

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
Minutes from the Governing Board Meeting on September 18th, 2025

Attendance:

In-Person and Remote via the Zoom Platform:

Kim Roney	City of Asheville
Sage Turner	City of Asheville
Chuck McGrady	BOT D14
Dr Ralph Hamlett	Town of Canton
Emily Whitmire	Village of Flat Rock
Jim Player	Town of Fletcher
Kevin Ensley	Haywood County
Parker Sloan	Buncombe County
Jennifer Hensley	City of Hendersonville
George Banta	Town of Laurel Park
Matt Wechtel	Madison County
Tom Widmer	Town of Montreat
Drew Stephens	Town of Biltmore Forest
Anthony Sutton	Town of Waynesville
Catherine Cordell	Town of Weaverville
Jim McAllister	Town of Woodfin
Daniel Sellers	NCDOT TPD
Steve Williams	NCDOT Division 14
Chris Medlin	NCDOT Division 13
Tim Anderson	NCDOT
Chris Lee	NCDOT
Doug Phillips	NCDOT Div 13
Nathan Moneyham	NCDOT
John Hunter	NCDOT TPD
Billy Clark	NCBOT Div 13
Brandon Rogers	Haywood County
David Roy	NCTA

Members without Representation present:

Town of Black Mountain
Town of Clyde
Town of Maggie Valley
Town of Mars Hill
Rural Transit
Urban Transit
Town of Mills River

Additional Attendees:

Tristan Winkler (FBRMPO)	Hannah Bagli (FBRMPO)	Daisy O'Connor (FBRMPO)
Asha Rado (LOSRC, Minutes)	Sandy Broadwill(FBRMPO)	Joel Strickland (McAdams)
Julia Murphey(public)	Robert Harmon(Public)	Barbara Collett (Public)
Joyce Roberts (public)	Lyuba Zuyera(VHB)	

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & ROLL CALL

Anthony Sutton called the meeting to order at 1:01 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 conflict's were had.

Quorum was announced to conduct the business of the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Anthony Sutton opened the floor for public comment.

Summarization of comments, please see recording for full commentary:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAzy3IYJNfc>

Barbara Collett- Sidewalks needed in Woodfin, lots of traffic, more people living on road and sidewalks are needed. She was t-boned because of the blind curve and it is a narrow road. She is hoping that we will fund that project.

Robert Harmon-Woodfin, owner of elk mountain motors on Elk Wood Ave. It is right at blind curve and top of hill by water plant. There have been many close calls pulling in and out of parking lot. Would like speed limit lowered again to 25 as it is a residential street. Sidewalks would be a tremendous help. The Ipex has a lot of employees who walk to and from work. Excessive speeding occurs frequently.

-Uda Brunstetter asked that Robert speak on her behalf. Lived on elk wood for past 21 years, traffic has dramatically increased.

Joyce Roberts- Woodfin, she is a resident of elk wood ave, she has lived in that house since 1962, she references a sidewalk that used to exist but after the four lane was built it made changes to the sidewalk and now there is no sidewalk, the curb was paved over and there is nothing but weeds there and there is no place

for people to walk. Desperately need a sidewalk before there is a tragedy.

CONSENT AGENDA

3A. August 2025 Meeting Minutes:

https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/2025_8_21_MPO.DRAFT_Board_Minutes.pdf

3B. Memorandum of Understanding Final Approval:

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a formal agreement between various governmental entities and stakeholders involved in metropolitan transportation planning.

What an MOU for an MPO Includes

1. Governance Structure:

- **Organizational Framework:** Details the structure of the MPO, including decision-making processes and membership.
- **Decision-Making Processes:** Describes how decisions will be made, including voting rights and procedures.

2. Funding and Resources:

- **Financial Contributions:** Specifies how funds will be provided to the MPO for operations and planning

3. Responsibilities and Obligations:

- **Planning Duties:** Outlines planning duties and deliverables, such as transportation plans and studies.
- **Compliance:** Addresses compliance with federal, state, and local regulations and requirements.

4. Termination:

- **Termination Conditions:** Defines conditions under which the MOU can be terminated by any party.

Summary of Changes to the MOU

-Formatted changes to meet with the approved MOU template from NCDOT

-MPO Board membership changes

-Transylvania County removed as a non-voting member

-Urban Transit Representative clarified

-Rural Transit Representative clarified

-FTA Representative added as a non-voting member

-MPO TCC membership changes

-Transylvania County removed as a non-voting member

-FTA Representative, NCDOT Freight Representative, NCDOT Rail Representative, Regional Housing Representative, and Vulnerable Road Users Representatives added as a non-voting members

-A section on dues-paying members and local dues responsibilities was added

Steps Since the Draft Approval

Since the Board and TCC approved the Draft MOU, every member jurisdiction of the MPO has approved the MOU. No significant changes have been made since the draft MOU went before Board and TCC.

Approval by the Board and TCC will make the new MOU the official MOU for the French Broad River MPO.

3C. Board Bylaws:

With the new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), a number of changes to keep the bylaws in-line with the MOU. This includes:

- updating membership in the bylaws to reflect the changes to membership in the MOU
- formalizes Transit Representative seats (previously done by amendment)
- adds FTA non-voting seat
- removes Transylvania County non-voting seat
- updating references to the MOU

The updated bylaws are provided below.

<https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/FBRMPO-Board-Bylaws- 2025 Redline.pdf>

3D. TCC Bylaws:

With the new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), a number of changes to keep the bylaws in-line with the MOU. This includes:

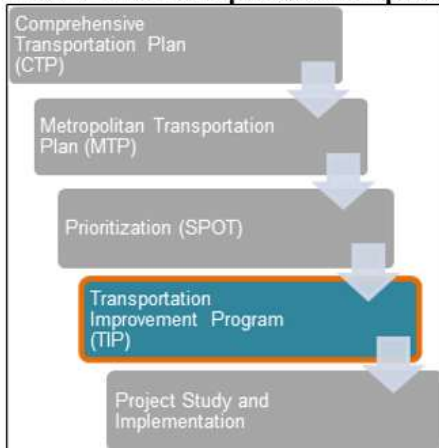
- updating membership in the bylaws to reflect the changes to membership in the MOU
- removes NCDOT Statewide Bicycle Committee seat (the committee has been inactive for several years)
- adds a number of non-voting seats at FHWA's request:
 - NCDOT Freight representative
 - NCDOT Integrated Mobility Division representative
 - NCDOT Rail representative
 - NCDOT Regional Safety Engineer representative
 - FTA representative
 - At-large Regional Housing representative
 - At-large Vulnerable Road Users representative
- removes Transylvania County non-voting seat
- removes NCDOT Public Transit Division (defunct division at NCDOT)
- updating references to the MOU

The updated bylaws are provided below.

<https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/FBRMPO-TCC-Bylaws- 2025 Redline.pdf>

3E. Modifications to the 2024-2033 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

What is the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)?



The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is our region's document that reflects planned transportation investments over a ten-year period. The TIP describes each project, a schedule for implementation, funding sources, and estimated costs.

Modification Highlights:

Amendments this month include:

- Various guardrail installations in Divisions 13 and 14.
- Correcting EB-5774A to match the STIP

All TIP Amendment Summaries can be found here:

https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/SeptemberTIP_Modifications.pdf

Matt Wechtel moved to approve the TAC Agenda, consent agenda including the August 2025 minutes, MOU, the Board Bylaws, the TCC Bylaws and the amendments to the 2024-2033 TIP. Jim McAllister seconded the motion which passed upon a unanimous roll call vote.

4. Public Hearing on the adoption of the Elevate 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan:

Billy Clarke moved to open the public hearing. Chuck McGrady seconded the motion and it passed upon a unanimous roll call vote.

Comment period opened at 1:14 PM

No comments were heard.

Billy Clarke moved to close the public hearing. Chuck McGrady seconded the motion. Chair Anthony Sutton allowed the meeting to close without a roll call vote.

Hearing closed at 1:15 PM

Business:

5A. Adoption of the Elevate 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Elevate 2050/MTP Final Draft

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 must 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).

Updates:

The draft Elevate 2050 plan was available for public comment between July 7 and August 15, 2025, and three public meetings were held between July 7-9. During the course of the draft Elevate 2050 plan being made available for comment, 492 people visited the survey site and 14 comments were received.

Since the draft was published, several edits were made to the document as well as the incorporation of project changes presented to this group in August 2025.

Approval from the TCC and Board is required in September 2025 to keep the region in compliance with federal requirements.

Key Elements of Elevate 2050:

- Federally required planning factors are incorporated throughout the entirety of the document to visually connect each portion of the plan to federal requirements.
- The Elevate 2050 Vision, Goals, and Objectives are outlined in *Chapter 02*, and were written following Phase 1 of public engagement.
 - **Vision Statement:** The FBRMPO region envisions a resilient, equitable, connected, and well-maintained multimodal transportation system that reflects the unique character of the region and its terrain, while getting all travelers and goods to their destinations safely, easily, and reliably. This system supports an inclusive, healthy, and economically vibrant region that aligns with land use goals and expands mobility choices
- Growth projections for the FBRMPO area over the next 25 years.
 - Based on the Socioeconomic and Land Use Study, which was completed in May 2025 with the Preferred Growth Scenario approved by the Board in March 2025.
 - The adopted scenario, Consolidated Growth, predicted continued growth focused in more urban areas with overall reduction in vehicle miles traveled and aspirational policy changes.
 - The study projects more than 84,000 new residents in the region and over 74,000 new jobs.
- *Chapter 04. Existing Conditions* summarized the trends and status in the FBRMPO region for:
 - **Safety:** Crash rates have increased, especially for vulnerable users (pedestrians, cyclists). The region is developing a regional safety action plan (Safe Streets for WNC).
 - **Congestion:** Concentrated along I-26, I-40, and US-25 corridors. Non-recurring congestion (e.g., crashes, weather) is a major contributor.
 - **Freight:** The region is a key freight corridor with growing truck volumes and limited truck parking. Hurricane Helene disrupted freight routes.
 - **Public Transit:** Multiple providers offer fixed-route and demand-response services. Ridership has declined post-COVID and post-Helene.
 - **Bicycle & Pedestrian:** Significant investment in greenways and trails (e.g., Ecusta Trail, Hellbender Trail). Challenges include funding, topography, and safety.

- **Rail:** Interest in restoring passenger rail service (Asheville–Salisbury corridor). Freight rail is recovering from Helene-related damage.
 - **Aviation:** Asheville Regional Airport (AVL) is the third busiest in NC, with major expansions underway.
 - **Tourism:** Increasing off-season travel underscores the need for resilient, multimodal infrastructure that can handle seasonal surges and year-round demands. Improved connectivity between key destinations should remain a top priority to alleviate congestion, support workforce mobility, and enhance visitor experience.
 - **Technology:** Planning for electric vehicles, connected/autonomous vehicles, and intelligent transportation systems (ITS).
- The summary of public engagement addresses the outreach conducted throughout the timeline of the Elevate 2050 process. *Appendix B. Public Engagement* and *Appendix H. Public Comments Received* expand upon the outreach efforts that factored into the development of the Elevate 2050 plan.
 - 130 attendees at public meetings/workshops
 - 36 attendees to virtual focus groups
 - 938 online survey respondents with over 9,000 visits to the project website throughout the development of Elevate 2050.
 - *Chapter 06. Modal and Policy/Program Recommendations* provide guidance to the FBRMPO regarding broad efforts and specific studies to consider going forward, supplementing the fiscally constrained infrastructure project list in the plan.
 - The Financial Plan outlines the anticipated revenues for the next 25 years and how those funds will be allocated.
 - The financial plan is based on STI/SPOT with roadway funding broken out into Statewide Mobility, Regional Impact, and Division Needs tiers. Bike/ped funding projections represent a combination of STI/SPOT projections and the MPO's Locally Administered Projects funding. Transit funding was based on federal, state, and local contributions.
 - An inflation factor of 5% was used; however, to simplify the process of programming projects, the inflation factor was subtracted from the revenue (versus being added to the revenue), allowing for project costs to be programmed in current year dollars.
 - Elevate 2050 identifies the projects that fall within fiscal constraints (e.g. the projects within each funding tier that can be delivered within the forecasted funds through 2050).
 - There are three (3) horizon year periods that helped guide projections:
 - Near Term (FY26-35)
 - Mid-Term (FY36-45)
 - Long-Term (FY46-50)

- The Near-Term horizon year funding only includes currently programmed STIP projects.

Changes to the Draft Elevate 2050 Plan (since July 7, 2025):

Slight grammatical changes were made as well as inclusion of a section on High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes, electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure, and environmental mitigation activities. Additional appendices were added, including: *Appendix G. Model Output Summary*, which addresses the travel demand model outputs with Elevate 2050 projects incorporated, *Appendix H. Public Comments Received*, which provides full reports from each phase of public comments, and *Appendix I. Plan Revisions*, which identifies the additions to the plan between when the draft was published for comment and adoption of the plan.

Actions Required:

- The Elevate 2050 Plan goes before the TCC and Board for adoption.

The MTP is available here: <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Elevate2050MTP-090225-WithoutAppendices-compressed.pdf>

The appendices, including the unfunded portion/updated CTP is available here: <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Elevate2050MTP-090325-AppendicesOnly.pdf>

Joel Strickland with McAdams presented.

Discussion around clarity for projection for population has decreased, do we know why the state would say it would decrease from the model. What changed? That was part of the socio-economic study, it's not that the population is decreasing but our rate of growth is starting to slow. Comments around where the full plan and appendices are listed.

Billy Clarke moved to approve the Elevate 2050 MTP and adopt it. Dr Ralph Hamlett seconded the motion, roll was not called as there was an amendment added before we could vote.

Discussion around the in-person comment sessions and how many people attended and what their comments were. Wanted a reminder how many people participated and what their top concerns and curiosities were. Somewhere between 200-250 total votes in the four sets of public engagement. The survey ended up with over 500 participants. Heard a lot about bike ped routes/greenways, public transportation, biggest thing was on the active transportation side. The number one concern that council member Kim Roney heard was public safety on all modes of transportation. Where are the decision making points on how to shift that percentage so that 10% isn't the max option the MPO has.

Kim Roney motioned to add a friendly amendment that we include a note that we would like to see a shift in a greater % be allowable for pike and pedestrian infrastructure to help meet our safety goals. Parker Sloan seconded the motion, Billy Clarke and Dr Ralph Hamlett accepted amendment and it was passed upon a unanimous roll call vote.

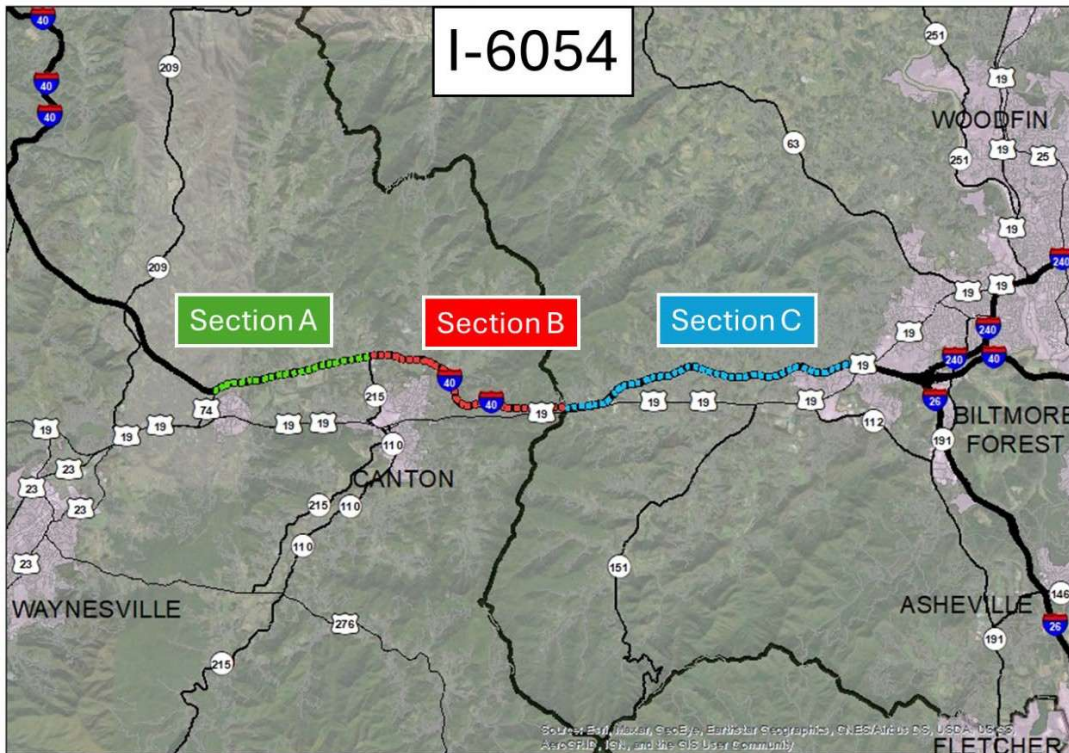
5B: I-40 Managed Lanes: NCDOT Update & P8 Considerations

I-40 from roughly Exit 44 near Monte Vista Road in Buncombe County to Exit 27 (US 23/74) in Haywood County. The project has been submitted as a widening since P 5 and was an uncommitted project in the STIP (I-6054.)

In the past, I-6054 has been submitted in three sections:

Section A: US 23/74 (Smokey Mountain Expressway) to NC 215 (Champion Drive) Section B: NC 215 (Champion Drive) to Exit 37 (Wiggins Road)

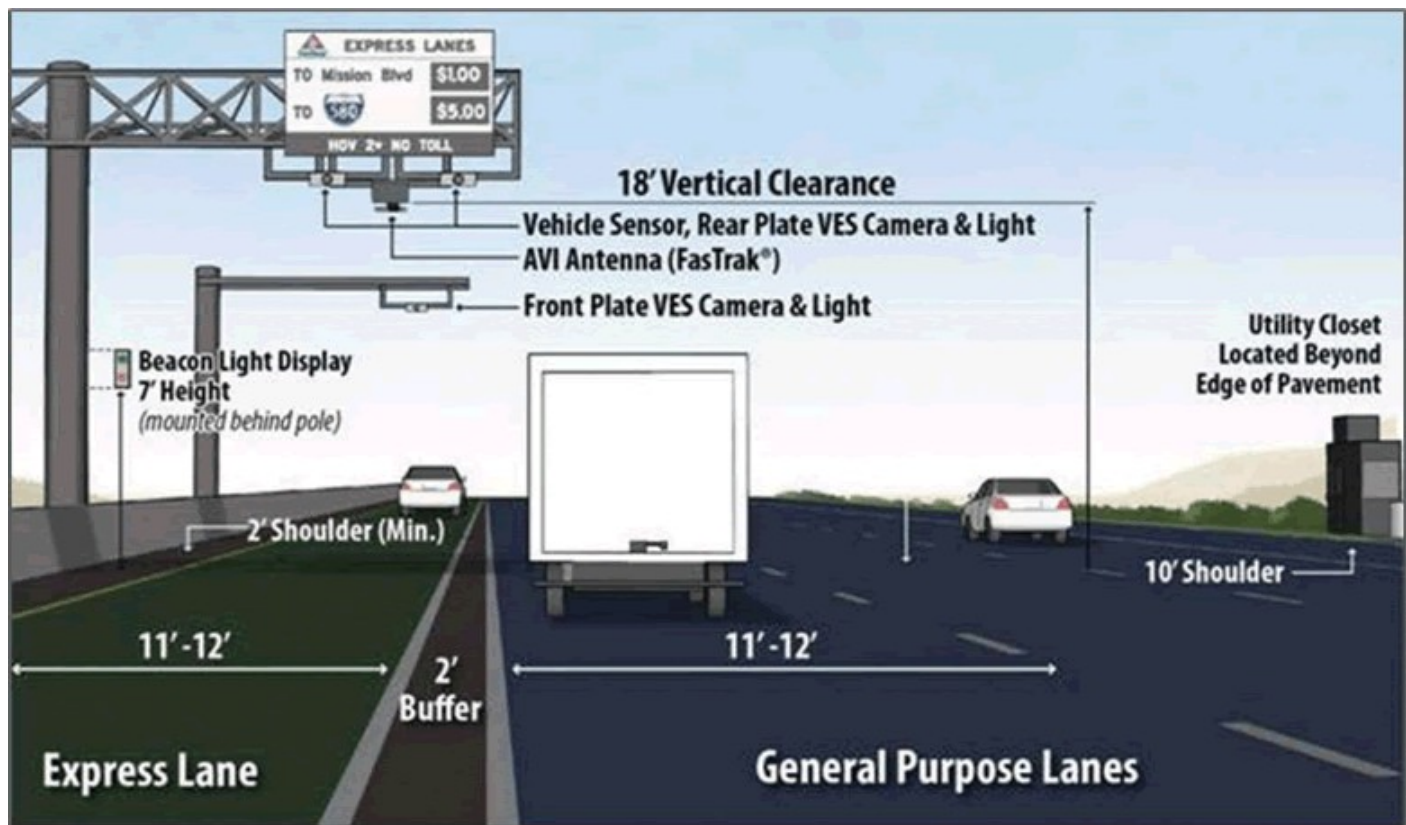
Section C: Exit 37 (Wiggins Road) to Monte Vista Road



What are Managed Lanes?

Managed lanes are special highway lanes where traffic flow is actively controlled, often using tolls, to keep vehicles moving reliably. They give drivers the option to pay for a faster trip, while carpoolers and buses may use them for free, helping reduce congestion in the regular lanes.

The potential application in I-6054's case would most likely be with High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes. This would leave the existing lanes on I-40 as free-flow lanes, while additional lanes would be managed and tolled.



1- Example Cross-Section of Express Lanes from the "Priced Managed Lane Guide" by FHWA

Past Discussion

In 2018, the MPO adopted the [Congestion Management Process](#), a federally-required plan that sets congestion targets and recommends strategies for addressing congestion. In the plan, "Managed Lanes" are identified as a potential application to address congestion on I-40 in West Buncombe and Haywood counties.

In January, 2024 the MPO Board voted to support a study led by NCDOT to look at the feasibility of managed lanes on the I-6054 project. The study's findings were presented to staff on September 6, 2025.

Study Findings

Representatives from NCDOT will report on the findings of the study. In general, the study found that managed lanes on I-6054 would likely be financially viable, help the project score better, and would likely be eligible for the maximum amount of bonus allocations (\$100 million) that would enable the MPO to program additional projects in Buncombe and Haywood counties.

General Reasons for Consideration PROS

- **Better Scoring in Prioritization-** the project would likely score better due to the reduced need of State funding to do the project (the benefit/cost score would be expected to improve), making the project more competitive.
- **Funding For Additional Improvements-** The project is expected to generate \$100 million in bonus

allocation funding, which would be programmed in Buncombe and Haywood counties by the MPO, within eligibilities

- **Reduced Congestion**- Studies have found that managed lanes reduces congestion for all travel lanes on a facility (not just the managed lanes)
- **Improved Reliability**- tolling keeps traffic in the managed lanes moving at a predictable speed.
- **Supports Carpools and (Potential) Transit**- Many managed lanes allow high-occupancy vehicles and buses to travel toll-free, improving transit reliability.
- **Encourages Smart Travel Behavior** – Drivers can choose to pay for reliability during peak hours, potentially shifting some trips to off-peak times or carpooling.

CONS

- **Perceived Equity Issues (“Lexus Lanes”)** – Some see them as benefiting wealthier drivers who can afford tolls.
- **Implementation Costs** – Building and operating managed lanes requires significant investment in tolling infrastructure and ongoing maintenance.
- **Enforcement Challenges** – Ensuring compliance with tolls and HOV rules requires monitoring.
- **Limited Use Without High Demand** – If traffic isn’t heavy, managed lanes may be underutilized, reducing cost-effectiveness.
- **Public Perception & Political Risk** – Opposition can arise if the public feels tolls are unfair or if benefits aren’t clearly communicated.

Topic for Discussion

The primary topic of discussion is whether or not to submit the managed lanes project for P 8. The MPO is the only entity that can submit the managed lanes project; NCDOT is not allowed to submit managed lanes projects. It has also been noted that it would be advisable to submit the entire corridor as one project vs. several sections, if managed lanes are preferred.

Option #1: Submit the managed lane project from Exit 27 to Monte Vista Road Notes:

- the MPO may still reverse this decision up until the project goes to bid.
- Division 14 has noted it would submit whatever project the MPO removes in order to submit the project
- Discussions, coordination, and outreach could continue on this consideration

Option #2: The MPO does not submit the managed lane project Notes:

- Division 14 would still be expected to submit I-40 as a widening project (without managed lanes)
- Discussions, coordination, and outreach could continue on this consideration

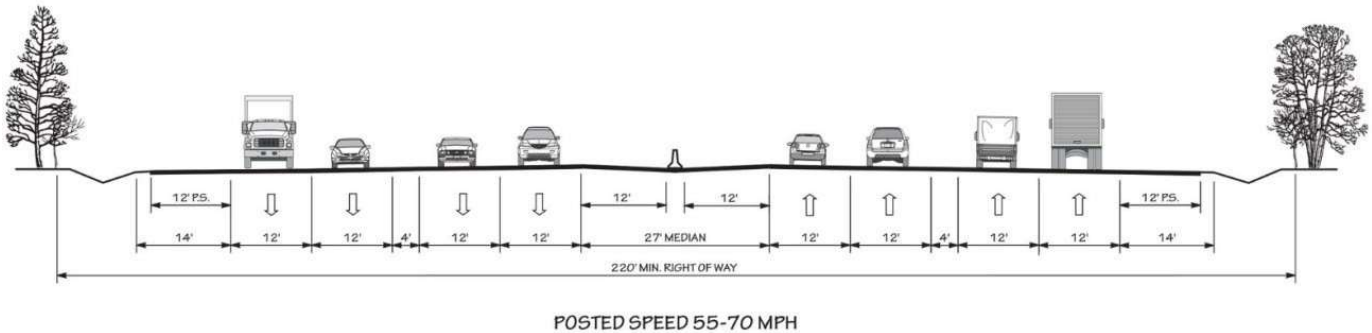
Option #3: The MPO can submit a widening of I-40 and consider changing the project to a managed lanes project by January.

- Allows additional time for discussions and considerations on the managed lanes
- Keeps the overall project moving in the meantime

Potential Typical Cross-Section for Prioritization, if submitted as Managed Lanes:

TYPICAL SECTION No. 8E

8 LANE FREEWAY (4 GENERAL PURPOSE LANES, 4 MANAGED LANES, AND 27' MEDIAN WITH JERSEY BARRIER) WITH PAVED SHOULDERS



Other Managed Lane/Toll Projects in North Carolina:

- I-77 Managed Lanes (Mecklenburg and Iredell Counties, Completed)
- Triangle Expressway Tolloed Lanes (Research Triangle Park to I-40, Completed)
- Monroe Expressway Tolloed Lanes (Mecklenburg and Union Counties, Completed)
- Complete 540 Tolloed Lanes (Wake and Johnston Counties, Under Construction)
- I-485 Express Lanes (Mecklenburg County, Under Construction)
- Mid-Currituck Bridge Tolloed Road (Currituck County, In-Development)
- Two US 74 Express Lanes Projects (Mecklenburg County, In-Development)
- I-77 Express Lanes to the SC Border (Mecklenburg County, In-Development)

Other Examples on I-40

One point of discussion at the MPO's Prioritization Subcommittee in January, 2024 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.

Discussion about seeing the studies that were done about toll lanes, to learn more. What is the timing on this, our timing is by January 2026. Discussion also occurred around the corridor that the lanes would be ie. Exit 33-36 which is in middle of that corridor and is the most accident prone section of I-40. Managed lanes could incur higher than normal speeds causing accidents. Discussion also occurred around if we add this, will this effect the other projects like Elk Wood Ave getting sidewalks or any other lesser project. This project would be evaluated in statewide mobility tier, it's a different pool of money. State funding will help us not cascade projects. Discussion occurred around what impact financially or physically or timeline wise would this effect the new candler exit? Liberty road interchange that is planned for 2029-2030, pretty unlikely this project would start construction in that timeframe, it would probably be after that. Something to be lined up for future years. Chuck McGrady mentioned option 1 might be better. Discussion around financial hits these could produce.

See recording for additional commentary: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAzy3lYJNfc>

Dr Ralph Hamlett motioned to approve option #3 to submit the widening of I-40 from exit 44 to exit 27 and to consider changing to managed lanes by no later than January 2026. Matt Wechtel seconded and it passed upon a roll call vote. 18-Yay, 3-No

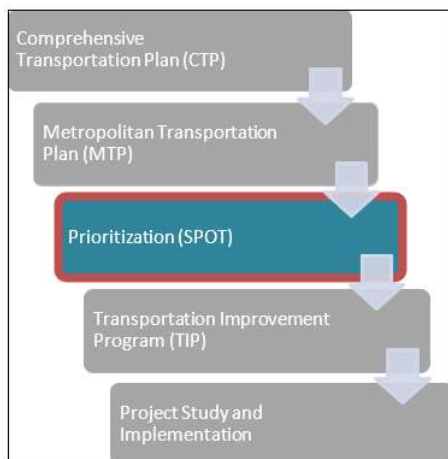
5C. P8 Project Submittals- Final Approval

Very Brief Overview

The Prioritization Process (AKA SPOT, AKA P 8) is the process in North Carolina that helps determine the majority of transportation improvements across the State. The process is dictated by the [Strategic Transportation 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.

Project submittals are planned transportation projects that are elected to be considered for funding in the process by MPOs, RPOs, or NCDOT Divisions. Projects will be scored based on the mode, facility type, and proposed improvement, to compete for any available funding.

The end result of the process is expected to be the 2028-2037 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), as well as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) at the MPO.

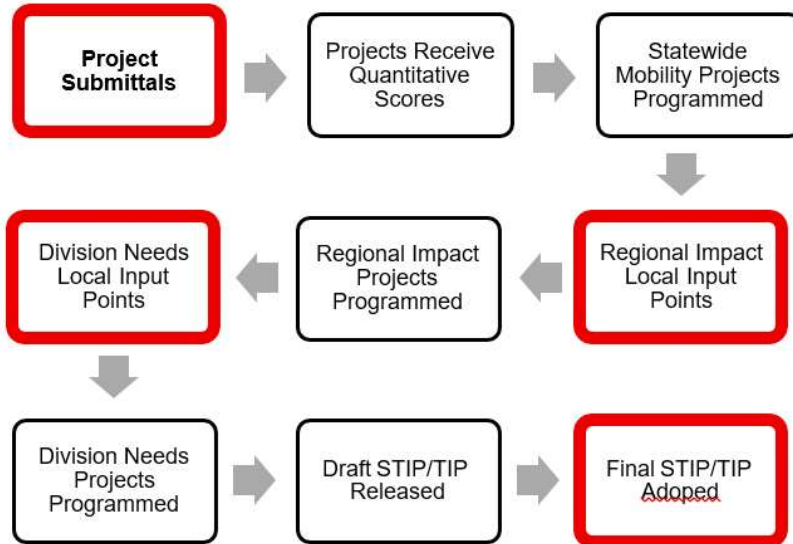


Action Items for Today

- Recommendation of the Final Submittal List

■ Prioritization Background

There are several “major” steps in the prioritization process. The steps are laid out below with MPO tasks circled in red.



Initial/Current Step

We are currently at Step #1 in the process- Project Submittals.

Project Submittals generally come from three different places:

1. **New Projects Submitted by the MPO**- the MPO can submit **18** projects of each mode for consideration in the prioritization process (18 highway, 18 transit, 18 rail, 18 bike/ped, 18 aviation.)
2. **New Projects Submitted by the Divisions**- NCDOT Divisions are allotted **10** submittals per mode for consideration in the prioritization process.
3. **Carryover Projects**- projects that are “automatically” added to the prioritization process, either because they are “siblings” of existing projects or were projects decommitted in the last round.

Other sources of projects for our region:

1. **New Projects Submitted by Other Planning Organizations**- Land of Sky RPO, Foothills RPO, and Southwestern RPO are all adjacent to the FBRMPO and sometimes projects submitted go into the MPO.

MPO Schedule

August, 2025	Draft Submittals Approved by Board & TCC
August 22-September 17, 2025	Public Comment on MPO Draft Submittals
September, 2025	Final Submittals Approved by Board & TCC
June, 2026	Draft Regional Impact Local Input Points
June 19, 2026-August 19, 2026	Public Comment on Draft Local Input Points (Regional Impact)
August, 2026	Final Regional Impact Local Input Points
October, 2026	Draft Division Needs Local Input Points
October 16, 2026-November 18, 2026	Public Comment on Draft Local Input Points (Division Needs)
November, 2026	Final Division Needs Local Input Points
January, 2027	Draft STIP Released

*See [Agenda](#) for all project lists.

Discussion occurred around some of the carryover projects that have a high cost to potentially upgrade future I-26. Why can't we use that money to fund smaller projects that could really help people's daily lives. It's a different pool of money. That project was split on purpose.

Jim McAllister moved to approve the Final P8 Project Submittal List including the addition of I-40 widening and accepting the RPO donation. Matt Wechtel seconded, and the motion passed upon a unanimous roll call vote.

5D. Functional Classification Changes:

Functional classification is the process of grouping streets and highways into classes according to the character of service they are intended to provide and include evaluation of annual average daily traffic (AADT) data, speed limit, length, and other roadway characteristics. Accurate roadway functional classification ensures that federal aid funds are allocated where they are needed most. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Transportation Planning Division (TPD) is responsible for processing updates to the Federal Functional Classification System in North Carolina every 10 years in partnership with planning organizations (MPO's & RPO's) for submission to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for approval. Functional classification for roadways is categorized into the 7 classifications noted below:

- 1 – Interstate
- 2 – Freeway
- 3 – Other Principal Arterial
- 4 – Minor Arterial
- 5 – Major Collector
- 6 – Minor Collector
- 7 – Local

For the French Broad River MPO, an internal NCDOT committee identified the roadways. Then TPD worked with MPO, RPO, and Division staff to refine the attached list for functional classification updates placed in front of you today.

NCDOT TPD is requesting approval of the updates for submittal to FHWA.

*See [Agenda](#) for list of submittals.

Discussion did not occur.

Chuck McGrady moved to approve the updates for submittal to FHWA. Dr Ralph Hamlett seconded and it passed upon a unanimous roll call vote.

6A. I-26 Connector (I-2513) Update:

What is the I-26 Connector?

The I-26 Connector (I-2513) is a highway project in Buncombe County that aims to provide improvements to I-26, I-240, and parts of I-40. The project is split into several different sections (generally described below):

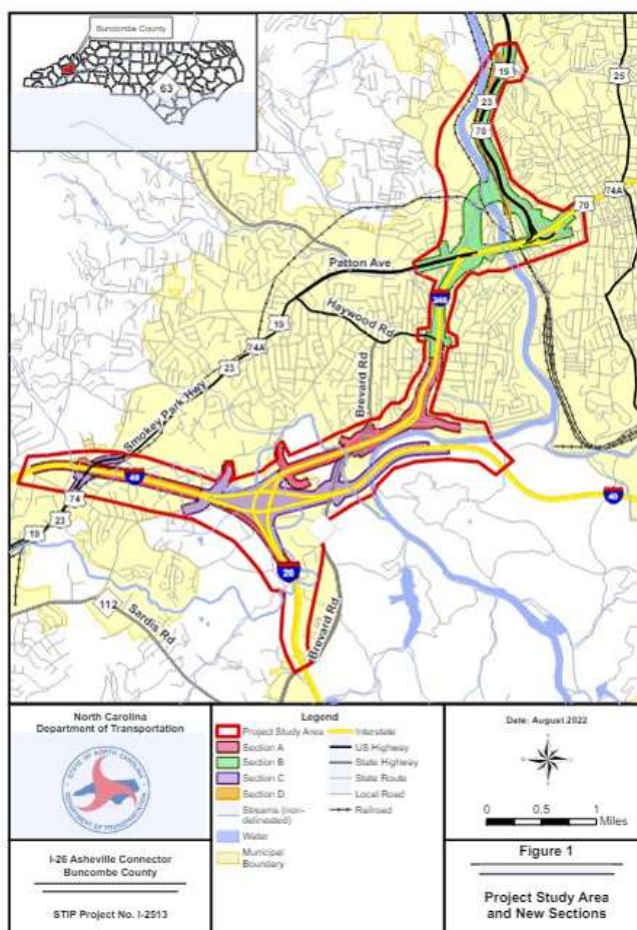
Section AA- Pavement rehabilitation on I-40 from roughly Sand Hill Road to Monte Vista Road. (STIP Status: Funded)

Section AB- I-26/I-40 AND I-40/US 19/23 (SMOKEY PARK HIGHWAY) INTERCHANGES. CONSTRUCT THE FOLLOWING IMPROVEMENTS: WIDEN I-40 EASTBOUND TO I-26 EASTBOUND RAMP, WIDEN I-26 WESTBOUND BETWEEN I-40 RAMPS, CONSTRUCT NEW I-40 WESTBOUND TO US 19/23 (SMOKEY PARK HIGHWAY) NORTHBOUND RAMP. (STIP Status: Funded)

Section AC- Widen I-26/I-240 from I-40 to Haywood Road (STIP Status: Funded)

Section B- Highway Widening and New Bridge Construction over the French Broad River from Haywood Road to Broadway Avenue. (STIP Status: Funded)

Section C- Final Improvements to the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange. (STIP Status: NOT Funded)



Section D- modernization and complete streets improvements to Riverside Drive (STIP Status: Funded)

The project also includes additional improvements that have been requested by the French Broad River MPO and City of Asheville, including multimodal infrastructure and aesthetic enhancements.

Update

Nathan Moneyham, NCDOT Division 13 Construction Engineer, will provide an update.

Information Only.
Discussion did not occur.

7A. Division Project Updates

Division 13: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Division13_September2025Updates.pdf

Division 14: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Division14_August2025Updates.pdf

7B. TPD Updates

FHWA/FTA Updates

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

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

7C.

Committee & Workgroup Updates

Prioritization Subcommittee— met on August 6th, next meeting September 3rd.

- P8 Submittals
- Elevate 2050 Updates
- Subcommittee Bylaws Discussion

5307 Subrecipient Workgroup- met on August 19th;

Points of Business/Discussion:

- Transit-specific training and learning opportunities for workgroup
- Grant reporting updates and future detailed reporting needs
- Knowledge-sharing opportunities within current group composition

Hellbender Trail Stakeholder Group/Regional Trail Forum Updates- met on April 3rd; next meeting TBD

Citizens Advisory Committee- met on July 7th

- Discussed the Committee's current standing, recommended dissolution.

MPO Studies Status

Study	Managing Entity	Year Programmed	Status
CTP/MTP Update	FBRMPO	2024	Underway
Safe Streets for All Regional Action Plan	FBRMPO	2024	Completed
Patton Avenue Corridor Study	City of Asheville	2023	Underway
Woodfin-Weaverville Greenway Study	Town of Woodfin	2025	Underway
Buncombe County Pedestrian Plan	Buncombe County	2025	Underway
Hellbender Implementation Plan	FBRMPO	2024	Not Started
Regional ITS Plan	FBRMPO	2024	Contracting Underway
Travel Survey/Model Upgrades	FBRMPO	2024	Not Started
Staffing & Compensation Study	LOSRC	2024	Not Started

(*See Agenda for Locally Administered Projects and MPO Studies Status)

7D. Legislative Updates:

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

ADJOURNMENT

Anthony Sutton adjourned the meeting at 3:38 PM as there was no further business before the Board.