

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization

Minutes from the Combined Governing Board and TCC Meeting on November 20th, 2025

Board Attendance:

In-Person and Remote via the Zoom Platform:

Anthony Sutton (Chair)	Town of Waynesville
Jennifer Hensley	City of Hendersonville
Steve Williams	NCDOT Div 14
Vicki Eastland	LOSRPO
Matt Wechtel	Madison County
George Banta	Town of Laurel Park
Kim Roney	City of Asheville
Daniel Sellers	NCDOT TPD
Shanon Gonce	Town of Mills River
Chuck McGrady	BOT 14
Archie Pertiller	Town of Black Mountain
Emily Whitmire	Village of Flat Rock
Catherine Cordell	Town of Weaverville
Jim Player	Town of Fletcher
Jim McAllister	Town of Woodfin
Kevin Ensley	Haywood County
Jay Egolf	Henderson County
Tom Widmer	Town of Montreat
David White	Rural Transit
Susan Bean	Urban Transit
Sheila Franklin	Henderson County
Sage Turner	City of Asheville
Drew Ball	Buncombe County
Dr Ralph Hamlett	Town of Canton
Mike Eveland	Town of Maggie Valley
Parker Sloan	Buncombe County
Wes Jamison	NCDOT Div 14
Doug Phillips	NCDOT Div 13
Stephen Sparks	NCDOT

Steve Cannon	NCDOT
Alpesh Patel	NCDOT
Troy Wilson	NCDOT
Cody Weddle	NCDOT
Colton Hires	NCDOT Div 14
John Hunter	TPD
David Wasserman	NCDOT
Theresa Robinson	NCDOT

Members without Representation present:

BOT 13
Town of Clyde
Town of Mars Hill
Town of Biltmore Forest

TCC ATTENDANCE:

In-person and remote via Zoom:

Autumn Radcliff	Henderson County
Lucy Crown	City of Asheville
William High (Chair)	Buncombe County
Chloe Donohoe	Buncombe County Transit
Daniel Sellers	NCDOT TPD
Jodie Ferguson	Haywood County
Janna Bianculli	Apple Country Transit
Sam Cullen	Town of Maggie Valley
Nathan Bennett	Town of Mars Hill
Vicki Eastland	LOSRPO
Elizabeth Teague	Town of Waynesville
Ricky Hurley	Town of Woodfin
James Eller	Town of Weaverville
Matt Manley	City of Hendersonville
Doug Phillips	NCDOT Div 13
Steve Williams	NCDOT Div 14
Pat Christie	Village of Flat Rock

Members Without Representation Present:

ART
Town of Biltmore Forest
Town of Black Mountain
Town of Canton
Town of Clyde
Haywood Transit
Town of Laurel Park
Madison County
Town of Mills River
Town of Montreat

Additional Attendees:

Tristan Winkler (FBRMPO) Hannah Bagli (FBRMPO) Daisy O'Connor(FBRMPO)
Sandy Broadwill (FBRMPO TDM) Ada McGovern(FBRMPO), Carly Swanson (NC Turnpike Authority)
David Roy (NC Turnpike Authority) Nikki Abija(IMD) Bill Keyrouze (AMPO)
Mike Sule (Public)

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & ROLL CALL

William High called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM and welcomed everyone.

Quorum was announced to conduct the business of the Board.

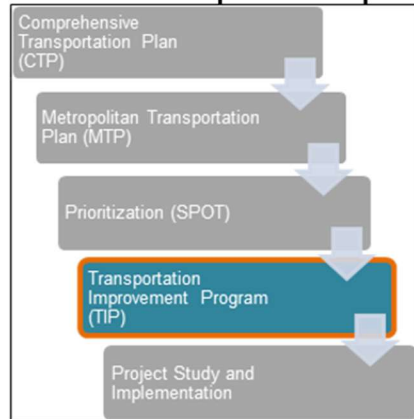
2. CONSENT AGENDA

2A: October 2025 TCC Minutes: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/2025_10_09_DRAFT.MPO_TCC_Minutes.pdf

2B: October 2025 Board Minutes: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/2025_10_16_MPO.DRAFT_Board_Minutes.pdf

2C. Amendments to the 2026-2035 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.

Amendment Highlights:

Amendments this month include:

- Increase in ROW funds for B-5929 which replaces bridge 430246 over West Fork Pigeon Creek.

All TIP Amendment Summaries can be found here:

https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/November2025_TIPAmendment.pdf

2D. Express Design Priorities

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

The Prioritization Subcommittee met on November 5th to discuss priority express design projects. The following were recommended by the subcommittee:

Recommended Express Designs

- Clingman Avenue @ Patton Avenue & Hilliard Avenue (Multiple Intersection Improvements)

- NC 63 (New Leicester Highway) from Newfound Road to Gouges Branch Road (Multiple Intersection Improvements)
- US 25B (Asheville Highway) from North Main Street to NC 191 (Brevard Road) (Multiple Intersection Improvements)
- US 19/23 (Smokey Park Highway) from I-40 to Wiggins Road (Access Management)

2E: 2026 Meeting Schedule:

Prioritization Subcommittee	TCC	Board
January 14 th	January 15 th	January 22 nd
February 4 th	February 12 th	February 19 th
March 4 th	March 12 th	March 19 th
April 1 st	April 9 th	April 16 th
No Meetings in May- NCAMPO Conference in Asheville		
June 3 rd	June 11 th	June 18 th
July 1 st	No July Meeting	No July Meeting
August 5 th	August 13 th	August 20 th
September 2 nd	September 10 th	September 17 th
October 7 th	October 8 th	October 15 th
October 28 th	November 19 th (Joint Meeting)	
December 3 rd	No December Meeting	No December Meeting

**2F. Letter of Support- Mars Hill Request for a Safety Study on NC 213:
November 20, 2025**

Tim Anderson

Division Engineer, Division 13

North Carolina Department of Transportation Dear Mr. Anderson:

On behalf of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board, I am writing to express our support for the Town of Mars Hill's recent request for NCDOT to conduct a safety study along the NC 213 corridor from South Main Street to the Ingles entrance.

The Town has shared that residents recently raised concerns during a Town Board meeting regarding high vehicle speeds, limited pedestrian visibility, and the difficulty of making safe crossings along this segment. Given the combination of residential areas, commercial activity, and pedestrian use in this corridor, the MPO Board agrees that a safety assessment is both appropriate and timely.

We respectfully request that NCDOT evaluate existing conditions and determine potential safety improvements—including speed management, crossing enhancements, traffic calming, or other measures—to support safer travel for all users.

The MPO stands ready to assist in coordinating data, supporting community engagement, or helping identify potential funding pathways for any improvements that may result from this evaluation.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your continued partnership in improving transportation safety across our region.

Sincerely,

Anthony Sutton

Chair, French Broad River MPO Board

Daniel Sellers moved to approve the consent agenda including the October 2025 TCC Minutes and the Joint consent agenda. Lucy Crown seconded the motion which passed upon a roll call vote.

Anthony Sutton read the Ethics Statement and inquired if there were any conflicts of interest to note for today's meeting. No conflicts were noted with the business before the body.

Matt Wechtel moved to approve the consent agenda including the October 2025 Board Minutes and the Joint agenda. Chuck McGrady seconded the motion which passed upon a roll call vote.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

William High and Anthony Sutton opened the floor for public comment.

Mike Sule Executive director of Asheville on Bikes. 501C3, mission of cultivating a culture of urban and commuter riding through advocacy, education and celebration. Through education they teach adult cycling classes, they have a longest running after school bicycle program in the state of NC, that teaches kids how to ride their city. They host a variety of events to help get people up and riding and participating in the right of way and embrace new types of mobility. They are here to thank Div 13 NCDOT for inviting him in to start a conversation on about recommendations to NC Scenic byway 251 where two fatalities occurred this summer. He published a recommendation letter, and he wants to go over a few key recommendations he has. He referenced a law that prohibits NCDOT from spending standalone funds on bicycle and pedestrian facilities. That restricts their ability to respond to the deaths that have occurred. DOT has a prohibition on the bicycle may use full lane sides that was adopted by FHWA in 2023, this needs to change. We need to communicate that cyclists indeed have a right to the public right of way and articulate where they can be on that facility. In regards to 251 specifically, the speed limits need to be reduced and there need to be surface treatments. When we are making changes to 251 we need to be informed by the comprehensive planning that is happening. Please see attached letter.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

4A: Federal Legislative Update:

As Congress has started work on drafting a new federal transportation bill, we have asked Bill Keyrouze, the Executive Director of the Association of MPOs to provide an update as a draft of the bill is likely approaching.

Slides are available here: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/RVARC_10.23.25.pdf

Discussion occurred around elimination of the transit fund under the highway trust fund and what the impact from that could be. The response was that they had not seen anything for this yet, the house cni said they were not looking to entertain any of those recommendations if they should become real. To their understanding it probably won't come to fruition. They are paying close attention to as well and will monitor and inform as much as possible in real time.

Tristan Winkler added an additional presentation on DA Funding & Local Projects.

4B. NCDOT Transportation Planning Division Update:

Alpesh Patel, took over as the Director of the Transportation Planning Division at NCDOT in 2014, and will provide an update on a number of initiatives the division is undertaking.

Slides are available here: <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp->

[content/uploads/2025/11/2025_11_20_140_Turnpike.pdf](#)

Discussion occurred around how do they foresee areas in NC being able to recover from national disasters. Goal is to build a resiliency practice in the department. Discussion around roads that are still damaged from Helene.

4C. Safety Targets:

Effective April 14, 2016, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) established five highway safety performance measures in accord with regulations set forth in the Federal MAP-21 and FAST Act transportation funding bills.

These performance measures are:

- 1. Number of fatalities;*
- 2. Rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled;*
- 3. Number of serious injuries;*
- 4. Rate of serious injuries per 100 million vehicle miles traveled; and*
- 5. Number of combined non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious injuries.*

These targets are established annually, are based on five-year rolling averages, and are for calendar years. North Carolina state targets are set in agreement with our Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) goals. The SHSP goals are developed through collaborative efforts of a diverse group of stakeholders including state, regional, and local partners (including MPOs). The goal of the most recent (2019) SHSP is to reduce fatalities and serious injuries by half by 2035, moving towards zero by 2050.

State safety performance targets for 2026 were submitted to FHWA on August 31st, as required, with the submission of the annual Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) report. These targets reflect the 2019 SHSP goal to reduce fatalities and serious injuries by half by 2035, moving towards zero by 2050. The calculated targets are shown in the document available here: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/SafetyPerformanceMeasures_2026Targets_Memo_FrenchBroadRiverM_PO.pdf

Table 2: French Broad River MPO Safety Performance Target Achievement Determination Summary for CY 2023.

Performance Measures	5-Year Rolling Averages			Target Achieved?	(Actual) Better than Baseline?	Met or Made Significant Progress?
	Target	Actual	Baseline			
	2019 - 2023	2019 - 2023	2017 - 2021			
Fatalities (5 Year Average)	43.7	52.8	51.0	No	No	No
Fatality Rate (5 Year Average)	0.876	1.099	1.047	No	No	
Serious Injuries (5 Year Average)	105.6	133.0	133.0	No	No	
Serious Injury Rate (5 Year Average)	2.096	2.773	2.731	No	No	
Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries (5 Year Average)	15.1	21.4	20.0	No	No	

In 2025, the French Broad River MPO voted to become the first MPO in North Carolina to not go along with the State's targets. Instead, the MPO adopted its own safety goal of "achieving a 10% reduction of fatalities and serious injury crashes by 2035, an additional 45% reduction by 2045, and moving towards zero serious injuries and fatalities by 2050."

MPO staff will provide the item as information in November, with an expected vote on the targets in January. Discussion around Safe Streets For All target percentages. Discussion around the goals and actually achieving those goals. Discussion around timeline of when we have to have these set by and what non compliance would look like.

BUSINESS:

5A: NCDOT Certified Scope & Cost Estimate Milestone:

NCDOT recently introduced a new milestone in project development known as the Certified Scope & Cost Estimate (CSCE). This milestone is documented by what is being called the **Project Definition Document (PDD)**. This step is being introduced to develop clear expectations for each project and enable more trustworthy cost estimates. This milestone is also important because it sets some parameters on what will be part of the project and what will not be part of the project.

David Wasserman with NCDOT will present on the new milestone in project development.

MPO staff has noted a concern that the Project Definition Document is only planned to receive approval from an NCDOT Division Engineer. In an effort to ensure a Collaborative process that also enables follow-up to ensure

and/or understand the expected impacts of transportation projects and raise awareness of project milestones, MPO staff requests that the MPO Board and TCC consider a letter to NCDOT to request a change in NCDOT's process to also require MPO & RPO approval of the Project Definition Document.

November 20, 2025

Secretary Johnson
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1 South Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601

Dear Secretary Johnson,

On behalf of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board, we are writing regarding NCDOT's recently introduced project development milestone known as the Certified Scope & Cost Estimate (CSCE) and its accompanying Project Definition Document (PDD).

We appreciate NCDOT's intent in creating this milestone—to establish clearer expectations for each project, improve cost reliability, and provide a consistent framework for defining project elements. These improvements are beneficial not only for project management within NCDOT, but also for local governments, MPOs/RPOs, and the public who rely on transparent and predictable project development processes.

However, the MPO Board has significant concerns about the planned approval procedure for the Project Definition Document. As currently designed, the PDD would be approved solely by the NCDOT Division Engineer. Because the PDD will define the scope, key elements, and cost expectations for each project—and because these decisions directly influence local land use, economic development, multimodal access, and long-term transportation planning—local input is essential.

To ensure a fully collaborative, coordinated, and accountable process, the MPO respectfully requests that NCDOT revise the CSCE/PDD approval process to **require MPO and RPO concurrence** before a Project Definition Document is finalized.

Requiring MPO/RPO involvement in this milestone would:

- Ensure that local and regional priorities are consistently reflected in project scopes;
- Create a transparent mechanism for understanding scope changes and their implications;
- Strengthen communication and buy-in between NCDOT, local governments, and regional planning partners; and
- Improve the likelihood that cost estimates developed at the CSCE stage remain reliable throughout the project lifecycle.

We value our long-standing partnership with NCDOT and recognize the complexity of improving project delivery statewide. Including MPOs and RPOs more formally in this milestone would reinforce that partnership and enhance the shared responsibility needed to steward public resources effectively.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. The French Broad River MPO looks forward to continued collaboration as NCDOT refines the CSCE process and other project development tools.

Sincerely,

Anthony Sutton

Chair, French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization

Discussion around realistic number of projects that should be in the STIP as a whole. It really depends on funding availability. Do those unfunded projects remain valid or do they fall off? No true answer was given. Is there a similar proposed process for DOT and not just LAP projects. They are for all projects not just LAP. Discussion around if the DOT project would have to go back through prioritization. Discussion on who will be involved in finalizing the cost estimates.

**Please see recording for further discussion points (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5t2mpPNFJ5Q> 1:33:00 marker)*

Janna Bianculli motioned to change letter not saying concurrence with plan document but changes happening in overall process, collaboration when it goes back through prioritization.

Janna Bianculli moved to recommend to the Board the NCDOT Certified Scope & Cost Estimate Milestone with the edit to change wording. Ricky Hurley seconded the motion and it passed upon a roll call vote. There were 6 NO votes and 9 YES votes, see voting sheet for who voted which way.

It has been notated that if a member is here during roll call but has left the meeting after roll call but before voting their absence is considered an affirmative vote.

Discussion occurred on how Division staff sees where this puts us. Would this be a big burden to get with the board and how this will move forward. Division staff mentioned that they work very hard to hear what is being said and to incorporate it. Listen to discussion (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5t2mpPNFJ5Q> at 2:06:50 for further discussion)

Chuck McGrady moved to approve the NCDOT Certified Scope & Cost Estimate Milestone with changes to letter suggested by TCC. Drew Ball seconded the motion and it passed upon a roll call vote. There were 6 NO votes and 12 Yes votes and 5 no answer votes which count towards the affirmative vote, see voting sheet.

5B: I-40 Express Lanes:

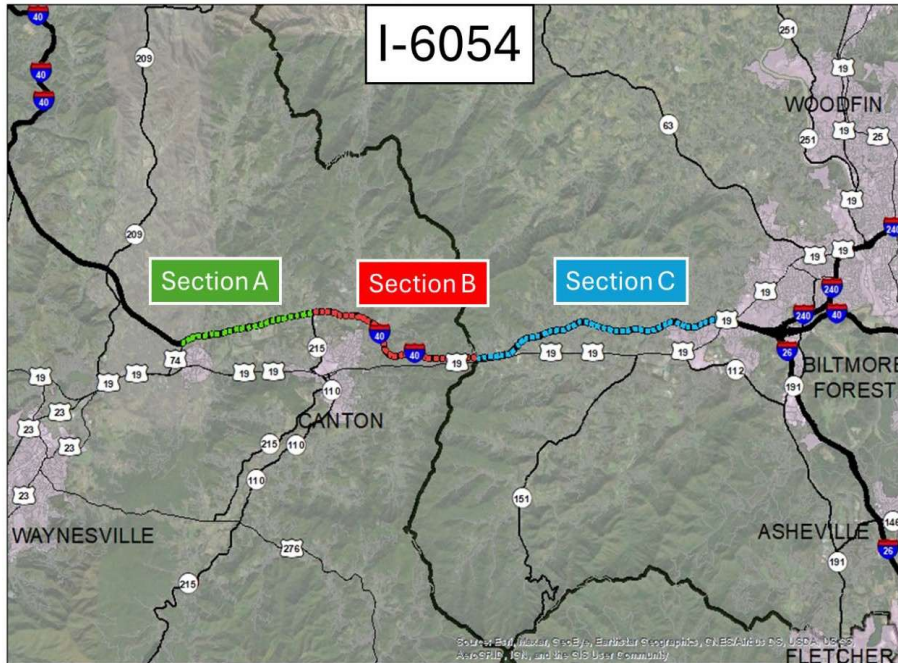
Project Under Consideration

The project being discussed is the widening of I-40 from Exit 44 (Monte Vista Road) in Buncombe County to Exit 27 (US 23/74) in Haywood County. This project has historically been submitted as a general-purpose widening (State TIP project I-6054) in each Prioritization cycle since P5, and it previously appeared as an unfunded project in the STIP.

In prior submissions, I-6054 has been divided into three sections:

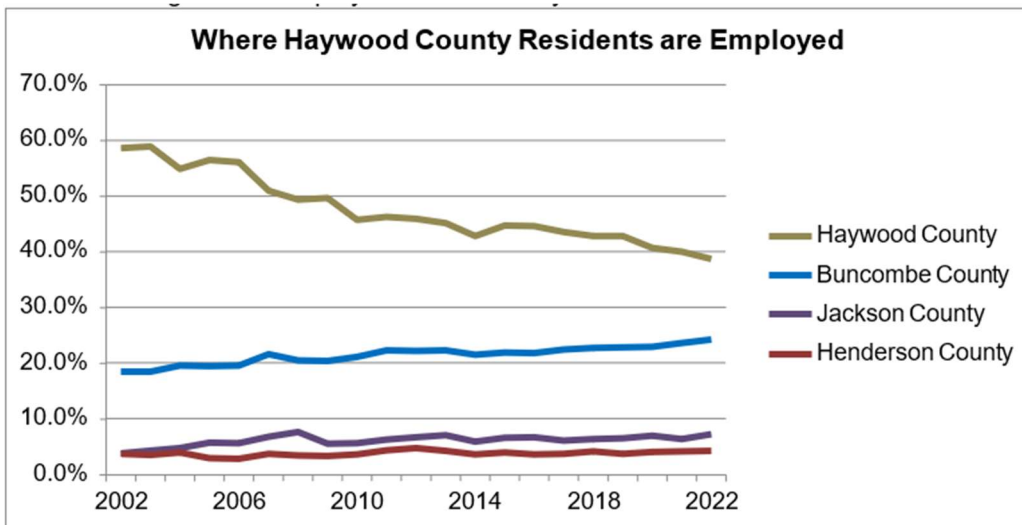
- Section A: US 23/74 (Smokey Mountain Expressway) → NC 215 (Champion Drive)
- Section B: NC 215 (Champion Drive) → Exit 37 (Wiggins Road)

- Section C: Exit 37 (Wiggins Road) → Monte Vista Road



Why is the Project Considered a Priority?

- The corridor is part of the major freight corridor in the region, carrying roughly 8,000 trucks/day.
- The corridor carries 55,000-58,000 vehicles/day
- This section of I-40 has seen considerable reliability issues, based on the 2023 Congestion Management Process update
- The corridor includes sections of medium-to-high safety section scores (no low scores), i.e., higher number of crashes
- The corridor connects to the most visited national park in the country- Great Smoky Mountains National Park (>12 million visitors/year)
- The corridor has locations identified as wildlife crossing priorities in the MPO's Wildlife Crossing Plan
- This corridor is likely playing an increasingly important role in cross-county commuting, based on Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics data



What Is Actually Being Considered at This Stage

For Prioritization 8.0, the question before the MPO is how the project should be submitted—not whether it proceeds, but how it is defined in the scoring process:

- Option 1: Submit the project as a conventional highway widening (additional general-purpose lanes); or
- Option 2: Submit the project as a widening that includes managed lanes (likely HOT/express lanes).

This distinction is important because the way a project is defined directly affects how it is scored and evaluated under the state Prioritization process.

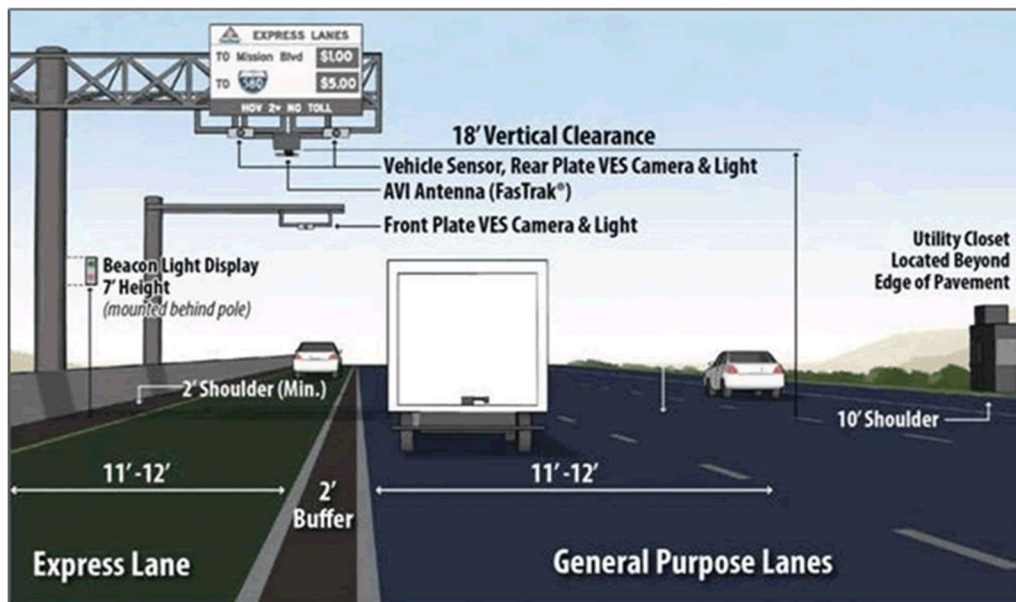
Funding Category Context

I-6054 is a Statewide Mobility tier project. This means:

- It competes only against other major statewide highway and interstate projects, not against local surface street, transit, or bicycle/pedestrian projects.
- Choosing between a traditional widening or a managed-lanes widening will not impact regional or division-level project funding for smaller multimodal improvements (unless the project is cascaded at the request of the MPO Board).

What Are Managed Lanes?

Managed lanes are highway lanes where traffic is actively regulated—often through tolls—to maintain reliable travel speeds. In most applications, including on I-40, the concept would involve High-Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes added alongside the existing free-flow general-purpose lanes. Carpoolers and transit may access these managed lanes at reduced or no charge, and traffic in the existing lanes remains free.



Past Discussion

This topic has a long planning history:

- 2018: The MPO's Congestion Management Process identified managed lanes as a potential strategy for the I-40 corridor in west Buncombe and Haywood Counties.
- January 2024: The MPO Board voted to support NCDOT's study of managed lanes feasibility for I-6054.
- September 6, 2025: NCDOT presented preliminary feasibility findings to MPO staff.
- September, 2025: The MPO Board and TCC voted to submit the project as a widening from Exit 44 to Exit 27, and to revisit whether it should be submitted as a managed-lanes project in P8.
- October, 2025: The MPO Board continued discussion of the pros and cons of a potential toll application and signaled an intention to vote on the matter in November.

Discussion at This Meeting

David Roy, Director of Innovative Finance, and Carly Swanson, Director of Innovative Delivery, at the NCDOT Turnpike Authority, will present a general summary of NCDOT's financial feasibility study and an overview of tolling considerations and applications.

The slides from the Turnpike Authority are available here: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/2025_11_20_I40_Turnpike.pdf

MPO staff will provide additional information on funding and background.

Other Resources

[Impacts of Congestion Pricing on Low-Income Populations \(FHWA\)](#)

[Safety Impacts of Managed Lane Cross Section Elements \(FHWA\)](#)

[Energy and Emission Impacts of Atlanta's High-Occupancy Toll Lanes \(National Center for Sustainable Transportation\)](#)

[Express Lanes in North Carolina \(NCDOT\)](#)

Discussion occurred around if the express lanes was approved, would it still have a community impact assessment? Yes, this was the first step, this is a 10 year long process. This is first point of decision, we really need something in the STIP to move forward and get more information. This can be cancelled at any time if it is decided this is not for the area. Discussion around how many lanes are being proposed. Clarification on what they are voting on. They are voting on if Toll lanes should be added.

It has been notated that if a member is here during roll call but has left the meeting after roll call but before voting their absence is considered an affirmative vote. Written answers sent in chat function before the official vote are considered not applicable. A member must be present during actual votes for them to be considered a "No" vote.

Janna Bianculli moved to recommend to the Board option 2 of the I-40 Express Lanes. Lucy Crown seconded the motion and it passed upon a unanimous roll call vote. Steve Williams abstained his vote.

Chuck McGrady moved to approve option 2 of the I-40 Express Lanes. Shanon Gonce seconded the motion and it passed upon a roll call vote. There were 12 Yes votes, 5 No votes and 6 no answer votes which count towards an affirmative vote (see attached voting log).

Discussion occurred before the roll call vote on why the Town of Woodfin has decided to vote no on this vote. Discussion went on further about strategy around getting movement on a project. More discussion on why these managed lanes can help with commuter routes. If this doesn't get started now it would be generations away before it ever gets done. See recording for further discussion (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5t2mpPNFJ5Q> starting at 2:46:22 and goes to 2:50:27 marker on video)

PARTNER UPDATES:

6A. NCDOT Division 13 & 14 Updates:

Division 13: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Division13_November2025Updates.pdf

Division 14: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Division14_November2025Updates.pdf

6B. TPD Updates:

Available here: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/FBRMPO_LOSRPO_Newletter_2025.pdf

6C. 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>

6D. Staff Updates:

Committee & Workgroup Updates

Prioritization Subcommittee— met on November 5th, next meeting January 14th.

- Express Design Priorities
- Chair Election

5307 Subrecipient Workgroup- met on November 18th

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

MPO Studies Status

Study	Managing Entity	Year Programmed	Status
CTP/MTP Update	FBRMPO	2024	Completed
Safe Streets for All Regional Action Plan	FBRMPO	2024	Completed
Patton Avenue Corridor Study	City of Asheville	2023	Completed
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	RFLOI Drafted
Staffing & Compensation Study	LOSRC	2024	Not Started

See agenda for other locally administered updates : https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/2025_11_20_TCCBoard-Agenda-Packet.pdf

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Anthony Sutton and William High opened the floor again for public comment. No comments were heard.

ADJOURNMENT

Anthony Sutton and William High adjourned the meeting at 4:14PM as there was no further business before the Board and TCC.

	Primary	Vote#1-Consent	Scope/Cost Estimate	Express Lanes
Asheville	Lucy Crown (Anna Sexton alt.)	y	n	y
ART	Jessica Morriss			
Biltmore Forest	Harry Buckner			
Black Mountain	Michelle Kennedy (Jessica Trotman alt.)			
Buncombe County	William High	y	y	y
Buncombe Transit	Chloe Donohoe	y	y	y
TPD	Daniel Sellers	y	n	y
Canton	Byron Hickox			
Clyde	Joy Garland			
Flat Rock	Pat Christie	y		y
Fletcher	Eric Rufa	na		
Haywood County	Jodie Ferguson	y	y	
Haywood Transit	Cole Sutton			
Henderson County	Autumn Radcliff	y	y	y
Apple Country Public Transit	Janna Bianculli	y	y	y
Hendersonville	Matthew Manley	na	y	
Laurel Park	Cara Reeves			
Madison County	VACANT			
Maggie Valley	Sam Cullen (Noah Taylor alt.)	y	y	y
Mars Hill	Nathan Bennett	y	n	
Mills River	Michael Malecek			
Montreat	Savannah Parrish			
LOSRPO	Vicki Eastland	y	y	y
Waynesville	Elizabeth Teague	y	y	
Weaverville	James Eller	na		
Woodfin	Ricky Hurley	y	n	
NCDOT 13	Doug Phillips/Brendan Merithew	y	n	y
NCDOT 14	Steve Williams/Troy Wilson	y	n	a

Member	Name	Vote#1-Consent	Vote#2 I-40 Scope/Cost Estimate	Vote#3 I-40 Express Lanes
Asheville (KR)	Kim Roney	y	na	na
Asheville (ST)	Sage Turner	y	y	na
Black Mountain	Archie Pertiller	y	y	na
BOT D13	Billy Clarke			
BOT D14	Chuck McGrady	y	y	y
Buncombe County (DB)	Drew Ball	y	y	n
Buncombe County (PS)	Parker Sloan	y	na	n
Canton	Dr. Ralph Hamlett	y	n	y
Clyde	Dann Jesse			
Flat Rock	Emily Whitmire/Susa	na	y	n
Fletcher	Jim Player	y	y	y
Haywood County (BR)	Brandon Rodgers			
Haywood County (KE)	Kevin Ensley	y	y	y
Henderson County (JE)	Jay Egolf		na	y
Henderson County (SF)	Sheila Franklin	y	y	y
Hendersonville	Jennifer Hensley	y	n	y
Laurel Park	George Banta	y	y	y
Madison County	Matt Wechtel	y	n	y
Maggie Valley	Mike Eveland	y	n	y
Mars Hill	John Chandler			
Mills River	Shanon Gonce	y	n	y
Montreat	Tom Widmer	y	na	na
Rural Transit	David White	y	y	na
Town of Biltmore Forest	Drew Stephens			
Urban Transit	Susan Bean	y	y	n
Waynesville	Anthony Sutton	y	n	y
Weaverville	Catherine Cordell	na	na	na
Woodfin	Jim McAllister/Betsy	y	y	n
Total Yes		20	12	12
Total No		0	6	5
Total No Answer		2	5	6

If they were here during roll call but did not vote in subsequent motions, their vote is for the motion



Asheville on Bikes
RIDE YOUR CITY

Mike Sule
Asheville on Bikes
1 Haywood St, 4th Floor
Asheville, NC 28801

Nov. 4, 2025

Randall M. Tritt
Division Traffic Engineer
Division 13
N.C. Department of Transportation
55 Orange St
Asheville, NC 28801

Dear Mr. Tritt,

I am following up regarding our September 30 meeting to discuss safety spot improvements on NC Scenic Byway 251, aimed at enhancing the safety and functionality of the corridor for all road users by implementing existing safety measures currently at the disposal of NCDOT. On behalf of Asheville on Bikes (AoB), I thank you for your commitment to improvements following the tragic collision on July 1, 2025, which resulted in the deaths of Jacob Hill and Leonard Antonelli.

I agree that this corridor continues to present significant safety challenges due to its mix of commercial and commuter vehicular traffic, bicycle use, and the topographical and physical constraints of the route. I recognize that there is no simple solution to maximize both safety and utility, and I deeply appreciate your department's focus on safety improvements. I also thank you for including me and Abby Walker—AoB's Executive Assistant, Pisgah Rage Head Coach, BB Barnes Race Team Member, and co-founder of Dirt Skirrts—in the discussion of potential improvements.

While the focus of our meeting was NC 251 between Asheville and Marshall, I must also note that current North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) policies sometimes limit the safety of our most vulnerable road users. I urge you and your office to advocate for broader policy changes within the agency and the legislature. Safety is a shared responsibility, and this moment offers an opportunity to influence policies that enhance safety statewide.

For example, the Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) Law ([GS 136.89.11](#)), passed in 2013, prohibits NCDOT from funding and constructing stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This restriction also prevents NCDOT funds from being used as federal matches to expand infrastructure for vulnerable road users. While NCDOT officials cannot lobby for legislative changes, you can speak to the impacts of current law, which constrain the department's ability to improve safety along this and similar corridors.

Additionally, NCDOT's [Multimodal Guidance](#), published by the Safety and Mobility Division, does not include the *Bicycles May Use Full Lane* ([BMUFL, R4-11 or R9-20](#)) sign. This sign is included in the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* ([MUTCD](#), 11th Edition), adopted by FHWA in 2023 and required for state adoption by January 2026. (It also appeared in the 10th Edition, adopted in 2009.) NCDOT's 2024 Multimodal Guidance references the 11th Edition MUTCD but does not include BMUFL signage.

While municipalities like Asheville have deployed BMUFL signs, NCDOT has not. This sign clearly communicates that people on bikes have the right to use the full lane. We encourage NCDOT to include this sign in its manual and deploy it along NC 251 between Asheville and Marshall. Doing so would demonstrate Division 13's leadership and commitment to improving safety for all users.

These two policy changes—STI law reform and BMUFL sign adoption—would significantly enhance the safety of public roads across North Carolina.

Short-Term Recommendations for NC Scenic Byway 251

Align improvements with [Woodfin's Walk Bike Woodfin Comprehensive Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan \(2025\)](#), the [Hellbender Regional Trail](#) :

These plans outline a comprehensive active transportation network and reflect increasing recreational use along the NC 251 corridor. The [Riverside Park Expansion](#), [Silver Line Park](#), [Taylor's Wave](#), [Beaverdam Greenway](#), and NC 251 Greenway all indicate rising demand for safe multimodal access. NCDOT improvements should complement this emerging network and use.

Reduce the speed limit a range between 30mph - 25mph from Asheville to Marshall:

The 11th Edition of MUTCD explicitly states that the 85th percentile speed should not be the sole basis for setting speed limits when pedestrian and bicycle safety is a factor. Woodfin's plan notes that NCDOT's Corridor Section Safety Score along Riverside Road "has a relatively higher safety score, indicating that safety may be an issue" (*Bike Walk Woodfin*, p. 51). We encourage NCDOT to use other FHWA-adopted methods, such as [USLIMITS2](#), to evaluate potential speed limit changes.

Collect pre- and post-treatment data:

Measure the impact of short-term safety treatments on vehicle speeds, paying special attention to outliers that may indicate a need for further traffic calming. Conduct pre- and post-speed audits of the corridor.

Implement traffic calming at intersections:

Use [hardened centerlines](#)—devices that extend the centerline beyond the stop bar—to slow turning vehicles. These can be low-cost and mountable for larger vehicles. Incorporate crosswalks where sidewalks exist and consider raised intersections.

The raised intersection at [301 Linville Ave in Linville, NC](#), has proven effective since the mid-2000s and functions well despite regular snowfall. Given that the Woodfin area receives less annual snowfall than Linville, raised intersections are a feasible option here as well.

Priority intersections for traffic calming:

- [Elk Mountain Rd / NC 251](#)

- [Bannister Dr / Hogan View Dr / NC 251](#)
- [Old Marshall Highway / Canoe Ln / NC 251](#)
- [Louise Rdg Dr / NC 251](#)
- [Wiley Dr / NC 251](#)
- [Monticello Rd / NC 251](#)
- [Fletcher Martin Rd / NC 251](#)
- [Lower Flat Crk Road / NC 251](#)
- [Panther Branch Rd / NC 251](#)
- [Panhandle Rd / NC 251](#)
- [Ivy Hill Rd / NC 251 / US 25](#)

Intersection signage and sharrow treatments:

Install signage at all intersections to alert motorists that they are entering a heavily used bicycle corridor, and apply sharrow surface markings to reinforce this message.

Consult best practices for rumble strips:

Reference the FHWA [Rumble Strip Implementation Guide: Addressing Bicycle Issues on Two-Lane Roads](#) and Adventure Cycling's [Solutions for Making Rumble Strips Safer for Cyclists](#).

Coordinate with local stakeholders:

Collaborate with the cities of Asheville and Woodfin, the Town of Marshall, the Downtown Asheville Racing Club (DARC), the Blue Ridge Bicycle Club, and Asheville on Bikes to account for events, weekly rides, and anticipated increases in bicycle traffic.

Public awareness campaign:

Communicate that:

- People on bikes have the right to ride.
- Motorists should respond safely and respectfully to cyclists.
- Citizens can report harassment or unsafe driving behavior to authorities.

On behalf of Asheville on Bikes, we believe these immediate interventions will meaningfully enhance the safety and functionality of NC Scenic Byway 251. Thank you for the opportunity to work together toward safer streets.

We also encourage NCDOT Division 13 to pursue additional safety improvements by combining such efforts with other projects—such as corridor modernization or resurfacing—that allow for safer designs without constituting

“stand-alone” bicycle or pedestrian projects. Other divisions have successfully used this approach to prioritize safety, and Division 13 should do the same.

Finally, we urge Division 13 to use discretionary spot treatment funds to address the longstanding safety issues along this corridor. Our region continues to lead the state in pedestrian and cyclist injuries and deaths, making it imperative that Division 13 adopt new, creative approaches to elevate safety across our public rights-of-way. This safety crisis requires innovative, proactive problem-solving from NCDOT and its divisions.

Sincerely,

Mike Sule

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M. Sule".

Executive Director
Asheville on Bikes