

Transportation Matters: FBRMPO Quarterly Update

Locally Administered Project Updates

Locally Administered Projects are projects that receive federal money based on the recommendations of MPOs or RPOs. The French Broad River MPO has several of these projects, primarily consisting of bicycle & pedestrian improvements across our region.

There are a lot of exciting updates for our Locally Administered Projects, and a lot of progress to look forward to in the near future! See below for the current status of projects expected to make significant progress this year:

- **RECENTLY COMPLETED:**
 - Broadway Street Pedestrian Improvements
 - I-240/Charlotte Street Interchange Improvements
- **UNDER CONSTRUCTION:**
 - Ecusta Trail (Kanuga Road to US 64)
 - Onteora Boulevard Sidewalks
 - New Leicester Highway Sidewalks
- **CONSTRUCTION TO BEGIN 2024:**
 - Biltmore Avenue/White Fawn Drive Intersection Improvements
 - Johnston Road Sidewalks
 - New Haw Creek Road Sidewalks
 - Town Branch Greenway
 - Haywood Road Resurfacing & Pedestrian Improvements
 - Maggie Valley Pedestrian Improvements
- **RIGHT-OF-WAY TO BEGIN IN 2024:**
 - Woodfin Greenway
 - Beaverdam Creek Greenway
 - Enka Heritage Trail
 - 9th Avenue Bridge Replacement (Black Mountain)

To see a more detailed list on the project status of all of our Locally Administered Projects, you can view the 'Locally Administered Projects' page on our website.

5310/JARC Call for Projects

On Thursday, January 18th the French Broad River MPO Board approved the opening of two calls for projects for public transportation projects qualifying for FTA 5310 and FTA Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) funding.

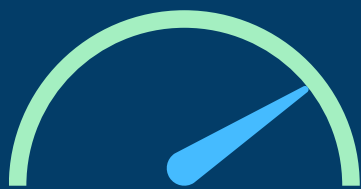
The FTA 5310 Call for Projects is making \$454,265 available in FTA funding to aid non-profit organizations, private operators, and public agencies in providing coordinated transportation services that are designed, planned, and implemented in order to meet the needs of elderly persons and persons with disabilities in the Asheville Urbanized Area.

The Jobs Access Reverse Commute (JARC) Call for Projects is making \$408,379 in FTA funding available to aid non-profit organizations, private transportation providers, and public agencies providing public transportation services. The goal of JARC is to improve access to transportation services to employment and employment-related activities for welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals as well as transportation service for residents of the Asheville urbanized areas to employment opportunities outside of City centers.

Applications for both calls for projects are due March 18th, 2024 at 5pm EST. Completed applications and other supporting documentation should be sent to mpo@landofsky.org. Please reach out to Hannah Bagli, hannah@landofsky.org, with any questions.

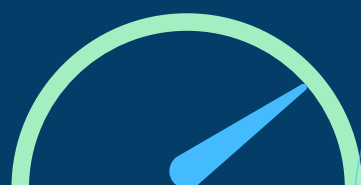
More information on the FTA funding being made available, eligibilities, cost-share requirements, and applications are available here: <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/5310-and-jarc/>

I-26 Construction Update



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

79% Complete -- 5/21/25 Completion



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

77.6% Complete -- 6/11/26 Completion

Around the Region

Safe Routes to School

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program has hit the ground running in the New Year. We have finalized our year one workplan, had our first committee meeting, supported a new school bike club, and done a lot of networking throughout the region. We will soon be finalizing our first round of eight pilot schools and gathering baseline data for our programming there. Each pilot school will be picked based on proximity to recently finished bike/ped projects, limited experience with SRTS, and several equity indicators. Please reach out to Ada with ideas/inspiration ada@landofsky.org.



HOT Lane Feasibility Study

The MPO Board provided a letter of support to NCDOT to conduct a feasibility study on high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes on I-40, west of I-26. HOT are HOV (High Occupancy Vehicle) lanes that allow vehicles that do not meet the traditional occupancy requirements for HOV lanes to pay a toll to use the lane. Variable pricing is used to manage the lanes, ensuring reliable performance and a steady flow of traffic in the lane. HOT lanes can help mitigate congestion and improve air quality. The study would potentially look at implementing HOT lanes on I-6054, which is the widening of I-40. For more information about HOT Lanes can be found here: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024_01_18_Board-Agenda-Packet-1.pdf

Passenger Rail Update

At the February MPO Board and TCC meetings, Jason Meyers with NCDOT presented an update on the WNC Passenger Rail project. The project, which aims to (re)connect Asheville to Salisbury via passenger rail, recently completed its initial study in December, 2023 and entered the Federal Rail Administration's Corridor ID Program in the same month. The Corridor ID program provides funding for NCDOT to develop a Service Plan and begin environmental work on the corridor to help provide more specifics on how the service could work as well as providing refined cost estimates. While entering the Corridor ID Program is a major step for the project, determining whether or not the project is implemented will be determined at a later date. The final study is available here: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/WNCReport_Final_2023-12-06.pdf A recording of the MPO Board meeting with the presentation from Jason Meyers is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-SIFs5_Vu70

Pedestrian Count

The pedestrian counter program is performed within the five-county region to assess activity of sidewalks and trails. Recent sidewalk surveys have been performed in Weaverville, during the Candlelight Stroll, and downtown Hendersonville on Main Street. Trail counts have been performed in Bill Moore Community Park in Fletcher and the Dr. W Otis Duck Memorial Greenway in Mars Hill. The purpose of these surveys is to measure usage during different seasons of the year, and to measure changes over the years. Feel free to say "Hi" to Jon Barsanti and his assistant "Cookie" when you see them out in the field. Information can be found on our Multimodal Planning Website: <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/multimodal/>



A photo of crews working on New Leicester Highway Sidewalks near the Land of Sky office

Upcoming Meetings

- **Prioritization Subcommittee:** March 6th, April 3rd, May 1st, June 5th 9:30am - 11:30am
- **MPO TCC:** March 14th, April 11th, May 9th, June 13th 11am - 1pm
- **MPO Board:** March 21st, April 18th, May 16th, June 20th 1pm - 3pm

Contact us:

mpo@landofsky.org

www.frenchbroadrivermpo.org/