

## French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization

Minutes from the TCC Hybrid Meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup> , 2026

### Minutes

**ATTENDANCE:**

In-person and remote via Zoom:

Lucy Crown	City of Asheville
Jessica Morriss	ART
William High (Chair)	Buncombe County
Daniel Sellers	TPD
Matthew Manley	City of Hendersonville
Noah Taylor	Town of Maggie Valley
Vicki Eastland	LOSRPO
Ricky Hurley	Town of Woodfin
Mike Malecek	Town of Mills River
Doug Phillips	NCDOT Div 13
Steve Williams	NCDOT Div 14
Stephen Sparks	NCDOT/TPD
Chris Medlin	NCDOT
John Hunter	NCDOT
Jeremy Chapman	NCDOT
Chloe Donohoe	Buncombe Transit
Troy Wilson	NCDOT
Elizabeth Teague	Town of Waynesville
Jason Myers	NCDOT
Tim McHugh	NCDOT Rail Division
Eddie McFalls	NCDOT Rail Division

**Members Without Representation Present:**

Town of Black Mountain
Town of Canton
Town of Clyde
Town of Laurel Park
Madison County
Town of Montreat
Village of Flat Rock
Town of Fletcher
Haywood Transit
Town of Waynesville

Apple Country Transit
Town of Mars Hill
Town of Weaverville
Haywood County
Town of Biltmore Forest

Additional Attendees:

Tristan Winkler	Sandy Broadwill	Hannah Bagli
Daisy O'Connor	Ada McGovern	Erica Anderson
Asha Rado (Minutes)		Olin Daelhousen (Public)

**WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING**

Chair William High called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone at 11:05AM. A quorum was established to conduct the business before the meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

William High opened the floor for public comment.

**Consent Agenda:**

**3A:March 2026 TCC Meeting Minutes:**

[https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/2026\\_03\\_12\\_DRAFT.MPO\\_TCC\\_Minutes\\_Updated.pdf](https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/2026_03_12_DRAFT.MPO_TCC_Minutes_Updated.pdf)

**3B. Amendment to the FY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program**

**What is the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)?**

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization’s annual planning work plan and budget. It describes what transportation planning activities the MPO and its partners will undertake during the fiscal year, how those activities support federal and regional goals, and how federal, state, and local planning funds will be used.

The UPWP is required under federal law to ensure that metropolitan transportation planning activities are:

- Continuing
- Comprehensive
- Cooperative

In practice, the UPWP functions as both:

- a scope of work for MPO staff and planning studies, and
- a financial plan that documents the use of federal planning funds.

No planning activity using federal funds may occur unless it is included in an adopted UPWP.

### **Proposed Amendments**

Following the adoption of the FY 2027 UPWP in March, 2026, the City of Asheville was notified that it did not program the full amount of FTA 5303 Metropolitan Planning Funds that were made available to the region.

The amendment would fully program the allotment of 5303 funds from \$127,241 to \$151,871 to the City of Asheville.

**See Agenda for tables of FY 26 UPWP FTA Section 2303 Work Tasks To Be Performed (Pages 5-8):**

[https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/2026\\_04\\_09\\_TCC\\_Agenda\\_Packet.pdf](https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/2026_04_09_TCC_Agenda_Packet.pdf)

### **3C. P8 Express Design Assignments:**

#### **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 and 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

#### **Previously Assigned Express Designs (Approved 11/30/25)**

- US 19 (Smokey Park Highway) Access Management from I-40 to Wiggins Road
- Clingman Avenue Multiple Intersection Improvements from Patton Avenue to Hilliard Avenue

- NC 63 (New Leicester Highway) Multiple Intersection Improvements from Newfound Road to Gouges Branch Road
- US 25B (Asheville Highway) Multiple Intersection Improvements/Access Management from North Main Street to Berkley Road

### **New Recommendations for 5/31/26**

- Fanning Bridge Road Modernization from US 25 (Hendersonville Road) to NC 280 (Airport Road)
- US 70 (Tunnel Road) Road Diet from Beaucatcher Tunnel to US 74A (South Tunnel Road)
- US 70 (State Street) Road Diet from Blue Ridge Road to NC 9

### **3D. Resolution of Support Waynesville Bike/Ped Planning Grant**

#### **What is the Multimodal Planning Grant Program?**

The Multimodal Planning Grant Program is a program through NCDOT that makes resources available to local governments to do pedestrian and/or bicycle planning efforts for their communities, including Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Network Plans, Multimodal Plan, Plan Updates, or Project Acceleration Plans. A local match is required, based on the population of the local government.

#### **What is The Town of Waynesville Planning to Apply For?**

The Town of Waynesville is planning to apply for Update to their Pedestrian Plan, which was initially adopted in 2010.

#### **What is Needed from the MPO?**

Applications for the Multimodal Planning Grant Program are required to have resolutions of support from the applicable MPO or RPO.

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE’S APPLICATION TO THE NCDOT MULTIMODAL PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM TO UPDATE ITS PEDESTRIAN PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) serves as the regional transportation planning body for Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, and Madison Counties, and provides a forum for cooperative, comprehensive, and continuing transportation planning; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Waynesville last adopted a pedestrian plan in 2010, and an update is needed to reflect current conditions, community priorities, safety needs, and development patterns; and

**WHEREAS**, improving pedestrian infrastructure and connectivity is critical to enhancing safety, accessibility, public health, and quality of life for residents and visitors; and

**WHEREAS**, the update of Waynesville’s pedestrian plan would support regional goals related to safety, multimodal connectivity, and implementation of locally adopted and regional plans, including the FBRMPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Safe Streets initiatives; and

**WHEREAS**, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Multimodal Planning Grant Program provides funding to assist communities in developing comprehensive transportation plans that address pedestrian, bicycle, and multimodal needs; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Waynesville intends to apply for funding through this program to update its pedestrian plan and identify priority projects, policies, and implementation strategies; and

**WHEREAS**, the French Broad River MPO supports efforts by member jurisdictions to improve multimodal transportation systems and advance projects that enhance safety and connectivity across the region.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization Board hereby expresses its support for the Town of Waynesville’s application to the NCDOT Multimodal Planning Grant Program to update its pedestrian plan; and

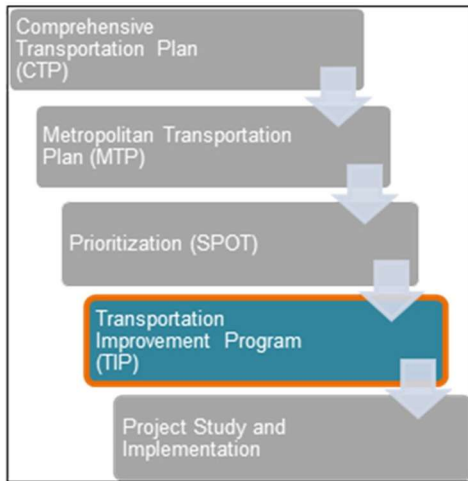
**ADOPTED** this 16th day of April, 2026.

-----  
Anthony Sutton, Chair, FBRMPO Board

ATTEST:-----  
Tristan Winkler, MPO Director

### 3E: Amendments to the 2026-2035 Transportation Improvement Program:

#### 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:

- Editing the programming 5310 and JARC Projects from the most recent call for projects to include the rescinded FY21 and FY22 Madison County funds.
  - Moving engineering funds for EB-5946 (Mills River Valley Trail) from FY26 to FY28
  - U-5616: Amending FY27 funding for the French Broad River MPO Planning Supplement
- Minor corrections to multiple City of Asheville Transit projects

All TIP Amendment Summaries can be found here: [https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/FBRMPO\\_April2026\\_TIPAmendments\\_UPDATED.pdf](https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/FBRMPO_April2026_TIPAmendments_UPDATED.pdf)

**Action Required:** Consider Recommending Adoption of the Amendments to the 2026-2035 TIP.

**Staff Recommendation:** Recommend Approval of the Amendments to the 2026-2035 TIP.

***Vicki Eastland moved to accept the consent agenda including the minutes from the March 2026 TCC Meeting Minutes, the FY 2027 UPWP Amendment, the P8 Express Design Assignments, the Resolution of Support-Waynesville Bike/Ped Planning Grant Application and the Amendments to the 2026-2035 TIP. Noah Taylor seconded the motion which passed unaminously upon a roll call vote.***

#### Business:

##### 4A. Congestion Management Process- Biennial Data Update:

As a Transportation Management Area (TMA), the French Broad River MPO is required to maintain a Congestion Management Process (CMP) for the region which includes congestion monitoring on a biennial basis. A draft biennial report is included below. A presentation will be provided.

## **What is a CMP?**

“A congestion management process (CMP) is a systematic and regionally-accepted approach for managing congestion that provides accurate, up-to-date information on transportation system performance and assesses alternative strategies for congestion management that meet State and local needs.”

## **When was the CMP last updated?**

The full CMP was updated in 2018 and is available on the MPO website here:

[https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/DraftCMP\\_2018-1-1.pdf](https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/DraftCMP_2018-1-1.pdf)

The previous biennial report was completed in 2023 with data focusing on 2021. MPO Staff will present on the latest data report.

Discussion occurred around the commuting in from McDowell County tripled and if the threshold would have triggered their inclusion. Trading housing cost for transportation costs. Discussion occurred around congestion delays going down from 2019/2020 and how they might compare to other MPOs. Redistribution of when trips are made and the increase and reliability in peak hours. Discussion on if you can find out who is commuting and how you know who is staying home and working remotely. Does this account for loss of industry in an area.

***Noah Taylor moved to recommend the approval of the Congestion Management Process-Biennial Data Update to the Board. Daniel Sellers seconded the motion and it passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.***

## **5A. Potential Improvements Near Exit 44 on I-40:**

NCDOT Division 13 will provide an update on potential improvements near Exit 44 on I-40 and the surrounding area.

Information Only.

Discussion around Acton Circle. Discussion around traffic forecasts. Discussion around travel forecast being submitted under R2513. Discussion on grading opposite side 19 22.

## **5B. WNC Passenger Rail Project Update:**

NCDOT Rail Division will provide an update on the WNC Passenger Rail project, which is planned to expand passenger rail service from Salisbury to Asheville.

The previously completed Feasibility Study is available here:

<https://www.ncdot.gov/divisions/rail/Documents/western-nc-feasibility-study-final.pdf>

The recently completed Economic Impact Study is available here:

[https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/Rail-Division-Resources/Documents/EconImpact-Asheville-Salisbury\\_FR.pdf](https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/Rail-Division-Resources/Documents/EconImpact-Asheville-Salisbury_FR.pdf)

Information Only.

Discussion occurred around how our region has always wanted rail. Asheville was leading requested

passenger request service to Amtrak. Discussion around localized planning around Old Fort Loops and Town of Black Mountain. Discussion around IIJA and how it helped provide a clear path forward. Discussion around negotiating with Norfolk Southern for a small portion of their property for passenger trains under dot system. Discussion around alternative funding streams.

### **5C. FY 2026 53007 Suballocation:**

The Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program is a federal funding program administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in the United States. It provides grants to public transit systems in urbanized areas (UZAs) with populations of 50,000 or more.

Section 5307 funds are distributed based on formulas set in federal law (currently under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law – also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), 2021–2026).

Under the FY 2026 Section 5307 allocation, the UZA received \$4,322,617.

Historically, FBRMPO has designated 10% of the allotment toward Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) programs which are funded through a call for projects each year. This year's JARC allotment would be \$432,261.70.

FBRMPO uses a suballocation formula approved by the MPO Board in 2023 to allot the 5307 funding received among transit operators within the UZA. Under this formula, Asheville (who serves as the designated recipient) receives 46.9% of the total FTA 5307 allocation, Buncombe County receives 31.9%, and Henderson County receives 21.2%. Both Haywood and Madison County are outside of the UZA and are therefore ineligible for 5307 funding.

Under the FY 2026 Section 5307 allocation, the UZA received \$3,890,355.30 after the JARC set aside. According to the formula:

- Asheville would receive \$1,824,576.64
- Buncombe County would receive \$1,241,023.34
- Henderson County would receive \$824,755.32

Information Only.

No discussion occurred.

### **6A. Division Project Updates**

Division 13:

Division 14: [https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Division14\\_April2026\\_Updates.pdf](https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Division14_April2026_Updates.pdf)

### **6B. 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>

## 6C.

### Committee & Workgroup Updates

**Prioritization Subcommittee**— met on April 1<sup>st</sup>, next meeting June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

- P8 Express Design Assignments

**5307 Subrecipient Workgroup**- met on February 17<sup>th</sup>, next meeting May 19<sup>th</sup>. Points of Business/Discussion:

- Grant management update by the City of Asheville
- Shared document repository discussion
- Locally Coordinated Plan update
- Service connection update
- 5310/JARC Call for Projects update
- Knowledge-sharing opportunities within current group composition

**\*See below for the MPO Studies and Locally Administered Projects Updates:**

[https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/2026\\_04\\_09\\_TCC\\_Agenda\\_Packet.pdf](https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/2026_04_09_TCC_Agenda_Packet.pdf)

### PUBLIC COMMENT

William High opened the floor for public comment. No comment was heard.

### ADJOURNMENT

William High adjourned the meeting at 12:55 PM as there was no further business.

