

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
 Minutes from the Governing Board Meeting on April 16th , 2026

Attendance:

In-Person and Remote via the Zoom Platform:

Kim Roney	City of Asheville
Emily Whitmire	Village of Flat Rock
Jim Player	Town of Fletcher
Jennifer Hensley	City of Hendersonville
Drew Stephens	Town of Biltmore Forest
Jim McAllister	Town of Woodfin
Daniel Sellers	NCDOT TPD
Steve Williams	NCDOT Division 14
John Hunter	NCDOT TPD
Sheila Franklin	Henderson County
Stephen Sparks	NCDOT
Drew Ball	Buncombe County
Dr Ralph Hamlet	Town of Canton
Susan Bean	Urban Transit
Mark Endries	Town of Weaverville
Jay Egolf	Henderson County
Sage Turner	City of Asheville
Billy Clarke	BOT DIV 13
Chuck McGrady	BOT DIV 14
Kevin Ensley	Haywood County
George Banta	Town of Laurel Park
Anthony Sutton	Town of Waynesville
Tim Anderson	NCDOT Division 13
Parker Sloan	Buncombe County
Archie Pertiller	Town of Black Mountain
Jason Myers	NCDOT Rail
Wesley Grindstaff	NCDOT Div 14
Scott Collier	NCDOT Safety Unit

Troy Wilson	NCDOT Div 14
Chris Medlin	NCDOT Div 13

Members without Representation present:

Town of Clyde
Town of Maggie Valley
Town of Mars Hill
Madison County
Town of Montreat
Rural Transit
Town of Mills River

Additional Attendees:

Tristan Winkler (FBRMPO) Daisy O’Connor (FBRMPO) Hannah Bagli (FBRMPO)
Sandy Broadwill(FBRMPO) Ada McGovern(FBRMPO) Brad Presler (Safe Schools AVL)
Jon Dees (Public) Will Hofmann (Citizen Times)

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & ROLL CALL

Anthony Sutton called the meeting to order at 1:03 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.

Brad Pressler- Resident of South Asheville and organizer of Safe Schools AVL an campaign focused on traffic safety along the Overlook rd and Long Shoals corridor serving four Buncombe County schools. Giving an update on a site visit with Estes Elementary, representatives from NCDOT Div 13, Asheville Polic department, school board and school principals. They walked the corridor to discuss traffic flow challenges during drop off and pick up. Buncombe county schools is reworking the parking lot of Estes to improve traffic flow. NCDOT I going back to their study team to look at gaps and how traffic moves between Koontz and Estes.

CONSENT AGENDA

3A. March 2026 Meeting Minutes:

https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/2026_03_19_MPO.DRAFT_Board_Minutes.pdf

3B. FY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment:

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.

TCC Recommendation: Approve the Adoption of the Amendment to the FY 2027 UPWP

Action Required: Consider Adoption of the Amendment to the FY 2027 UPWP

*See [Agenda](#) for tables and charts

3C. P8 Express Design Amendments:

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 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

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

Action Required: Consider Approval of P8 Express Design Assignments

Prioritization Subcommittee & TCC Recommendation: Approve New Recommendations for P8 Express Design Assignments

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 Waynesville Planning to Apply For?

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.

Action Required: Consider Approval of a Resolution to Support the City of Waynesville's Multimodal Planning Grant Application.

TCC Recommendation: Recommend the MPO Board Approve the Resolution of Support

FRENCH BROAD RIVER

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Staff Report & Recommendations

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE'S APPLICATION TO THE NCDOT MULTIMODAL PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM FOR A BICYCLE & 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 bicycle and 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.

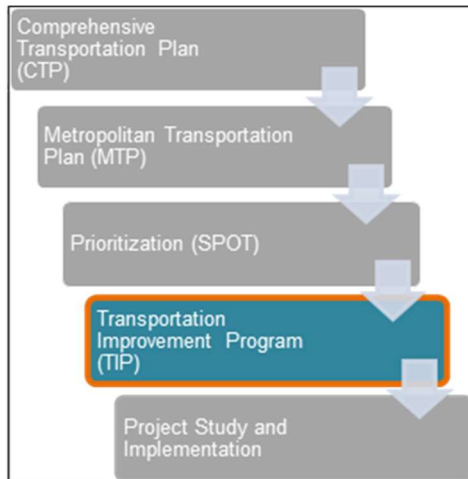
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization Board hereby expresses its support for the Town of Waynesville's application to the NCDOT Multimodal Planning Grant Program for a Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan; and

ADOPTED this 16th day of April, 2026.

ATTEST: _____

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

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

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

Billy Clarke moved to approve the TAC Agenda, consent agenda including the March 2026 Meeting Minutes, FY 2027 UPWP Amendment, P8 Express Design Assignments, Resolution of Support-Waynesville Bike/Ped Planning Grant Application and the Amendments to the 2026-2035 TIP. Jim McAllister seconded the motion which passed 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

The previous biennial report was completed in 2023 with data focusing on 2021. The latest biennial report is available here: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/CMP_Report_2025.pdf
MPO Staff will present on the latest data report.

TCC Recommendation: Approve the CMP Biennial Report

Action Required: Consider Approval of the CMP Biennial Report

Discussion occurred around if the data would allow for any finer scale analysis on the county level i.e. North Buncombe etc.

Jim Player motioned to approve the CMP Biennial Report. Billy Clarke seconded the motion and it passed 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 occurred around reviewing the traffic analysis of the Acton development of housing and the Costco project. To include all the growth happening in the area. Asked for update on MTP from MPO staff.

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

Information Only.

Discussion occurred around the Chicago to Portland route and how freight trains have right away and can cause passenger rail delays.

5C. FY 2026 5307 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.

Discussion did not occur.

6A. Division Project Updates

Division 13: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Division13_April2026_Updates.pdf

Division 14: 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 1st, next meeting June 3rd.

- P8 Express Design Assignments

5307 Subrecipient Workgroup- met on February 17th, next meeting May 19th. 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 [Agenda](#) for Locally Administered Projects and MPO Studies Status)

6D. Legislative Updates:

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

ADJOURNMENT

Anthony Sutton adjourned the meeting at 2:34PM as there was no further business before the Board.