

Prioritization Subcommittee

Meeting Agenda

November 5, 2025

9:30 AM

Meeting to be held at Land of Sky Regional Council or via

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85619095223>

Voting Members on the Committee: Jessica Morris (City of Asheville, Vice-Chair), William High (Buncombe County), Autumn Radcliff (Henderson County), Anthony Sutton (Town of Waynesville), Elizabeth Teague (Town of Waynesville, Chair), Archie Pertiller (Town of Black Mountain), Catherine Cordell (Town of Weaverville)

1.	Welcome and Introductions	Elizabeth Teague
2.	Public Comment	Elizabeth Teague
3.	Approval of September, 2025 Meeting Minutes	Elizabeth Teague
4.	Business	
A.	Priority Express Design Selections	MPO Staff
B.	Chair & Vice-Chair Elections	MPO Staff
5.	News, Events, Updates	Elizabeth Teague
6.	Public Comment	Elizabeth Teague
7.	Adjournment	Elizabeth Teague

Item 4A:

Priority Express Design Selections

What are Express Designs?

Express designs are meant to be “quick” designs of a potential transportation project, developed in collaboration between NCDOT, the MPO, and local government staff. These designs serve primarily as a tool to get a better idea of the potential cost of a project, but can also serve to look at high-level issues that a project may encounter.

Express Design Requirement for P9

The Prioritization Workgroup recommended that express designs be required for projects in the Prioritization process by P9 (next round- expected to begin in 2027). To begin work towards that requirement, express designs are starting in early 2026 to get as many express designs done as possible.

There are exceptions to the requirement. As of right now, lower-cost projects (projects expected to cost <\$10,000,000) are exempt and POs are allowed to have one project per round that is not required to have an express design.

Express Design Allotments

NCDOT has said that their capacity for express designs is roughly 200/year or 400/prioritization cycle. Split between the different MPOs, RPOs, and Divisions, the French Broad River MPO is being allotted 10 express designs over the P8 cycle.

Due Dates for Express Design Selection:

November 30th – 1/3rd of Express Design Assignments Due

May 31st – 1/3rd of Express Design Assignments Due

September 30th – 1/3rd of Express Design Assignments Due

Highway Projects in P8 Without Known Express Designs

Route / Facility / Project Name	From / Cross Street / Location	To / Cross Street	Description	County
US 19/23 (Smokey Park Highway)	I-40	NC 151	Access Management (Regional Impact)	Buncombe
NC 63 (New Leicester Highway)	Newfound Road	Gouges Branch Road	Improve Multiple Intersections (Regional Impact)	Buncombe
US 70 (Tunnel Road)	Beaucatcher Tunnel	US 74A (South Tunnel Road)	Road Diet (Regional Impact)	Buncombe
US 70 (State Street)	Blue Ridge Road	NC 9	Road Diet (Regional Impact)	Buncombe
Clingman Avenue	Patton Avenue	Hilliard Avenue	Multiple Intersection Improvements	Buncombe
Reems Creek Road	US 19/23 (Weaverville Highway)	Ox Creek Road	Modernization (Division Needs)	Buncombe
Elkwood Avenue/Old Burnsville Highway	NC 251 (Riverside Drive)	US 25 (Merrimon Avenue)	Modernization (Division Needs)	Buncombe
US 276	SR 1134 (Crymes Cove Rd), Raccoon Rd		SR 1134 (CRYMES COVE ROAD) AND RACCOON ROAD. INTERSECTION REALIGNMENT.	Haywood
NC 191	US 25 (Asheville Highway)	SR 1381 (Mountain Road)	Widen to Multi-Lanes.	Henderson
US 176 (Spartanburg Highway)	NC 225 (Greenville Highway)	Upward Road	Access Management (Regional Impact)	Henderson
US 25B (Asheville Highway)	North Main Street	NC 191	Multiple Intersection Improvements (Regional Impact)	Henderson

Route / Facility / Project Name	From / Cross Street / Location	To / Cross Street	Description	County
NC 280 (Boylston Highway)	NC 191 (Haywood Road)	NC 191 (Brevard Road)	Access Management (Regional Impact)	Henderson
Signal Hill/Berkely/Thompson Street	US 64 (Four Seasons Boulevard)	US 25B (Asheville Highway)	Modernization (Division Needs)	Henderson
Fanning Bridge Road	US 25 (Hendersonville Road)	NC 280 (Airport Road)	Modernization (Division Needs)	Henderson
NC 213	Athletic Street	Bone Camp Road	Access Management (Regional Impact)	Madison

Recommendations

- Two projects on this list are likely to not be of concern: NC 213 in Madison County is expected to be done as part of an RPO-led express design on the entire NC 213 corridor between Marshall and Mars Hill. The intersection at US 276 @ Crymes Cove Road is likely exempt from the express design requirement due to its limited cost.
- Recommendation #1- Focus on Projects That are More Likely to Be Funded This Round**

These projects were selected due to their lower cost compared to other projects in P8. Given the amount of funding available and the way intersection improvements have generally scored in the past, these recommendations are split between Division 13 (Buncombe & Madison) and Division 14 (Haywood & Henderson). Haywood County currently only has one project in P8 that needs an express design (Dellwood Road).

- Clingman Avenue @ Patton Avenue & Hilliard Avenue (Multiple Intersection Improvements)- Buncombe
 - NC 63 (New Leicester Highway) from Newfound Road to Gouges Branch Road (Multiple Intersection Improvements)- Buncombe
 - US 25B (Asheville Highway) from North Main Street to NC 191 (Haywood Road) (Multiple Intersection Improvements)- Henderson
 - US 19 (Dellwood Road) from US 23/74 to US 276 (Russ Avenue) (Access Management)- Haywood
- Recommendation #2- Focus on Projects That Have Greater Cost Uncertainty**
 These projects were selected due to some kind of uncertainty with cost. NC 191 is currently in P8 as a widening but the full extent of the widening and its cost are worth exploring more. US 19/23 (Smokey Park Highway) has scored well in the past but is in a somewhat constrained corridor and should be looked at more closely, especially given its high score in P6 and P7. US 70 (Tunnel Road) is the opposite- the concept in the Tunnel Road Corridor Study is likely less costly than the automated cost estimates from

P7. Dellwood Road is also a constrained corridor and- again- the only Haywood County candidate at this time.

- NC 191 (Haywood Road) from US 25B (Asheville Highway) to Mountain Road (Widening)- Henderson
- US 19/23 (Smokey Park Highway) from I-40 to NC 151 (Access Management)- Buncombe
- US 19 (Dellwood Road) from US 23/74 to US 276 (Russ Avenue) (Access Management)- Haywood
- US 70 (Tunnel Road) from Beaucatcher Tunnel to US 74A (South Tunnel Road) (Road Diet)- Buncombe

Action Needed: Recommend Four Projects For Express Designs

Item 4B

Chair & Vice-Chair Elections

Every two years, the Prioritization Subcommittee is required to hold an election to select its officers: a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson, as required by the committee's By-Laws.

Officer Roles & Responsibilities

- **Chairperson:** The Chair calls and presides at subcommittee meetings, coordinates meeting dates and times in consultation with MPO staff, and ensures that the agenda advances the Subcommittee's tasks under Article II of the By-Laws (e.g., making recommendations to the TCC and Board on methodology, selection criteria, vetting data, and calls for projects).
- **Vice-Chairperson:** In the Chair's absence the Vice-Chair assumes all duties of the Chair. In the event the Chair is unable to complete his/her term, the Vice-Chair automatically becomes Chair and an election for a new Vice-Chair will be held.

Election Process & Term

- Any currently appointed member of the Prioritization Subcommittee is eligible to serve as Chair or Vice-Chair.
- If only one candidate is nominated for a position, the Chair (or acting Chair) will declare that person elected. If more than one is nominated, a ballot vote or voice vote will be used as determined by the committee.
- The term of the officers is two years, and officers may be re-elected for subsequent terms without limit.
- If the Chair vacates the position mid-term, the Vice-Chair automatically becomes Chair and a new Vice-Chair election is held for the remainder of the term.

Why This Matters

The leadership of the Subcommittee plays a key role in maintaining an efficient, transparent, and responsive process for prioritizing transportation projects across the region. A strong Chair and Vice-Chair help ensure the Subcommittee meets its core responsibilities: recommending methodologies and selection criteria, vetting data, overseeing calls for locally-administered projects, and supporting the MPO's planning efforts.

Next Steps for Members

Members interested in serving in either role are encouraged to indicate their willingness to serve as Chair or Vice-Chair. The Chair and Vice-Chair will begin their terms at the next meeting.