

**French Broad River MPO
Prioritization
Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
August 7th, 2024**

ATTENDANCE in Person or Remote

Voting Members

William High, Buncombe County
Archie Pertiller, Town of Black Mountain
Jessica Morris, City of Asheville
Catherine Cordell, Town of Weaverville
Anthony Sutton, Town of Waynesville

Non-Voting Members

Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO
Hannah Bagli, FBRMPO
Jon Barsanti, FBRMPO
Mike Malecek, Town of Mills River
Emily Scott-Cruz, McAdams
Suzette Morales, FHWA
Hannah Smith, NCDOT Div 13
George Webb
Susan Bean

Stephan Sparks, NCDOT Div 13
Daniel Sellers, NCDOT – TPD
Daisy O’Connor-FBRMPO
Joel Strickland, McAdams
Lucy Crown, City of Asheville
Alex Mumby, Town of Waynesville
Colby Brown, Manhan Group
Janna Bianculli, City of Hendersonville
Vicki Eastland, LOSRPO

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Jessica Morriss started the meeting at 9:33AM with introductions. A quorum was announced, and roll was called.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jessica Morriss opened the floor for public comment. No comments were heard.

APPROVAL OF July 2024 MINUTES AND AGENDA

Anthony Sutton moved to approve the July 2024 meeting minutes and the agenda. Archie Pertiller seconded the motion which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

BUSINESS

4A. 2050 Socio-Economic Projections- Scenario Selection

Overview

As part of the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the MPO develops what's referred to as the "Preferred Growth Scenario" that determines how much growth the region should be planning to accommodate in 2050, what kind of growth is expected (in terms of demographics and business type), and where that growth is expected to go. This information feeds into the region's Travel Demand Model, which is used to develop traffic projections to determine future transportation needs.

Outputs from the model are used to build Purpose & Need Statements for future projects as well as a starting point for the development of traffic forecasts that NCDOT uses to determine roadway needs for projects.

Last Time (2020)

During the last time the MPO conducted this study in 2020 for the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the MPO hired Manhan Group to develop the socio-economic projections for the 2020 Travel Demand Model update. Manhan developed three different growth scenarios that the MPO Board used to recommend a Preferred Growth Scenario that was used. The scenarios included:

- 1) Business As Usual- future development patterns similar to recent development patterns
- 2) "Efficient" Growth- future development would be more constrained to areas with existing water and sewer infrastructure
- 3) "WalkUP" Scenario- future development would be more focused in walkable areas and areas with lower transportation impacts

The MPO Board adopted the "WalkUP" Scenario in 2020.

Decision for Today: Growth Scenarios for the 2050 Study

In July, Colby Brown presented seven potential growth scenarios for the study to pursue. Of those, staff recommends pursuing:

1. Business as Usual (with population projections from NC OSBM)
2. Upzoning Downtowns (with population projections from NC OSBM)
3. Downzoning Downtowns (with population projections from NC OSBM)
4. Increased Growth + Upzoning Downtowns (with alternative population projections, to be developed)

Other scenarios that could be considered:

1. Business as Usual (with population projections from private sources)
2. Upzoning Downtowns (with population projections from private sources)
3. Decreased Growth (with alternative population projects with lower growth projections than NC OSBM)

Action Requested: provide direction on the four scenarios for the 2050 Socio-Economic Study to pursue.

Discussion occurred around percentage of workforce coming in from other regions. Because of high cost of living in Asheville itself. A lot of our workers don't work here so we do have a lot of workers coming into downtown from other regions. We do have substantial individuals who commute within the different counties in our region ie Haywood- buncombe, etc. Reorganize the jobs so not many people are commuting. Consider planning for more growth than we are seeing today. Misconception that we are behind the national average in growth.

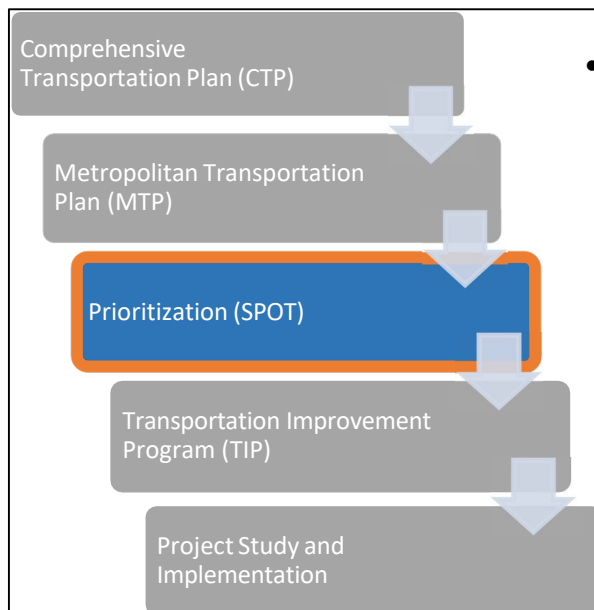
Downzoning the downtown area scenario mean upzoning the rural and suburban areas. Discussion over misconceptions of growth in our area. Be clearer on what "Downtown" means, as it can be vague. Consider not using words "Upzoning" and "Downzoning" as it has actual meaning and we don't want to confuse the public.

William High moves to support the four scenarios listed to recommend to the TCC. Anthony Sutton seconds the motion and it passed via a roll call vote.

4B. P 7 – Draft Local Input Point Assignment for Regional Impact Projects

Very Brief Overview

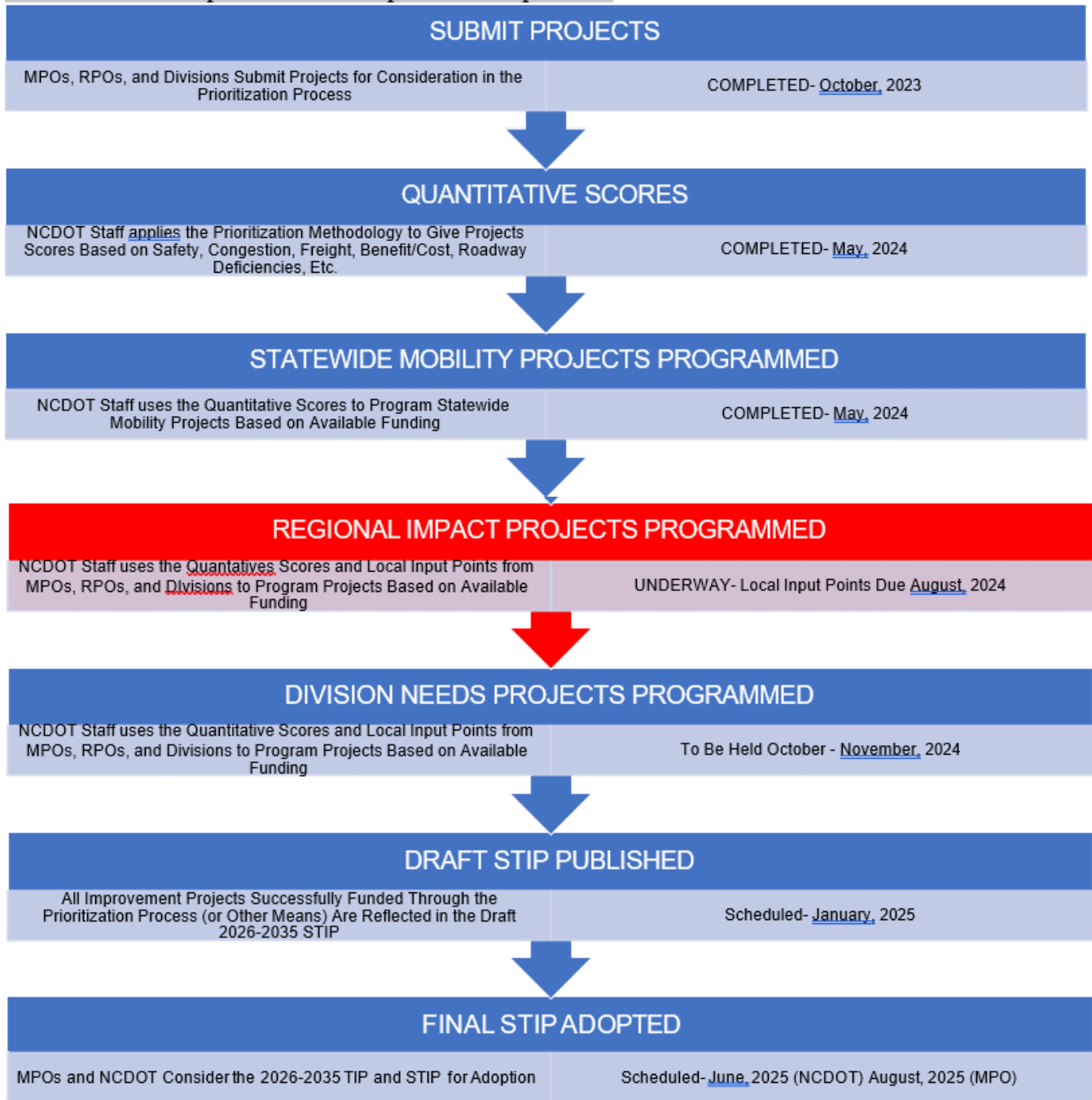
The Prioritization Process (AKA SPOT, AKA P 7) is the process in North Carolina that helps determine the majority of transportation improvements across the State. The process is dictated by the Strategic Highway Investments Act (STI) of 2012 and is generally designed to be a data-driven, transparent process to determine what transportation projects are funded or not. MPOs are engaged throughout the process to submit projects for consideration (along with Divisions and RPOs) as well as local input points that are used to boost the scores of projects competing for Regional Impact or Division Needs funding.



- Recommend which projects should receive Local Input Points in the Regional Impact tier

Where We Are in the Process

There are several steps involved in the prioritization process:



Funding Tiers

Per the STI law, funding is split into three different funding tiers. Each funding tier has different eligible projects and differs in how projects compete. Information is broken out below:

Funding Tier	Statewide Mobility	Regional Impact	Division Needs
Quantitative Score	100%	70%	50%
MPO Local Input Points	0%	15%	25%
Division Local Input Points	0%	15%	25%
Amount of All Funding in the Prioritization Process	40%	30%	30%
Distribution	All Projects Compete Against Each Other	Split Between Seven Regions, Projects Compete Within Each Region	Split Between 14 Divisions, Projects Compete Within Division
Funding	One Big Pot of Funds	Split to Each Region Based on Population	Split Equally Between 14 Divisions
Eligible Projects (in the FBRMPO)	Interstates, Strategic Highway Corridors (US 23/74 in Haywood County), Asheville Airport	US Highways, NC Highways, Anything Not Funded in the Statewide Mobility Tier that is Requested to Cascade	Secondary Roads, Stand-Alone Bike/Ped Projects, Transit Projects, Anything Not Funded in the Statewide Mobility or Regional Impact tiers that is Requested to Cascade

About the Regional Impact Tier

Quick Summary: No Funding Available

Funding Available: -\$191,000,000

Eligible Projects in Our Region: US Highways, NC Highways, Anything Not Funded in the Statewide Mobility Tier that is requested to cascade

Competition: Region G (pictured below)



Process for Developing Final Local Input Point Assignment

- MPO staff held county-by-county meetings with Board and TCC representatives on local priorities
- MPO staff applied the local input point methodology to score eligible projects in the Regional Impact tier
- The MPO Prioritization Subcommittee made a recommendation on the projects receiving local input points
- Draft local input points were assigned by the TCC & Board in June, 2024
- A Public Comment Period was/is being held from July 24th – August 14th on the Draft Assignment of Points

Draft Local Input Points:

Alternative #1: Follow the MPO's Methodology

Three Highway Priorities and One Non-Highway Project Based on Scores, Plus Two Additional Highway Projects for Geographic Equity

County	Route	From	To	Type of Improvement	Cost Estimate	MPO Score	SPO T Score	Points
Buncombe	US 19/23 (Smokey Park Highway)	I-40	NC 151 (Pisgah Highway)	Access Management	\$85,700,000	97	46.96	100
Buncombe	US 25 (Hendersonville Road)	NC 146 (Long Shoals Road)	NC 280 (Airport Road)	Access Management	\$132,200,000	92	37.60	100
Henderson	US 176 (Spartanburg Highway)	NC 225 (Greenville Highway)	Upward Road	Access Management	\$121,700,000	81	33.26	100
Haywood	US 19/23 (Asheville Highway/Park Street)	NC 215	Chestnut Mountain Road	Modernization	\$40,200,000	62	16.84	100
Madison	NC 213 (Cascade Street)	Athletic Street	Bone Camp Road	Access Management/ Widening	\$44,300,000	31	12.70	100

One Non-Highway Project (Only Non-Highway Project)

County	Route	From	To	Type of Improvement	Cost Estimate	MPO Score	SPO T Score	Points
Buncombe	WNC Passenger Rail	Asheville	Salisbury	Passenger Rail Service	\$133,000,000	85	41.81	15

15 points is the maximum number of points the MPO may assign to the WNC Passenger Rail project due to the project being 15% within the FBRMPO.

Changes From the Draft Local Input Point Assignment

In coordination with the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO), staff recommends the donation of 14 local input points to enable CRTPO to provide its maximum contribution of local input points for the WNC Passenger Rail project.

Action Requested: provide a recommendation to the TCC and Board on the Local Input Point assignment for Regional Impact projects

Discussion occurred around donation of points to the CRTPO and what that means with our points, clarification was given. Also if our points roll over or not. The points can be rolled into division needs pool but not others.

Anthony Sutton moved to recommend the Local Input Point assignment for the Regional Impact Projects plus the additional 14 points to the TCC. William High seconded the motion and it passed during a roll call vote.

4C. Ranking of Existing TIP/STIP Projects

MPO staff received a request from NCDOT to rank existing TIP/STIP projects to assist with the coordination for the development of the 2026-2035 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP.) The request and guidance from NCDOT was as follows:

As part of the development of the 2026-2035 Draft STIP, NCDOT is seeking input from Planning Organizations (POs) and Divisions on priorities of existing committed projects. These projects have previously been selected for funding through Prioritization 3.0 (P3.0), Prioritization 4.0 (P4.0), or Prioritization 5.0 (P5.0). The input will be used to assist the STIP Unit when adjusting schedules to meet federal and state fiscal constraint requirements. As you are aware, the P7.0 funding availability for many of the Regional Impact and Division Needs funding categories is in the negative (see attached funding availability as of May 17, 2024). For these funding categories, schedule changes will occur to meet federal and state fiscal constraint requirements for the Draft 2026-2035 STIP.

By default, the STIP Unit will use the Seniority Approach as the initial ranking of priorities for the 7 Regional Impact and 14 Division Needs funding categories (the Statewide Mobility category has already been completed). The Seniority Approach was recommended by the Prioritization Workgroup and approved by the Board of Transportation (BOT) to develop the 2024-2033 STIP. This approach ranks projects in each STI funding category as follows: highest to lowest scoring projects from P3.0, followed by highest to lowest scoring projects from P4.0, followed by highest to lowest scoring projects from P5.0.

POs and Divisions can modify rankings within their Region or Division as long as both the PO and Division agree on any changes. If the PO and Division do not agree on changes, or do not desire to make any changes, the STIP Unit will continue to use Seniority Approach rankings as input in the development of the Draft 2026-2035 STIP.

Based on discussions with the Prioritization Subcommittee in July, MPO staff setup meetings for the following groups to provide preliminary recommendations on the ranking of projects:

Region G- Prioritization Subcommittee recommendations in August, 2024.

Division 13- MPO TCC & Board members from Buncombe County

Division 14- MPO TCC & Board members from Haywood and Henderson counties

Region G:

SENIORITY RANK	STIP ID	ROUTE	DESCRIPTION	COUNTY(S)	TOTAL REMAINING STI COST	CURRENT ROW START FISCAL YEAR	CURRENT CON START FISCAL YEAR
1	U-2801AB	US 25A (SWEETEN CREEK ROAD)	SR 3116 (MILLS GAP ROAD) TO SR 3081 (ROCK HILL ROAD)	BUNCOMBE	\$ 117,198,000	2028	2031
2	A-0010AA	I-26 (US 19/US 23)	SR 1781 (BROADWAY STREET) TO US 25/70	BUNCOMBE	\$ 323,501,000	2028	2031
3	U-6049	NC 225 (SOUTH MAIN STREET)	SOUTH MAIN STREET AT SOUTH KING STREET TO US 176. WIDEN BRIDGE 440143 TO 5-LANES.	HENDERSON	\$ 7,800,000	2023	2027
4	I-2513AC	I-26/I-240	NORTH OF I-40 TO SR 3548 (HAYWOOD ROAD). WIDEN TO SIX LANE FREEWAY.	BUNCOMBE	\$ 282,589,000	2023	2025

Division 13:

MP O RAN K	STIP ID	MODE	ROUTE	DESCRIPTION	COUNTY(S)	TOTAL REMAININ G STI COST	CURREN T ROW START FISCAL YEAR	CURREN T CON START FISCAL YEAR
1	U-5834	Highway	SR 3116 (MILLS GAP ROAD)	US 25 (HENDERSONVILLE ROAD) TO SR 3157 (WESTON ROAD). UPGRADE EXISTING ROADWAY.	BUNCOMBE	\$ 25,533,000	2019	2025
2	I-4409	Highway	SR 2500 (BLUE RIDGE ROAD)	CONVERT I-40 / SR 2500 (BLUE RIDGE ROAD) GRADE SEPARATION TO INTERCHANGE. WIDEN SR 2500 (BLUE RIDGE ROAD) TO THREE LANES FROM US 70 TO SOUTH OF I-40 AND UPGRADE ROADWAY SOUTH OF I-40 TO SR 2713 (SOUTH BLUE	BUNCOMBE	\$ 31,901,000	2024	2025
3	EB-5822	Bike & Ped	GREENWAY WILMA DYKEMAN	NORTHERN TERMINUS NEAR <u>RIVERSIDE</u> DRIVE AND HILL STREET TO PEARSON BRIDGE ROAD. CONSTRUCT MULTI-USE PATH ALONG THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER.	BUNCOMBE	\$ 3,783,000	2025	2026

MP O RAN K	STIP ID	MODE	ROUTE	DESCRIPTION	<u>COUNTY</u> (S)	TOTAL REMAININ G STI COST	CURREN T ROW START FISCAL YEAR	CURREN T CON START FISCAL YEAR
4	EB-5965	Bike & Ped	DEAVERVIEW ROAD	US 19/23/74A (PATTON AVENUE) TO WESTMORE DRIVE IN ASHEVILLE. CONSTRUCT SIDEWALK.	BUNCOMBE	\$ 2,564,000	2026	2027
5	U-5019E	Highway	RIVERWAY MULTI-MODAL NETWORK	CRAVEN STREET BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS OVER THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER.	BUNCOMBE	\$ 4,250,000		2027
6	U-4739	Highway	SR 3556 (AMBOY ROAD/MEADOW ROAD)	I-240 TO NC 81/SR 3214 (BILTMORE AVENUE). UPGRADE ROADWAY WITH NEW BRIDGE OVER THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER.	BUNCOMBE	\$ 64,800,000	2025	2030
7	U-6047	Highway	NC 112 (SARDIS ROAD/SANDHILL ROAD)	NC 191 (BREVARD ROAD) TO US 19/23 (SMOKEY PARK HIGHWAY). WIDEN ROADWAY TO MULTI-LANES.	BUNCOMBE	\$ 136,598,000	2028	2031
8	U-5832	Highway	NC 81 (SWANNANOA RIVER ROAD)	SR 3214 (BILTMORE AVENUE) TO US 74A (SOUTH TUNNEL ROAD). WIDEN EXISTING ROADWAY.	BUNCOMBE	\$ 127,200,000	2028	2030

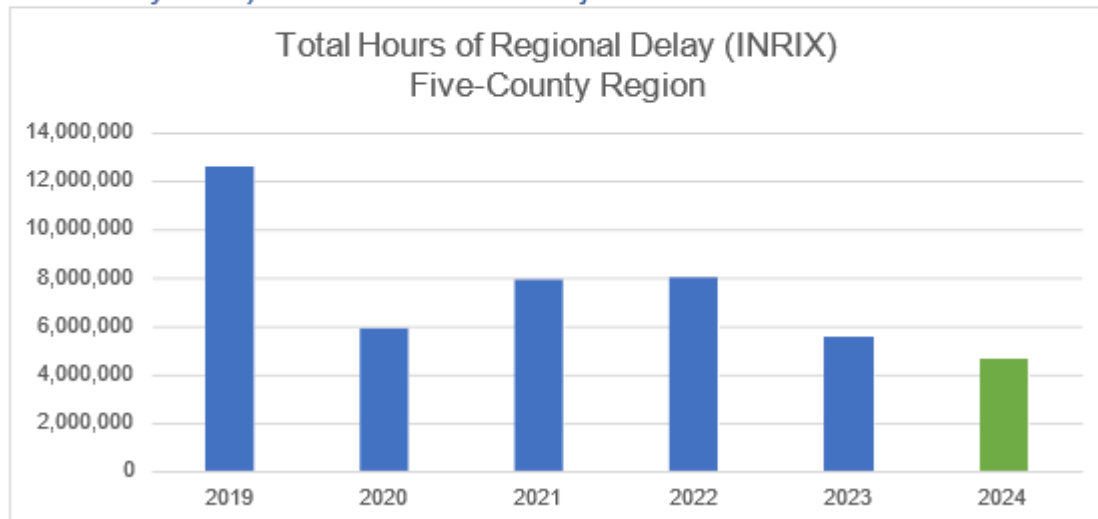
Division 14

MPO RANK	STIP ID	MODE	ROUTE	DESCRIPTION	COUNTY(S)	TOTAL REMAINING STI COST	CURRENT ROW START FISCAL YEAR	CURRENT CON START FISCAL YEAR
1	R-2588B	Highway	NC 191	SR 1381 (MOUNTAIN ROAD) TO NC 280 SOUTH OF MILLS RIVER.	HENDERSON	\$ 169,585,000	2021	2026
2	I-4400BA	Highway	I-26	US 64 INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS	HENDERSON	\$ 29,500,000		2029
3	U-5886	Highway	SR 1170 (WHITE STREET)	SR 1171 (WILLOW ROAD) TO US 176 (SPARTANBURG HIGHWAY). REALIGN AND EXTEND ROADWAY.	HENDERSON	\$ 36,400,000	2023	2027
4	U-4712	Highway	US 23 BUSINESSES (SOUTH MAIN STREET)	SR 1164 (HYATT CREEK ROAD) TO US 276 (PIGEON STREET). WIDEN TO MULTI-LANES.	HAYWOOD	\$ 57,402,000	2027	2030
5	U-6048	Highway	US 19, US 23	SR 1836 (CHESTNUT MOUNTAIN ROAD) TO SR 1200 (WIGGINS ROAD). UPGRADE ROADWAY.	HAYWOOD, BUNCOMBE	\$ 29,200,000	2028	2030
6	U-6158	Highway	US 276	SR 1134 (CRYMES COVE ROAD) AND RACCOON ROAD. INTERSECTION REALIGNMENT	HAYWOOD	\$ 3,801,000	2028	2030

MPO RANK	STIP ID	MODE	ROUTE	DESCRIPTION	COUNTY(S)	TOTAL REMAINING STI COST	CURRENT ROW START FISCAL YEAR	CURRENT CON START FISCAL YEAR
7	EB-5860	Bike & Ped	BLYTHE STREET	BLYTHE STREET, US 64 (BREVARD ROAD) TO NC 191 (HAYWOOD ROAD). CONSTRUCT SIDEWALKS.	HENDERSON	\$ 1,200,000	2025	2026
8	EB-5963	Bike & Ped	GROVE STREET	BARNWELL STREET TO US 176 (SPARTANBURG HIGHWAY). CONSTRUCT SIDEWALK.	HENDERSON	\$ 1,562,000	2025	2026
9	U-6159	Highway	US 276 (RUSS AVENUE)	US 23-74 (GREAT SMOKEY MOUNTAIN EXPRESSWAY) TO US 19 (DELLWOOD ROAD). ACCESS MANAGEMENT.	HAYWOOD	\$ 30,201,000	2028	2030

Data:

Hours of Delay [For](#) the Five-County (Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania) Area- 2024 Data is Projected to the Full Year



Discussion occurred around A10 segmenting and more clarification and description of what the segmenting entails. Discussion around I-26 connector project and if it could get delayed/pushed. And how if pieces of the I26 connector get put into other projects, how would that be impacted. Discussion of rankings went into Sweeten creek might be lower than the new stock rd. We need to have alternative routes than I26, which is why Sweeten creek is a better option to rank higher.

Jessica Morriss moved to recommend the rankings as amended to the TCC. Anthony Sutton seconded the motion and it passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jessica Morriss opened the floor for public comment. No comments were heard.

ADJOURNMENT

Jessica Morriss adjourned the meeting at 11:10 AM.