent will project be affected if it does not receive funding?	0-10
Equity, Coordination, and Outreach	15
Does the project include coordination and/or partnerships with transportation providers or other relevant stakeholders?	0-5
To what extent does the applicant include plans to market to target group and promote awareness of the project?	0 – 5
Does applicant include their Title VI Plan or description of equity work/commitment to equity?	0 or 5
Program Effectiveness and Performance Indicators	10
To what extent does applicant demonstrate that proposal is most appropriate method of service delivery and is a cost-effective approach?	0 – 5
Does applicant provide description of the process of monitoring and evaluation of service? Is there a description of steps that will be taken to measure effectiveness and impact of project on targets?	0 – 5
Innovation	5
Does project contain new or innovative concepts with potential for improving access and mobility for target population and potential for future application elsewhere in the region?	0 or 5
Alternative Fuels/Fuel Efficiency (BONUS POINTS)	5

Does the project demonstrate use of high-efficiency or alternative fueled vehicles/transportation methods?	0 or 5
TOTAL (out of 100, with 5 additional bonus points)	105

The proposed timeline for the FY2023 Call for Projects for both Section 5310 and JARC is below:

FY2023 Call for Projects Application Timeline	
January 18, 2023	5310 and JARC Call for Projects opens
March 18, 2023	5310 and JARC applications due to FBRMPO
May 1, 2023	FBRMPO Prioritization Subcommittee meets to review 5310 and JARC applications
May 9, 2023	TCC approves 5310 and JARC project selection
May 16, 2023	MPO Board votes on 5310 and JARC project selection
May 16, 2023	MPO Board approves TIP Amendments for 5310 and JARC projects

Larry Harris moved to approve the open call for projects for the 5310 and JARC. Shannon Gonce seconded, and the motion passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

Prioritization Subcommittee Appointment

Item Overview

The MPO Prioritization Subcommittee plays an important role in advising the MPO TCC and Board and is made up of four members of the TCC and three members of the MPO Board. One representative from the Board, Jerry Vehaun, is no longer a representative of the MPO Board. His position needs to be replaced.

Purpose of the Subcommittee

The MPO Prioritization Subcommittee was initially setup to advise the MPO TCC and Board on items related to the prioritization process but its role was expanded over the years to include the evaluation of the Locally Administered Projects Program (LAPP), being the steering committee for major MPO planning efforts including the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), and any other items that generally require preliminary, in-depth discussions before those items make it to the

TCC and Board for consideration.

Current Roster

All TCC, Board, and NCDOT members are welcome to join subcommittee meetings, but there are only seven voting members: four TCC representatives and the Board representatives. The current voting members include:

Voting Member	Jurisdiction	TCC/Board
Anthony Sutton	Town of Waynesville	Board
Archie Pertiller	Town of Black Mountain	Board
VACANT	-	Board
Autumn Radcliff	Henderson County	TCC
William High	Buncombe County	TCC
Jessica Morris (Vice-Chair)	City of Asheville	TCC
Elizabeth Teague (Chair)	Town of Waynesville	TCC

Catherine Cordell of Weaverville volunteered for the open position.

Matt Wechtel moved to approve the appointment of Catherine Cordell to the prioritization subcommittee. Larry Harris seconded, and the motion passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

Safety 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.

These targets are established annually, are based on 5 year rolling averages, and are for calendar years. North Carolina state targets are set in agreement with our Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) goals. The SHSP goals are developed through collaborative efforts of a diverse group of stakeholders including state, regional, and local partners (including MPOs). The goal of the most recent (2019) SHSP is to reduce fatalities and serious injuries by half by 2035, moving towards zero by 2050.

2024 state safety performance targets were submitted to FHWA on August 31st, as required, with the submission of the annual Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) report. These targets reflect the 2019 SHSP goal to reduce fatalities and serious injuries by half by 2035, moving towards zero by 2050. The calculated targets are shown in the table below.

Performance Measure	CY 2024
Number of Fatalities	1,151.7
Rate of Fatalities	0.967
Number of Serious Injuries	3,312.1
Rate of Serious Injuries	2.767
Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities & Serious Injuries	451.1

French Broad River MPO 2024 Safety Performance Targets

Year	Fatalities (5 Year Average)	Fatality Rate (5 Year Average)	Serious Injuries (5 Year Average)	Serious Injury Rate (5 Year Average)	Non-motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries (5 Year Average)
2008 - 2012	44.0	1.000	113.4	2.578	16.4
2009 - 2013	45.0	1.012	101.6	2.289	15.6
2010 - 2014	46.8	1.042	89.6	2.003	15.6
2011 - 2015	46.8	1.030	81.8	1.809	15.6
2012 - 2016	46.0	0.993	74.0	1.599	16.0
2013 - 2017	50.0	1.052	84.4	1.751	15.2
2014 - 2018	52.2	1.076	102.0	2.067	17.2
2015 - 2019	51.0	1.029	116.8	2.327	17.6
2016 - 2020	49.4	0.999	128.4	2.593	18.6
2017 - 2021	50.6	1.014	136.8	2.743	19.6
2018 - 2022	50.6	1.021	137.8	2.782	19.0
2024 Target*	42.0	0.841	103.0	2.041	14.5

Information only. Brian Murphy with NCDOT presented.

Discussion occurred around the report from last year and if we look at where we are investing in our infrastructure, how is DOT looking to make our roads safer. Safety Action Plan might be good time to document and dig deeper into these types of questions. Is there information on crashes on if they are more local or out of towners. There is information in the reports.

Memorandum of Understanding Survey Results

After updating the MPO's Planning Area, the MPO is required to update its Memorandum of Understanding. Several updates are required, either to update language to current federal law or to change committee and Board designations for members who may or may not apply any longer. After a Draft MOU is established it is required to be approved by EVERY JURISDICTION IN THE MPO.

Proposed Timeline:

Date	Event
October, 2023	Introduce MOU
November, 2023	Develop Survey for MPO Representatives
January, 2024	Discuss Survey Results
February, 2023	Draft MOU Discussion
March, 2023	Draft MOU Consideration
April, 2023 - ?	Local Government Council Consideration

Items to Consider Within the MOU:

1. MPO Membership
 - a. MPO members to be removed in the updated MOU
 - i. Transylvania County (non-voting) (TCC and Board)
 - ii. State Bicycle Committee Representative for Divisions 13 & 14 (TCC only)- group has been defunct for some time
 - b. MPO members to add
 - i. Transit representative were added via amendment, would be included in the updated list
2. Quorum
 - a. Currently defines quorum for “active” members, inactive members are those that have not attended the previous two meetings, don’t count towards quorum
3. Voting Power
 - a. Distribution of Votes
 - b. Veto Votes
 - c. Weighted Voting
4. MPO Roles and Responsibilities

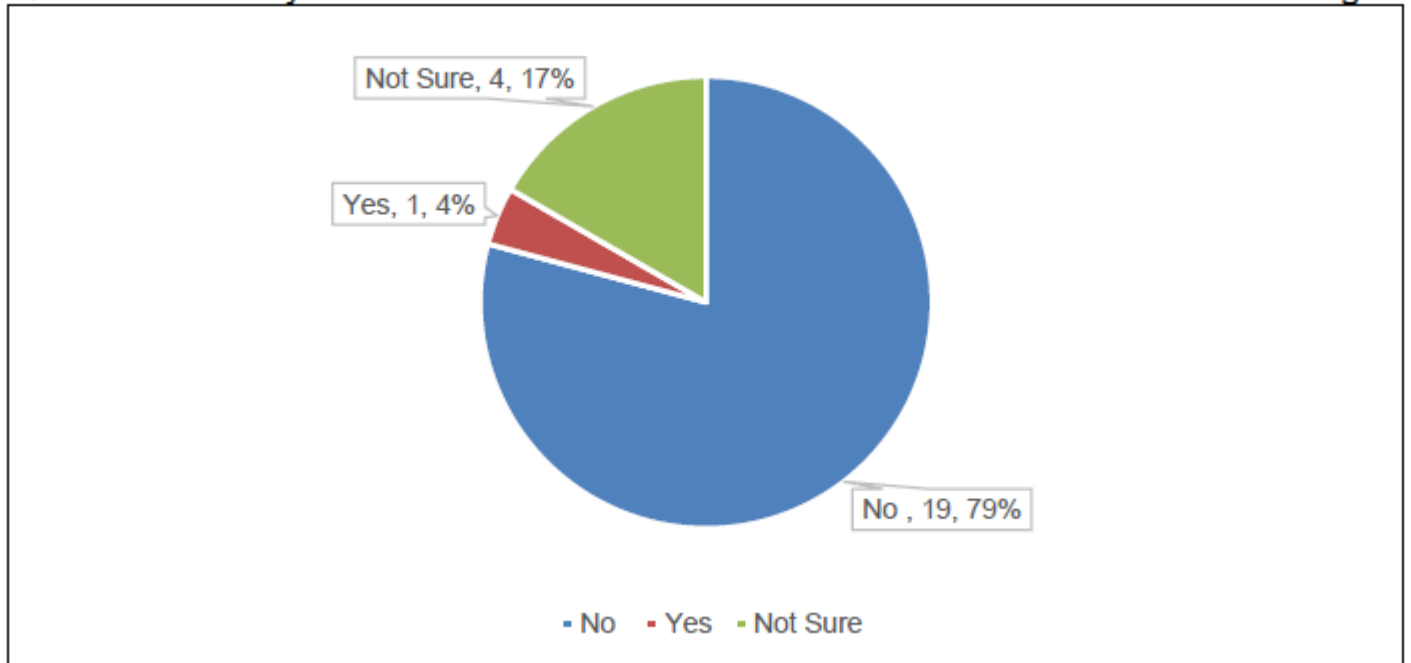
Survey Overview & Results

MPO staff sent out two surveys on the MOU- one targeted to the TCC and one for the MPO Board. The primary difference between the two is the Board was only asked about the make-up of the Board, the TCC was asked about the TCC and Board. The survey was made available from November 17-December 22.

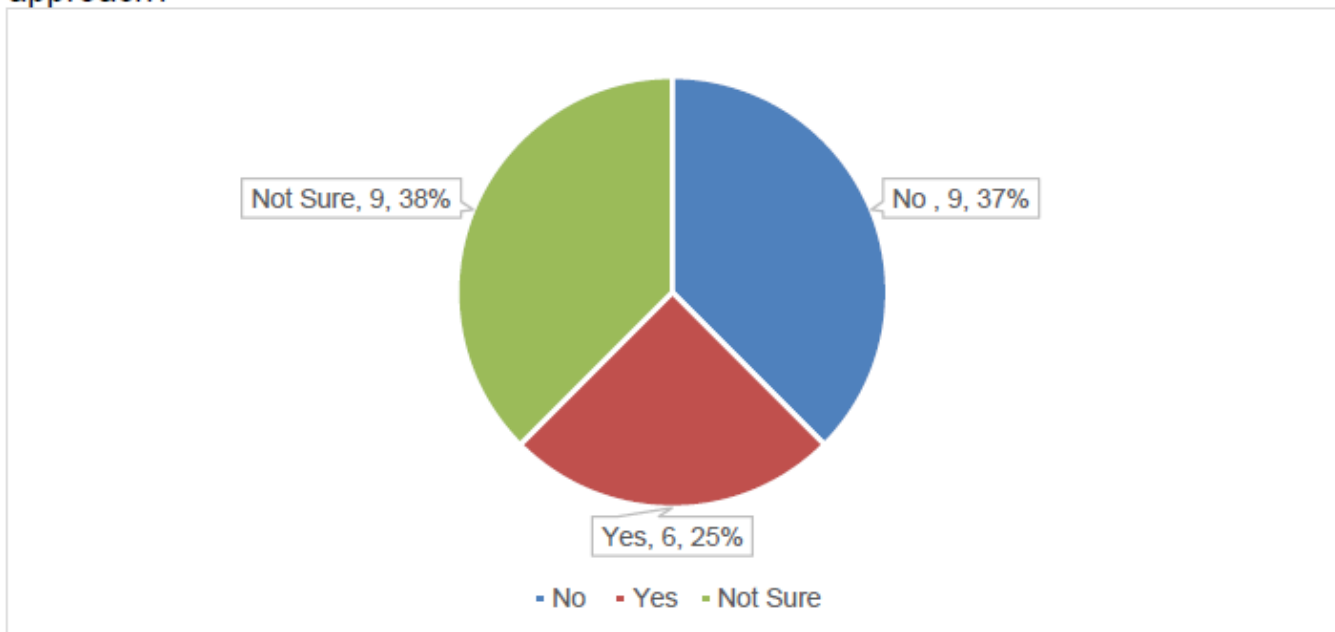
High-level results from the survey are below. In general, there was strong support for maintaining the status quo in most facets, but some interest in consolidation of Board seats, removal of the veto power provision, and removal of the weighted voting provision.

MPO staff will provide a detailed update on the survey at the meeting.

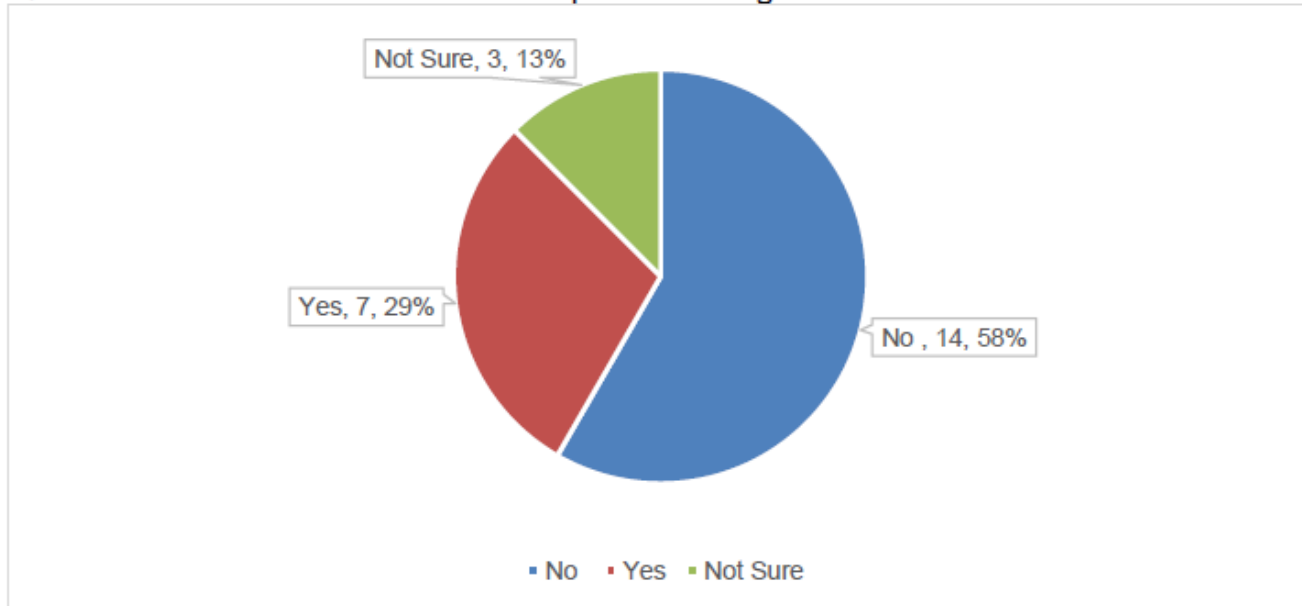
Question #1: Do you think the distribution of votes on the MPO Board should change?



Question #2: Do you think having multiple jurisdictions consolidate votes would be a beneficial approach?

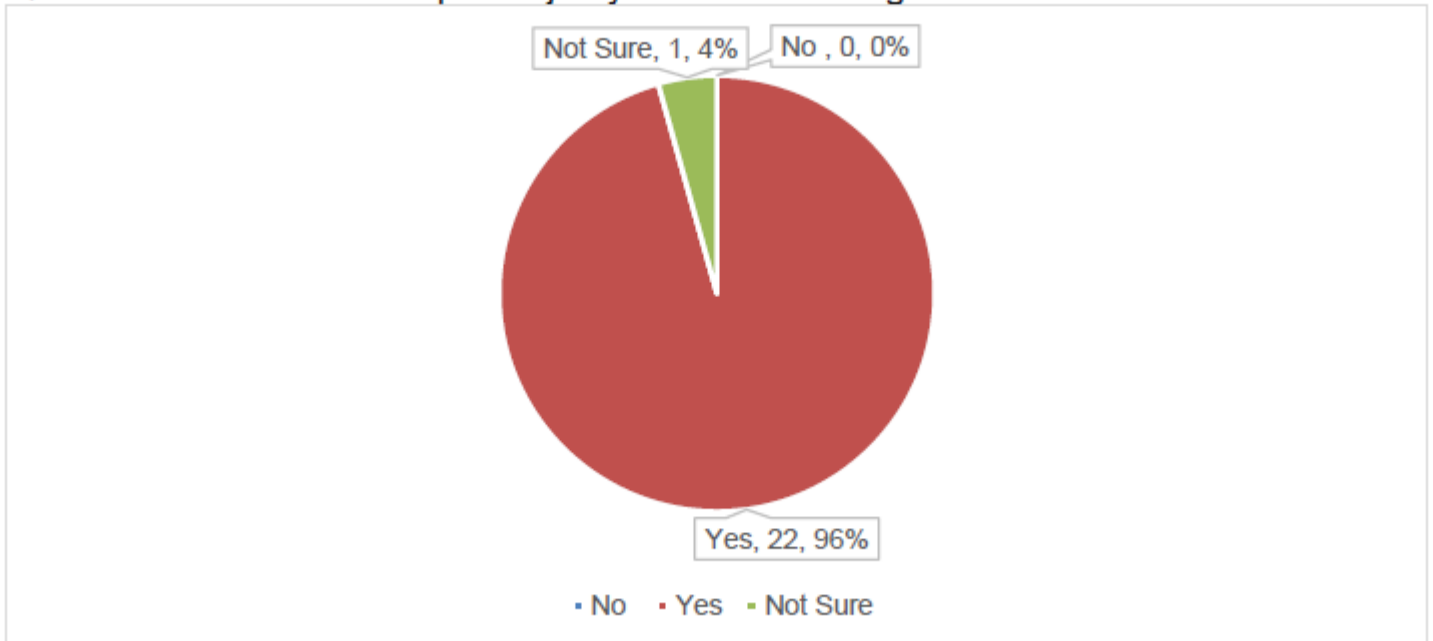


Question #3: Should the definition of quorum change?

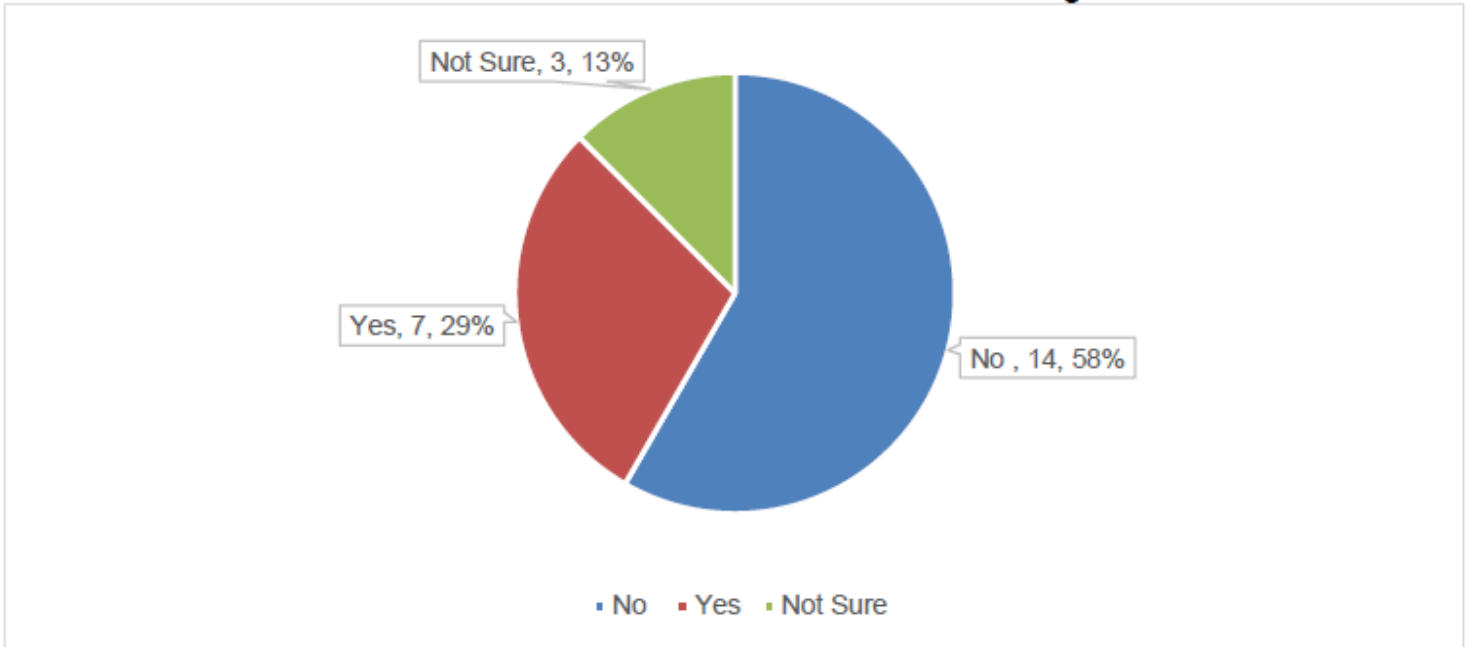


Note: two people who said the definition of quorum should change later noted to keep it the same

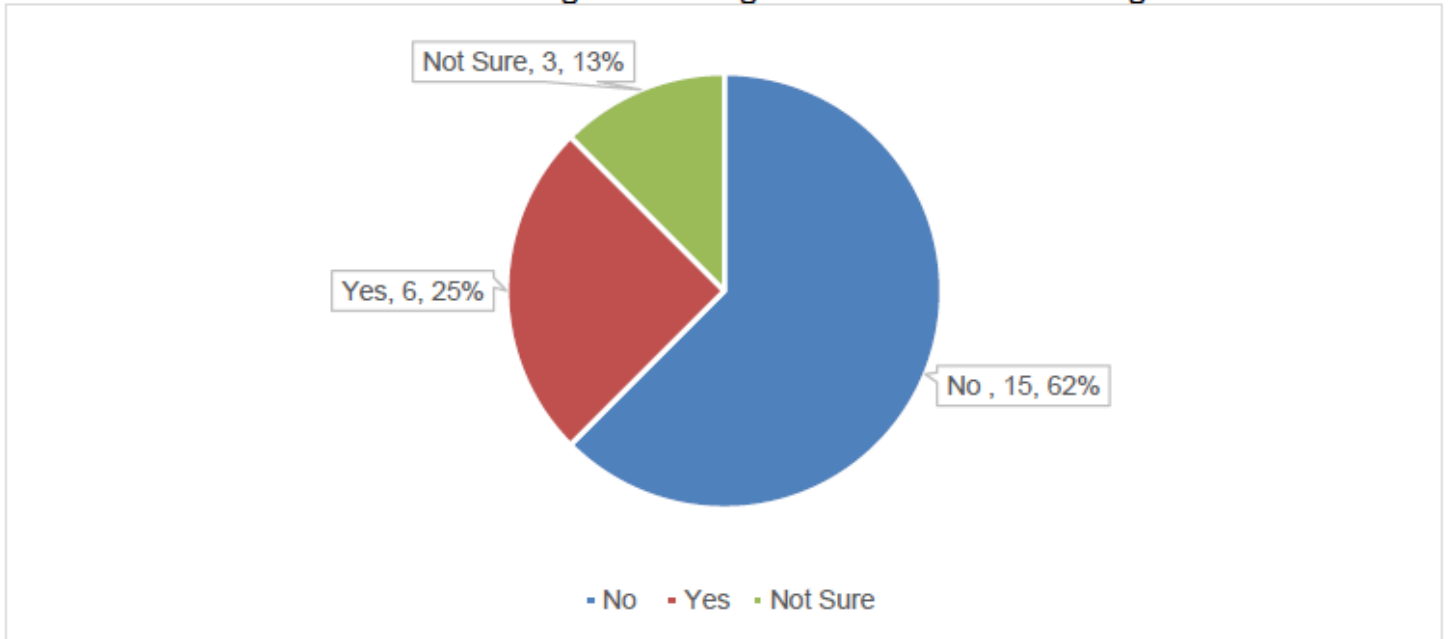
Question #4: Should a simple majority determine voting outcomes?



Question #5: Do You Think the Veto Power Provision Should Change?



Question #6: Do You Think the Weighted Voting Provision Should Change?



Division Project Updates

Division 13: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Div13_January_Updates.pdf

Division 14: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Div14_January_Updates.pdf

TPD Updates given by Daniel Sellers

FHWA/FTA Updates given by Suzette Morales

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

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

FHWA Updates – January 2024

Final Rule for Greenhouse Gas Emissions Performance Measure Effective January 8, 2024

On December 7, 2023, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published the final rule for the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions performance measure in the Federal Register [88 FR 85364], with an effective date of January 8, 2024. The final rule provides State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) a national framework for measuring and reporting transportation-related GHG emissions. More information is available [here](#) and [here](#).

Final Rule for Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices Effective January 18, 2024

On December 19, 2023, FHWA published the final rule adopting the [11th Edition of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways \(MUTCD\)](#) in the Federal Register [88 FR 87672], with an effective date of January 18, 2024. The MUTCD is the national standard for traffic control devices used on all public roads, bikeways, or private roads open to public travel. More information is available [here](#).

FRA Announces \$8.2 Billion in Awards for Passenger Rail Projects and Corridor Planning

On December 8, 2023, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) [announced](#) \$8.2 billion in awards from the Federal State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program and the Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID) Program. The Partnership Program will advance two high-speed rail corridors, and fund improvements to existing rail corridors for expanded service and performance. The Corridor ID Program aims to upgrade 15 existing rail routes, add or extend service on 47 new routes, and advance 7 new high-speed rail projects. More information is available [here](#) and [here](#).

USDOT Announces \$817 Million in Awards for Safe Streets and Roads

On December 13, 2023, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) [announced](#) \$817 million in awards from the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program for 385 projects across the country. The SS4A Program funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. More information is available [here](#) and [here](#).

USDOT Announces \$645 Million in Awards for Rural Transportation and Mobility

On December 12, 2023, the USDOT [announced](#) \$645 million in awards from the Rural Surface Transportation Grant (RSTG) Program. The RSTG Program supports projects that improve and expand the surface transportation infrastructure in rural areas to increase connectivity, improve the safety and reliability of the movement of people and freight, generate regional economic growth, and improve quality of life. More information is available [here](#) and [here](#).

FHWA Announces \$110 Million in Awards for Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program

On December 5, 2023, FHWA [announced](#) \$110 million in awards from the Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program (WCPP). The WCPP is a competitive grant program with the goal of reducing wildlife vehicle collisions while improving habitat connectivity for terrestrial and aquatic species. More information is available [here](#).

FHWA Announces \$9.7 Billion in Available Funding for Bridge Investment Program

On December 20, 2023, FHWA [announced](#) the availability of \$9.7 billion in funding through the Bridge Investment Program. FHWA is soliciting applications for “Planning” grants for planning, feasibility analyses, and revenue forecasting associated with the development of a project, and “Bridge Project” grants for bridge replacement, rehabilitation, preservation, and protection projects with total eligible

costs of \$100 million or less. The application deadline is March 19, 2024. More information is available [here](#) and [here](#).

FTA Announces \$343 Million in Available Funding to Make Transit Stations Accessible for All

On December 1, 2023, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) [announced](#) the availability of approximately \$343 million in funding through the [All Stations Accessibility Program \(ASAP\)](#). ASAP makes competitive funding available to assist in the financing of capital projects to repair, improve, modify, retrofit, or relocate infrastructure of stations or facilities for passenger use. The application deadline is January 30, 2024. More information is available [here](#) and [here](#).

USDOT Announces \$25 Million in Available Funding for Rural Autonomous Vehicle Program

On December 13, 2023, the USDOT [announced](#) the availability of \$25 million in funding through the Rural Autonomous Vehicle (RAV) Program. The RAV Program will be used for two awards to accredited non-profit institutions of higher education, or consortia thereof, as cooperative agreements on a competitive basis, to conduct research and to work with rural and Tribal communities to address the challenges of bringing the benefits of responsible integration of automated vehicles and associated technologies for air and surface mobility to rural and Tribal communities. The application deadline is March 13, 2024. More information is available [here](#) and [here](#).

Application Deadlines Approaching for Other USDOT Discretionary Grant Opportunities

Please be aware of the approaching application deadlines for the following discretionary grant opportunities from the USDOT:

- **January 17** – [Saving Lives with Connectivity: Accelerating Vehicle to Everything \(V2X\) Deployment](#);
- **January 23** – [Accelerated Innovation Deployment \(AID\) Demonstration](#);
- **February 2** – [Advanced Transportation Technology and Innovation \(ATTAIN\) Program](#);
- **February 13** – [Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility \(ICAM\) Pilot Program](#); and
- **February 28** – [Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity \(RAISE\) discretionary grant program](#).

FHWA Launches New Website for HEPGIS

The FHWA Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty recently launched a new website for HEPGIS, the Office's online geographic information system (GIS) for web-based applications, maps, and data. More information is available at <https://hepgis-usdot.hub.arcgis.com/>.

USDOT Resources for Benefit-Cost Analysis, Rural Grant Applications, and Equity

USDOT recently published the following resources:

- [Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs](#);
- [Benefit-Cost Analysis Spreadsheet Template for Discretionary Grant Programs](#);
- [Rural Grant Applicant Toolkit for Competitive Federal Transportation Funding](#); and
- [Intersections: Transportation Data + Equity Hub 1.0](#).

FHWA Resources for TPM, TSMO, Mitigation, Traffic Management, Safety, and Resilience

FHWA recently published the following resources:

- [Highlights From the Third Performance Management Regulation Peer Exchange Series for State DOTs](#);
- [Planning for Transportation Systems Management and Operations: A Practitioner's Reference](#);

- [Programmatic Mitigation Planning Guidebook](#);
- [Review of Traffic Management Systems - Current Practice](#);
- [Safe System Approach for the Urban Core](#);
- [Trails as Resilient Infrastructure Guidebook](#); and
- [Vulnerable Road User Research Plan](#).

NCHRP Research on Road Usage Charge and Resilience

The National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) recently published the following research:

- [Road Usage Charge Guide](#); and
- [Business Case and Communications Strategies for State DOT Resilience Efforts](#).

Upcoming Webinars on Equity, GHG, Advanced Air Mobility, and Unmanned Aircraft Systems

Here is the registration information for some upcoming webinars in 2024:

- **January 5** – [Cutting Carbon from Transportation: State and Local Best Practices](#);
- **January 5** – [Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity](#);
- **January 17** – [Environmentally Responsible Advanced Air Mobility](#);
- **January 23** – [Considerations for Equity in Advanced Air Mobility](#);
- **February 6** – [International Collaboration in Advanced Air Mobility](#);
- **February 7** – [Global Benchmarking Study on Unmanned Aircraft Systems](#); and
 - **February 15** – [The Advanced Air Mobility Workforce of the Future](#).

Committee & Workgroup Updates

Prioritization Subcommittee— met on November 1st; next meeting February 7th

Transit Operators' Workgroup— last met on September 18th; Points of Business/Discussion:

- **September 18th Agenda:**
 - 5307 funding updates
 - NCDOT Regional Transit Study Update
 - Updates from Agencies

5307 Subrecipient Workgroup- met on September 12th, 2023; plans to meet on January 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.

Hellbender Trail Stakeholder Group/Regional Trail Forum Updates- met on November 30th; next meeting TBD

MPO Studies Status

Study	Managing Entity	Year Programmed	Status
Reed Creek Greenway Feasibility Study	City of Asheville	2023	Underway
2050 Socio-Economic Projections	FBRMPO	2023	Consultant Selected; Awaiting NCDOT OIG Approval
CTP/MTP Update	FBRMPO	2024	LOIs Received; Consultant Selection In-Process
Safe Streets for All Regional Action Plan	FBRMPO	2024	Consultant Selected
Patton Avenue Corridor Study	City of Asheville	2023	Underway
Ridgecrest Connector Greenway Feasibility Study	Town of Black Mountain	2023	Underway
Cane Creek Greenway Study	Town of Fletcher	2024	Agreement Being Drafted
Woodfin-Weaverville Greenway Study	Town of Woodfin	2024	RFLOI 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

Legislative Updates:

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

ADJOURNMENT

Anthony Sutton adjourned the meeting at 2:50PM as there was no further business before the Board.