

**French Broad River MPO
Prioritization Subcommittee**

**Meeting Minutes
March 5th, 2025**

**ATTENDANCE in Person or Remote
Voting Members**

Archie Pertiller, Town of Black Mountain
Catherine Cordell, Town of Weaverville
Anthony Sutton, Town of Waynesville
Elizabeth Teague, Town of Waynesville
Autumn Radcliff, Henderson County
Jessica Morriss, City of Asheville
William High, Buncombe County

Non-Voting Members

Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO
Daisy O'Connor-FBRMPO
Steve Williams, NCDOT Div 14
Emily Scott-Cruz, McAdams
Stephen Sparks, NCDOT
Lyuba Zuyeva, VHB
Colby Brown, Manhan Group
Vicki Eastland, LOSRPO
Susan Bean,

Hannah Bagli, FBRMPO
Sandy Broadwill, Land of Sky Transportation
Daniel Sellers, NCDOT TPD
Mike Maleck, Town of Mills River
Joel Strickland, McAdams
Connor Klassen, VHB
Lucy Crown, City of Asheville
Hannah Smith, NCDOT Div 13

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Jessica Morriss started the meeting at 9:34AM 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 February 2025 MEETING MINUTES AND AGENDA

Anthony Sutton moved to approve the February 2025 Meeting Minutes. William High seconded the motion which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

BUSINESS

4A. HL-0003 Additional Funding Request

What is HL-0003?

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Route | US 19/23 Business (Haywood Road) |
| Project Limits | US 19/23/74 (Patton Avenue) to <u>Ridgelawn Road</u> |
| Lead Agency | NCDOT Division 13 |
| Year Funded | 2020 |
| Current Status | Received Bids for Construction |

Project Background

HL-0003 is a project in Buncombe County on Haywood Road in West Asheville that is funded with a combination of MPO Local Project funding and NCDOT resurfacing and other State funds. The project was originally a simple resurfacing but applied to the MPO for additional funds to add safety, pedestrian, and bicycle features to the corridor from Patton Avenue to Ridgelawn Road, in coordination with the West Asheville Business Association and City of Asheville.

Funding Request

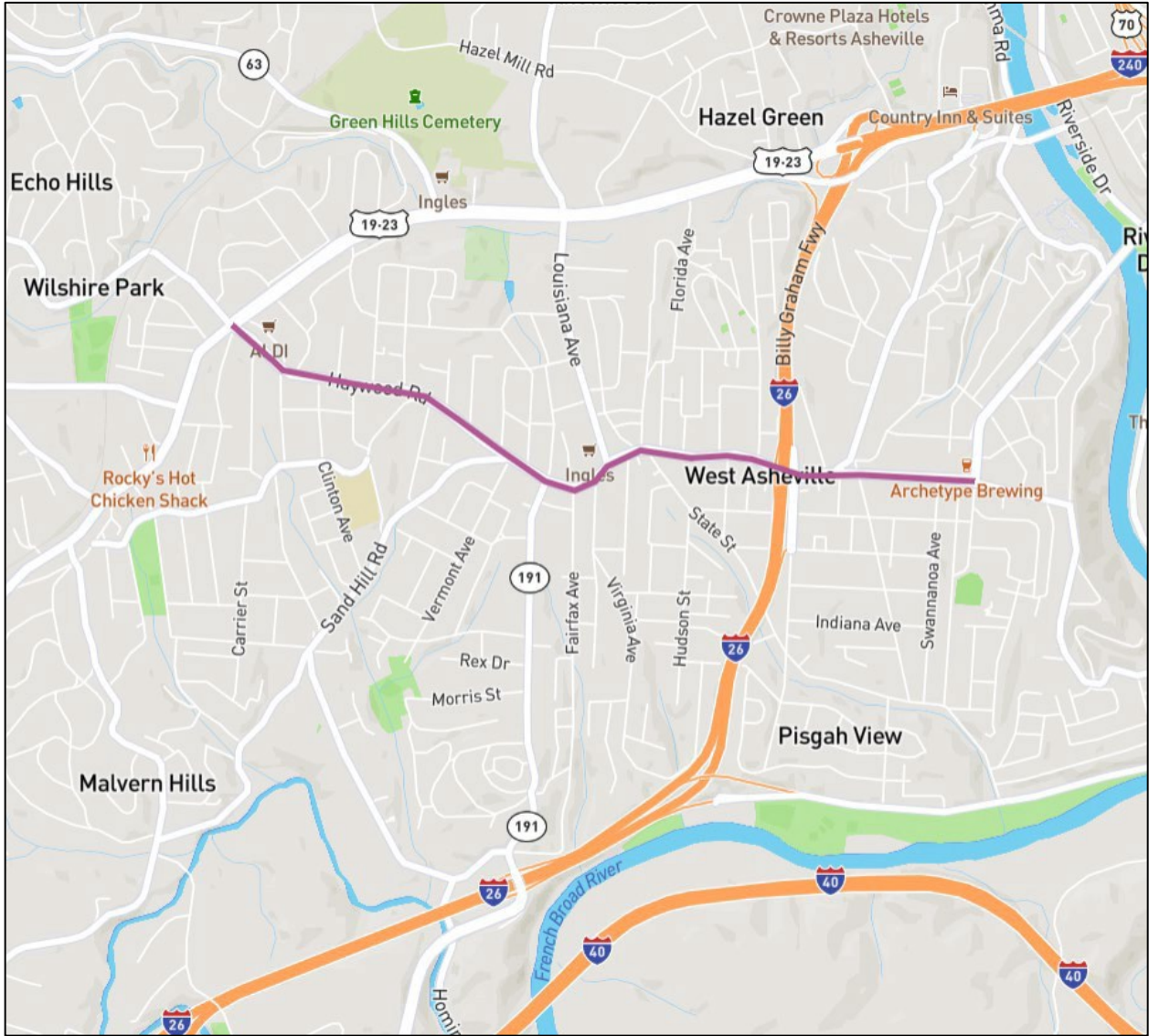
The project went to bid in 2024 and received no bids. It went to bid again and received bids that went over the amount of funding currently available.

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total Need for Const. | \$8,382,262.50 |
| Available Funding | \$6,122,745 |
| Additional Funds Needed | \$2,259,517.50 |

To address the gap, NCDOT is requesting that 50% of the additional funding come from the MPO and NCDOT will provide the other 50%. **The MPO's share would \$1,129,758.75**, in addition to what has already been programmed.

Impact on the FBRMPO Local Project Program

The project is expected to have no impact on the MPO's funding for local projects due to recently communicated "leftover" funds from U-5019B. U-5019B (French Broad River West Greenway) was a project that had \$4 million in federal funds from the MPO programmed to it but had \$1,967,052 remaining when it closed. \$713,328.77 was recently programmed from that amount of funding to reimburse the City for unaccounted for costs, leaving \$1,253,723.23 that is currently not programmed- more than sufficient to program for the Haywood Road project.



Discussion occurred around MPO provided funding and what exactly it means. By using the MPO funds does it allow the MPO to have a greater say in what occurs with this project. Discussion occurred around if we could use other funds instead. Because Haywood Rd didn't go through prioritization legally we can't fund with other funds. Discussion around the more projects we can get done the better. Some concern around the other projects that went through prioritization that have been decommitted vs this project. Discussion around if we do fund this project that it will complete this project.

Jessica Morris moved to recommend programming additional funding to HL-0003 to the TCC and Board. William High seconded and it passed upon a roll call vote.

4B. 5310 & JARC Project Selection

5310 Project Selection

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 application process for Section 5310 ran from January 16, 2025, to February 20, 2025. Additional information about Section 5310 is available at: <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/5310-and-jarc/>.

| FY2024 Call for Projects Application Timeline | |
|---|---|
| January 16, 2025 | 5310 and JARC Call for Projects opens |
| February 20, 2025 | 5310 and JARC applications due to FBRMPO |
| March 5, 2025 | FBRMPO Prioritization Subcommittee meets to review 5310 and JARC applications |
| March 13, 2025 | TCC approves 5310 and JARC project selection |
| March 20, 2025 | MPO Board votes on 5310 and JARC project selection |
| May 15, 2025 | MPO Board approves TIP Amendments for 5310 and JARC projects |

The 5310 Grant has two categories for funding:

- Traditional/Capital projects: at least 55% of the total funding amount has to go to “traditional” projects.
- Other/Operations projects: no more than 45% of the total funding amount can go to these projects

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|--|-----------|
| FY2023 5310 Available Funding | \$477,561 | 55% of Funds (Traditional)* | \$262,659 |
| Admin | \$47,756 | 35% of Funds (Other)* | \$167,147 |
| After 10% Admin | \$429,806 | *Note: percentage divisions were calculated before 10% Admin | |

**It is important to note that 10% of the original allocation is set aside for Administrative funds for the City of Asheville, so “Other” projects only receive up to 35% of total funding as a result since Traditional projects are required to receive a minimum of 55% of the allocation before administrative costs are considered.*

MPO Staff reviewed the 5310 applications, rating them based on a scorecard (out of 100 points). The following pages show recommendations for awarding 5310 funds based on scores. The quantitative scoring methodology was simplified for this round of funding. The Prioritization Subcommittee will select a project award scenario for recommendation to the Technical Coordinating Committee and subsequently the MPO Board.

| | Better Together Transportation (Traditional) | Buncombe County SEDTAP (Traditional) | Total Funding Required |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Project Code | BTT | BC SEDTAP | |
| Score (out of 100 points) | 63.5 | 100 | |
| Requested Amount | \$15,821 | \$262,659 | \$278,480 |
| Scenario 1 (94.32% Funding) | \$14,922 | \$247,740 | \$262,662 |
| Scenario 2 Awarded by Points | \$0 | \$262,659 | \$262,659 |
| Pro-Rated by Points | \$10,046 | \$262,659 | \$272,705 |
| Scenario 3 (pro-rated by Points) | \$9,676 | \$252,986 | \$262,662 |

Discussion around if Better Together had proper compliances and that they are new. Discussion around helping them understand more what the MPO would need in order to qualify them going forward. Working with them so that they could reapply next time.

Jessica Morriss moved to approve Scenario 2 to award BC SEDTAP fully. Archie Pertiller seconded the motion and it passed upon a roll call vote.

| | Buncombe County RIDE (Other) | Senior Companion Program (Other) | Senior Companion Program Caregiver Project (Other) | Council on Aging Buncombe County (Other) | Total Funding Required |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|------------------------|
| Project Code | BC RIDE | SCP | SCP-CP | COA BC | |
| Score (out of 100 points) | 95 | 90 | 90 | 88 | |
| Requested Amount | \$53,215 | \$83,550 | \$83,529 | \$24,000 | \$244,295 |
| Scenario 1 (68.42% Funding) | \$36,410 | \$57,165 | \$57,151 | \$16,421 | \$167,147 |
| Scenario 2 Awarded by Points | \$53,215 | \$83,550 | \$30,381 | 0 | \$167,147 |
| Pro-Rated by Points | \$50,554 | \$75,195 | \$75,176 | 21120 | \$222,046 |
| Scenario 3 (pro-rated by Points) | \$38,055 | \$56,604 | \$56,590 | \$15,898 | \$167,147 |

Discussion around if BC Ride is able to work at a lower fund if Scenario 1 is chosen. Discussion occurred around more explanations on what the remaining projects were exactly. Discussion around clarification on scenarios. Discussion that we came up with the point system deliberately and that scenario 2 would be a better way to go. What is the percentage of funding would the awarded amount go towards the applicants budgets. Discussion on if the members that scored higher have a history of good reporting.

Catherine Cordell moved to approve Scenario 3 to the TCC and Board. Jessica Morriss seconded the motion and it passed upon a roll call vote.

JARC Project Selection

JARC (Jobs Access Reverse Commute) funds are allocated to the Asheville Urbanized Area, with the City of Asheville serving as the designated recipient for these funds. The application process for JARC ran from January 16, 2025, to February 20, 2025. Additional information about JARC is available at: <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/5310-and-jarc/>.

FY 2024's Section 5307 (JARC) Allocation

**Regional JARC - FY 2024 at 10% of
FTA 5307 Amount allocated to
Asheville Urbanized Area**

\$ 412,909

| Applicant | Project Title | Period of Performance | Project Description | Funding Requested | Local Match | Total Cost | Project Score |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|-------------------|-------------|------------|---------------|
| City of Asheville | ART Routes 170 and S3 | 7/2025-6/2026 | The City of Asheville is seeking support through the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC, Section 5307) grant to sustain the operations of its pivotal public transportation routes, Route 170 and Route S3. These services are essential in bridging the mobility gap for low-income individuals, enabling seamless access to employment opportunities, and fostering community and <u>region</u> connectivity. | \$412,909 | \$412,909 | \$825,818 | 90 |

Scoring was based on a scorecard (out of 105 points). The following pages show recommendations for awarding JARC funds based on scores. The quantitative scoring methodology was simplified for this round of funding.

Autumn Radcliff moved to recommend to fund City of Asheville's JARC Application for ART Routes 170 and S3 at 100% of their funding request to the Board and TCC. William High seconded the motion and it passed upon a roll call vote.

4C. 2050 Socio-Economic Projections

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.

Today's Update

- Colby Brown will present the four growth scenarios and transportation impacts on the regional network
 - The Subcommittee will be asked to recommend a "Preferred Growth Scenario" to the MPO TCC and Board

Overview of the Selected Scenarios:

1. **Business as Usual**- growth would be dictated by a combination of comprehensive plans and market forces with the general intent that growth patterns would not change significantly based on current patterns and comprehensive plans. Growth total: NC OSBM
2. **Consolidated Growth**- growth would be more focused in more walkable areas (WalkUPs), areas with lower VMT/HH, and/or generally more developed areas. The intent would be to focus more growth in areas more conducive to shorter trips and densify urban areas beyond what is likely in current plans and UDOs. Growth Total: NC OSBM
3. **Dispersed Growth**- growth would be more focused in areas with lower densities in order to avoid densification of the region beyond what is currently in comprehensive plans. Growth Total: NC OSBM
4. **Accelerated Growth**- growth rates would exceed current projections with the hopes of accommodating additional housing and avoiding becoming a region being heavily-reliant on its working-age population being outside of the region as well as alleviating housing price pressures. Growth Total: Custom

Discussion around concerns around the accelerated model and how maybe the consolidated growth might be more realistic and expected. Discussion around walkability and also around water/sewer and how dispersed growth wouldn't work for all areas. Consolidated Growth seems to be the more preferred scenario by the members.

Anthony Sutton moved to propose the Consolidated Growth Scenario. Archie Pertiller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4D. Elevate 2050- Prioritization Methodology & CTP Project List

Elevate 2050, or the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) update, 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).

Items for Today:

- Draft Prioritization Methodology
- Project List
- Next Steps

Draft Prioritization Methodology

VHB will present the draft methodology for prioritizing MTP projects. The methodology was developed based on required Federal transportation planning factors and the adopted Elevate 2050 Goals. VHB will provide presentation slides for the Prioritization Subcommittee to reference. It is anticipated that the Prioritization Subcommittees comments will be incorporated into the methodology approach during this meeting as project scoring will occur throughout the month of March prior to Phase 3 of Public Engagement.

The proposed FBRMPO MTP scoring approach includes a two-tier process:

- Tier I evaluates the need (200 points).
- Tier II measures sustainability and context sensitivity (100 points).
- Projects scoring highest in Tier I advance to Tier II

Final project scoring is based on a combination of Tier I and Tier II scores to determine project ranking. High-ranking projects are prioritized until funding for the category is exhausted, aligned with MTP horizon years.

Transit projects compete only against other transit projects (separate funding source assumption); the same applies to rail projects.

Stakeholder Oversight: The Prioritization Subcommittee approves the final project list. The proposed FBRMPO MTP scoring criteria were separated to score “statewide mobility”

projects separately from those projects that are likely to be candidates for “regional” or “division needs” tier funding as part of Statewide STI Project Prioritization.

ⁱ Access in Appalachia online interactive map (turn on the bicycle and pedestrian opportunity layer)
<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/428e723717af40cead1db7c38a0bbc4f/page/Access-In-Appalachia/>

ⁱⁱ Key community resources (destinations) include: affordable housing, multi-family housing, senior housing, nursing homes, schools, daycare, gyms, parks, recreation centers, and places of worship from the FBRMPO destination database; government offices; SNAP Retailers (grocery store/supermarket). Subject to local data available, except for USDA SNAP locations.

Information Only.

Discussion occurred around rebalancing statewide scoring methodology. Also that transit is separate. Discussion about impacts about I-40 work in the gorge and the constriction of that corridor and how it relates to this.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Elizabeth Teague opened the floor for public comment. No comments were heard.

ADJOURNMENT

Elizabeth Teague adjourned the meeting at 11:52 AM.

