

# Prioritization Subcommittee

## *Meeting Agenda*

April 1, 2026

9:30 AM

**Meeting to be held In-Person 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, Chair), Anthony Sutton (Town of Waynesville), Elizabeth Teague (Town of Waynesville), Archie Pertiller (Town of Black Mountain), Mark Endries (Town of Weaverville)

|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| <b>1. Welcome and Introductions</b>               | Autumn Radcliff |
| <b>2. Public Comment</b>                          | Autumn Radcliff |
| <b>3. Approval of March, 2026 Meeting Minutes</b> | Autumn Radcliff |
| <b>4. Business</b>                                |                 |
| A. Express Design Priorities- Round Two           | MPO Staff       |
| <b>5. News, Events, Updates</b>                   | Autumn Radcliff |
| <b>6. Public Comment</b>                          | Autumn Radcliff |
| <b>7. Adjournment</b>                             | Autumn Radcliff |

# 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 30<sup>th</sup> - 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of Express Design Assignments Due~~

May 31<sup>st</sup> - 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of Express Design Assignments Due

September 30<sup>th</sup> - 1/3<sup>rd</sup> 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 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          |
| 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          |
| I-40                                  | Exit 44                        | Exit 27                    | Widen to Add Express Lanes (Statewide Mobility) | Buncombe, Haywood |
| US 176 (Spartanburg Highway)          | NC 225 (Greenville Highway)    | Upward Road                | Access Management (Regional Impact)             | Henderson         |
| Fanning Bridge Road                   | US 25 (Hendersonville Road)    | NC 280 (Airport Road)      | Modernization (Division Needs)                  | Henderson         |

### Recommendation

Alternative #1: Focus on Division Needs projects

1. Reems Creek Road
2. Elkwood Avenue/Old Burnsville Highway
3. Fanning Bridge Road

Alternative #2: Focus on Regional Impact projects with an emphasis on projects that haven't had previous work done

1. US 70 (Tunnel Road) Road Diet
2. US 70 (State Street) Road Diet
3. US 176 (Spartanburg Highway)

NOTE: I-40 has had express designs done but not with express lanes, just as a widening.

**Action Needed: Recommend Three Projects For Express Designs**

**Reference: On-Going Or Expected to Begin Express Designs**

| Route / Facility / Project Name | From / Cross Street / Location | To / Cross Street             | Description  | County    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-----------|
| US 19<br>(Smokey Park Highway)  | I-40                           | NC 151<br>(Pisgah Highway)    | Access Management                                    | Buncombe  |
| SR 3548<br>(Clingman Avenue)    | Hilliard Avenue                | Patton Avenue                 | Multiple Intersection Improvements                   | Buncombe  |
| NC 63 (New Leicester Highway)   | Newfound Road                  | Gouges Branch Road            | Multiple Intersection Improvements                   | Buncombe  |
| NC 191                          | Mountain Road                  | US 25B<br>(Asheville Highway) | Widening   | Henderson |
| US 25B<br>(Asheville Highway)   | North Main Street              | Berkeley Road                 | Multiple Intersection Improvements/Access Management | Henderson |