

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
Minutes from the Governing Board Meeting on June 18th , 2026

Attendance:

In-Person and Remote via the Zoom Platform:

Kim Roney	City of Asheville
Emily Whitmire	Village of Flat Rock
Jennifer Hensley	City of Hendersonville
Drew Stephens	Town of Biltmore Forest
Daniel Sellers	NCDOT TPD
Steve Williams	NCDOT Division 14
John Hunter	NCDOT TPD
Sheila Franklin	Henderson County
Stephen Sparks	NCDOT
Dr Ralph Hamlett	Town of Canton
Susan Bean	Urban Transit
Mark Endries	Town of Weaverville
Jay Egolf	Henderson County
Billy Clarke	BOT DIV 13
Chuck McGrady	BOT DIV 14
Kevin Ensley	Haywood County
Anthony Sutton	Town of Waynesville
Tim Anderson	NCDOT Division 13
Tom Widmer	Montreat
Archie Pertiller	Town of Black Mountain
Wesley Grindstaff	NCDOT Div 14
Steve Cannon	NCDOT
Troy Wilson	NCDOT Div 14
Chris Medlin	NCDOT Div 13
Doug Phillips	NCDOT Div 13
Brendan Merrithew	NCDOT
Jeremy Chapman	NCDOT
Matt Wechtel	Madison County

Mike Eveland	Maggie Valley
David White	Rural Transit
Drew Ball	Buncombe County

Members without Representation present:

Town of Clyde
Town of Fletcher
Town of Mars Hill
Town of Woodfin
Town of Mills River
Town of Laurel Park

Additional Attendees:

Tristan Winkler (FBRMPO) Daisy O'Connor (FBRMPO) Hannah Bagli (FBRMPO)
Sandy Broadwill(FBRMPO) Ada McGovern(FBRMPO) Maddie Barondeau (Public)

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. No Comment was heard.

CONSENT AGENDA

3A. April 2026 Meeting Minutes:

https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/2026_04_16_MPO.DRAFT_Board_Minutes.pdf

3B. May 2026 Special Meeting Minutes:

https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/2026_05_11_MPO_TCC-TAC-Combined-Special-Meeting-Minutes.pdf

3C Modification 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 amendment of the FY 2027 UPWP in April, 2026, the City of Asheville notified the MPO that it did not program the full amount of local match for FTA 5305-2 Area of Persistent Poverty Transit Program Support Fund that were required.

The amendment would fully allocate the local match for 5305-2 funds from \$32,814 to \$36,400 from the City of Asheville.

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

TCC Recommendation: Adopt the Amendment to the FY 2027 UPWP

3D. Letter of Support- Hendersonville Safe Street for All Application

The City of Hendersonville submitted a grant application for the USDOT Safe Streets for All Program to improve roadway safety in the City of Hendersonville. The City requested a letter of support from the MPO. The following was provided.

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FRENCH BROAD RIVER

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

The Honorable Sean Duffy Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY2026 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Application - Safe Streets for Hendersonville: 7th Avenue Safety Implementation

Dear Secretary Duffy:

On behalf of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO), I am writing to express our strong support for the City of Hendersonville's FY2026 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant application for the "Safe Streets for Hendersonville: 7th Avenue Safety Implementation" project.

This project represents a collaborative effort between the City of Hendersonville, the French Broad River MPO, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation to improve safety, accessibility, resilience, and economic vitality along one of Hendersonville's most important historic corridors.

The proposed improvements along 7th Avenue will create a safer and more comfortable transportation environment for all roadway users while maintaining the corridor's critical role in the local transportation network. The project will support safer travel for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, families, older adults, and visitors while strengthening connections between downtown Hendersonville, nearby neighborhoods, and major regional trail facilities.

In addition to its transportation benefits, the project will support broader community and economic goals by:

- Improving roadway safety and reducing the potential for serious crashes,
- Enhancing quality of life and accessibility for residents and visitors,
- Supporting local businesses, tourism, and economic development opportunities,
- Improving multimodal connectivity while maintaining vehicular access and mobility, and
- Incorporating infrastructure improvements that increase resilience to flooding and extreme weather events.

The FBRMPO strongly believes this project reflects the goals of the SS4A program and demonstrates how transportation investments can improve safety while supporting economic opportunity and community development in small and mid-sized communities.

Thank you for your consideration of this important application and for your continued support of safer transportation systems across the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tristan Winkler', with a stylized, cursive script.

Tristan Winkler

Director

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization

3E. Letter of Support- Buncombe County EMS Safe Streets for All Application:

Buncombe County EMS submitted a grant application for the USDOT Safe Streets for All Program to provide a faster delivery of whole blood to people severely injured in crashes. The County requested a letter of support from the MPO. The following was provided.



To Whom It May Concern:

The French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) is pleased to support Buncombe County Emergency Medical Services' application to the USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Grant Program.

The proposed Regional Roadway Survivability Framework directly aligns with the goals and findings of the adopted Safe Streets for WNC (SSWNC) Safety Action Plan, completed jointly by the FBRMPO and Land of Sky RPO in 2025. The SSWNC Plan identified roadway fatalities and serious injuries as a growing regional crisis and specifically noted that post-crash care has historically received limited attention in transportation safety planning. The plan also emphasized the importance of integrating safety considerations into changing regional conditions, disaster recovery, and future transportation system risks.

The Buncombe County EMS proposal thoughtfully builds upon that framework by evaluating innovative strategies intended to improve post-crash survivability, responder safety, and emergency access reliability within Western North Carolina's unique transportation environment. Our region has unique challenges caused- in part- by our Appalachian topography. Growth has been centered around a few roadway corridors with very limited redundancy, making access more difficult and additional hazards more likely. The proposal's focus on mountainous terrain, severe weather disruptions, congestion, roadway incidents, and emergency response challenges is consistent with conditions identified throughout the regional safety planning process.

FBRMPO particularly appreciates the proposal's multidisciplinary approach and its

commitment to measurable evaluation, data integration, and coordination with the regional Safety Action Plan. The proposed demonstration activities — including advanced post-crash clinical stabilization strategies, operational response analysis, and responder roadway safety improvements — represent an opportunity to further strengthen the region's understanding of post-crash care within the Safe System Approach.

Importantly, this effort complements rather than replaces the existing SSWNC framework. Findings and recommendations generated through this work have the potential to inform future updates to the regional Safety Action Plan and support more comprehensive transportation safety strategies across Western North Carolina.

FBRMPO looks forward to continued coordination with Buncombe County EMS and regional partners throughout the development and evaluation of this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tristan Winkler', is written over a horizontal line.

Tristan Winkler

Director

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization

3F. Letter of Support- NCDOT BRIC Application:

NCDOT Division 13 applied for a FEMA BRIC Application to improve drainage near Beacon Park. The following letter of support was provided.



To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization, I am pleased to provide this letter of support for Buncombe County and NCDOT's proposed Beacon Village Drainage Improvements project in Swannanoa, North Carolina, for consideration under FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program.

Beacon Village is a historic residential community in the Swannanoa area with origins as an early twentieth-century mill village. Many of the homes and roadways in the area were constructed before modern drainage and resilience standards were in place. As a result, the community has experienced repeated roadway and property flooding, particularly along Edwards Avenue, where inadequate drainage has created recurring maintenance, access, and safety concerns.

Those long-standing issues were made more urgent by Hurricane Helene in September 2024, which caused extreme flooding across the Swannanoa area and resulted in significant impacts to the Beacon Village community. The proposed project would address documented drainage deficiencies along Richmond Avenue, Edwards Avenue, and associated drainage outlets toward US 70, helping reduce future flood risk for residents, road users, and public agencies responsible for maintaining the transportation system.

From the MPO's perspective, this project is strongly aligned with regional transportation resilience and hazard mitigation priorities. Improving drainage in Beacon Village would help maintain safer and more reliable access during heavy rain events, reduce recurring roadway flooding, support emergency response and neighborhood mobility, and lower the likelihood of repeated public expenditures for response, repair, and maintenance. The project would also help protect a modest-income residential community that has already experienced substantial storm impacts.

The French Broad River MPO has placed increased emphasis on transportation system resilience following Hurricane Helene, particularly where known infrastructure vulnerabilities affect community access, safety, and long-term recovery. The Beacon Village Drainage Improvements project represents a practical, targeted investment that would reduce future risk, improve roadway reliability, and strengthen the resilience of an established Swannanoa neighborhood.

For these reasons, the French Broad River MPO supports the Beacon Village Drainage Improvements project and encourages its consideration for FEMA BRIC funding.

Sincerely,



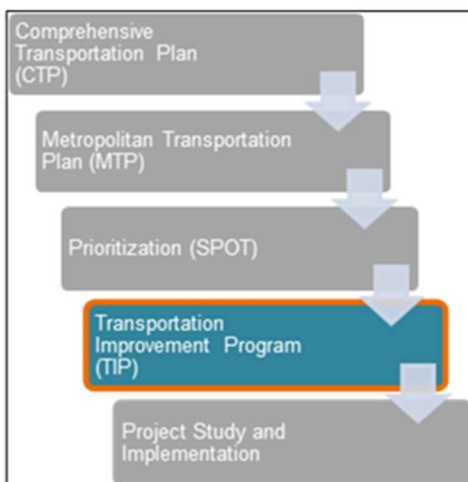
Tristan Winkler

Director

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization

3G. 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:

- Add additional Federal and Local funding to HL-0013 (9th Street Bridge Replacement)
 - Add additional Federal and Local funding to U-5019A (Nasty Branch Greenway)
 - Various pedestrian signal installation and improvements in Divisions 13 (Including Patton Ave at Louisiana Rd in Asheville, Flat Creek Rd at Village Way Intersections in Black Mountain, and US 70 Tunnel Rd at White Pine Dr)
- EB-5963 – Grove Street Sidewalks in Hendersonville: delay construction from FY25 to FY27, bringing the project into the federally approved STIP.

All TIP Amendment Summaries can be found here: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/FBRMPO_June2026_TIPAmendments_Updated.pdf

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

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

3H. Letter of Information- WNC Passenger Rail

Members of the North Carolina General Assembly
North Carolina General Assembly
Raleigh, NC

Dear Members of the North Carolina General Assembly:

On behalf of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization, I am writing to provide information on the Western North Carolina Passenger Rail project and its status within the MPO's regional transportation planning and prioritization processes.

Passenger rail service between Salisbury and Asheville has been identified as a regionally significant transportation project for Western North Carolina. The project is included in the MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Elevate 2050, which serves as the long-range transportation plan for the Asheville urbanized area and guides regional transportation investment priorities over a 25-year planning horizon.

The project has also been advanced through North Carolina's Strategic Prioritization process. During Prioritization 7.0, the MPO identified the Western North Carolina Passenger Rail project as one of its Regional Impact tier priorities, reflecting its importance for regional mobility, economic development, tourism, intercity travel, and long-term multimodal connectivity. The MPO has also submitted the project for consideration in Prioritization 8.0 and is working to help identify potential local match opportunities that may support the project's continued advancement and competitiveness within the statewide prioritization process.

From a regional transportation planning perspective, passenger rail service to Western North Carolina would expand intercity travel options, improve connections between Western North Carolina and other regions of the state, and support a more connected and resilient multimodal transportation system. The project would also complement existing and planned transportation investments by providing an additional travel option for residents, visitors, students, workers, and older adults. The MPO recognizes that significant planning, coordination, funding, and implementation steps remain before passenger rail service to Asheville can be realized. Continued state, federal, regional, and local coordination will be important to determine the most feasible path forward and to position the corridor for future funding opportunities.

The French Broad River MPO appreciates the ongoing work of NCDOT, local governments, regional partners, and project advocates to evaluate and advance passenger rail opportunities for Western North Carolina. We hope this information is helpful as the General Assembly considers transportation funding needs and opportunities across the state.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued work on behalf of North Carolina's transportation system.

Sincerely,

Tristan Winkler

Director

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization Land
of Sky Regional Council

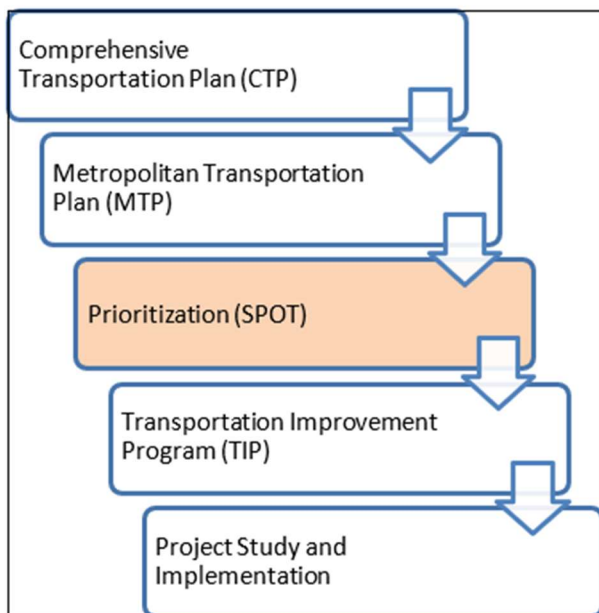
Jennifer Hensley moved to approve the TAC Agenda, consent agenda including the April 2026 Meeting Minutes, the May Special Meeting Minutes, FY2027 Unified Planning Work Program Amendment #2, Letters of Support for the following: Hendersonville Safe Streets for All Application, Buncombe County EMS Safe Streets for All Application, NCDOT BRIC Grant Application, the Amendments to the 2026-2035 Transportation Improvement Program and the Letter of Information-WNC Passenger Rail. Chuck McGrady seconded the motion which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

Business:

4A. P8- Regional Impact Local Input Points:

Background

The Prioritization Process (AKA SPOT, AKA P 8) is the process in North Carolina that helps determine the majority of transportation improvements across the State. The process is dictated by the [Strategic Transportation Investments Act \(STI\) of 2012](#) and is generally designed to be a data-driven, transparent process to determine what transportation projects are funded or not. MPOs are engaged throughout the process to submit projects for consideration (along with Divisions and RPOs) as well as local input points that are used to boost the scores of projects competing for Regional Impact or Division Needs funding.



Action Items for Today

- Review Outcomes of Statewide Mobility and Regional Impact scores
- Discuss DRAFT local input points for Regional Impact projects

Statewide Mobility Projects

Statewide Mobility projects are programmed solely based on the quantitative score. Only one project in the region scored well enough for programming with available funding in P8- the I-40 Managed Lanes project from Exit 44 to Exit 27. The scores for all Statewide Mobility projects in the MPO are available below.

Route / Facility / Project Name	From / Cross Street / Location	To / Cross Street	Description	Specific Improvement Type	Cost to NCDOT	Statewide Mobility Quantitative Score (Out of 100)
I-40	Exit 44 (Smokey Park Highway)	Exit 27 (US 23/74)	Construct managed lanes. [TOLL PROJECT]	1 - Widen Existing Roadway	\$ 513,200,000	88.47
I-26	US 25	US 64 (Four Seasons Boulevard)	Add Additional Lanes.	1 - Widen Existing Roadway	\$ 220,100,000	68.70
I-26, I-240	I-26/I-40/I-240 final interchange improvements	N/A	Construct Final Interchange Improvements	8 - Improve Interchange	\$ 358,200,000	60.36
I-26	US 64	N/A	Construct interchange <u>improvements</u>	8 - Improve Interchange	\$ 121,200,000	59.13
US 19 (Patton Avenue)	US 19 (Patton Avenue) / US 23 / US 74 ALT and NC 63 (New Leicester Highway)	N/A	Construct final intersection improvements.	10 - Improve Intersection	\$ 43,800,000	58.47
I-26, US 23, US 19	NC 251/SR 1781 (Broadway Street)	US 25/US 70/SR 1725 (Weaver Boulevard)	Widen roadway to 6 and 8 lanes.	1 - Widen Existing Roadway	\$ 602,700,000	57.33
I-26, US 19, US 23	US 25 (Merrimon Avenue)	N/A	Improve interchange	8 - Improve Interchange	\$ 138,300,000	55.31

Route / Facility / Project Name	From / Cross Street / Location	To / Cross Street	Description	Specific Improvement Type	Cost to NCDOT	Statewide Mobility Quantitative Score (Out of 100)
I-26, US 19, US 23	NC 251/SR 1728 (Broadway Street)	N/A	Improve interchange	8 - Improve Interchange	\$ 101,900,000	45.29
US 19, US 23, I-26	SR 1684 (Elk Mountain Road)	N/A	Improve interchange	8 - Improve Interchange	\$ 75,300,000	42.39
NS AS Line	NC 251 (Riverside Drive), Asheville, Buncombe County	N/A		3 - Highway-rail <u>crossing</u> improvement (point)	\$ 26,219,000	39.29
I-26, US 19, US 23	US 25, US 70 (Weaver Boulevard)	SR 2207 (North Buncombe school Road)	Upgrade freeway to interstate standards	17 - Upgrade Freeway to Interstate Standards	\$ 171,500,000	31.67
I-26, US 19, US 23	SR 2207 (North Buncombe School Road)	South of SR 2148 (Stockton Branch Road)	Upgrade freeway to interstate standards	17 - Upgrade Freeway to Interstate Standards	\$ 129,000,000	30.16

Regional Impact Projects

Regional Impact projects are programmed 70% based on quantitative score, 30% based on local input from planning organizations and NCDOT Divisions. The quantitative scores for eligible Regional Impact projects are below, including Statewide Mobility projects that are eligible to cascade.

Route / Facility / Project Name	From / Cross Street / Location	To / Cross Street	Description	Specific Improvement Type	Cost to NCDOT	Regional Impact Quantative Score (Out of 70)
NS AS Line (Asheville to Salisbury Passenger Service)	Asheville-to-Salisbury Passenger Rail along existing Norfolk Southern rail.	N/A	Upgrade rail infrastructure to support new intercity passenger service from Salisbury to Asheville on the AS Line. Project includes necessary infrastructure and stations to begin service with three roundtrips per day. This project is contingent upon the awarding of an 80/20 federal grant and if the grant is not awarded, then the project is void.	5 - Passenger rail service (line)	\$ 96,400,800	59.34
US 25 BUS (Asheville Highway)	North Main Street	NC 191 (Haywood Road)	Improve Multiple Intersections along US 25B to improve safety	25 - Improve Multiple Intersections along Corridor	\$ 22,800,000	49.62

Route / Facility / Project Name	From / Cross Street / Location	To / Cross Street	Description	Specific Improvement Type	Cost to NCDOT	Regional Impact Quantative Score (Out of 70)
US 70	Beaucatcher Tunnel	US 74 ALT (South Tunnel Road)	Implement a road diet with intersection improvements on US 70 (Tunnel Road) from Beaucatcher Tunnel to US 74A (South Tunnel Road)	24 - Implement Road Diet to Improve Safety	\$ 125,600,000	49.00
US 74 ALT (Patton Avenue)	NC 63 (New Leicester Hwy)	SR 1332 (North Louisiana Avenue)	Construct an additional westbound through lane to correspond to the U-5971B project, creating four receiving lanes west of the intersection of SR 1332 (N Louisiana Ave) at US 19/23 (Patton Ave). Change the northbound geometry to two left-turn lanes with a shared through-right lane. Split phasing will need to be replaced with standard NEMA phasing.	25 - Improve Multiple Intersections along Corridor	\$ 50,800,000	46.73

****See [June 2026 Agenda](#) for more tables.**

Local Input Points Alternatives

MPO staff is recommending two alternatives to be considered for Draft Local Input Point Assignments.

Alternative #1: Strictly Follow the MPO's Local Input Point Methodology

The MPO's methodology recommends putting points on a minimum of two highway projects and one non-highway project or up to 150% of available funding, if funding is limited. Funding is limited this round. Based on *current* results, these projects would include:

Mode	Route	From	To	Cost	Improvement Type	MPO Score	SPOT Score
Rail	WNC Passenger Rail	Asheville	Salisbury	\$96,400,800	Passenger Rail Service	100	59.34
Highway	US 19/23 (Smokey Park Highway)	I-40	NC 151 (Pisgah Highway)	\$194,600,000	Access Management	96	40.30
Highway	US 70 (Tunnel Road)	Beaucatcher Tunnel	US 74A (South Tunnel Road)	\$125,600,000	Road Diet	85	49.00

Alternative #2: Assign Points In-Line With Local Priorities

As part of the MPO's methodology, local priorities are requested. Assigning points to all locally identified priorities would recognize the priorities identified by local governments throughout the region while still remaining within the MPO's available Local Input Point capacity.

Mode	Route	From	To	Cost	Improvement Type	MPO Score	SPOT Score
Rail	WNC Passenger Rail	Asheville	Salisbury	\$96,400,800	Passenger Rail Service	100	59.34
Highway	US 19/23 (Smokey Park Highway)	I-40	NC 151 (Pisgah Highway)	\$194,600,000	Access Management	96	40.30
Highway	US 70 (Tunnel Road)	Beaucatcher Tunnel	US 74A (South Tunnel Road)	\$125,600,000	Road Diet	85	49.00

Mode	Route	From	To	Cost	Improvement Type	MPO Score	SPOT Score
Highway	US 25A (Sweeten Creek Road)	Rock Hill Road	Mills Gap Road	\$182,100,000	Widening	83	37.51
Highway	NC 63 (New Leicester Highway)	Newfound Road	Gouges Branch Road	\$29,000,000	Multiple Intersection Improvements	70	43.00
Highway	US 19 (Dellwood Road)	South Lakeshore Drive	Dayton Drive	\$39,100,000	Access Management	64	32.46
Highway	US 23B (South Main Street)	US 276 (Pigeon Street)	Hyatt Creek Road	\$65,400,000	Widening	48	23.87
Highway	NC 213 (Cascade Street)	Athletic Stret	Bone Camp Road	\$18,400,000	Modernization	47	19.12
Highway	Henderson Priority #1						
Highway	Henderson Priority #2						
Highway	Henderson Priority #3						

Next Steps

After the MPO Board approves the Draft Local Input Point Assignment, it will go out for public comment. The final assignment will come back through the TCC and Board in August.

Staff & TCC Recommendation: Recommend Alternative #2 to the MPO Board

Discussion occurred around the access management project in Hendersonville scored higher than the 25 N. Main project. Very close scoring but the resilience issues around Mudd Creek gave it more points. Discussion occurred around the point process from a division standpoint.

Billy Clarke motioned to approve the DRAFT Regional Impact Local Input Point with Alternative #2. Matt Wechtel seconded the motion and it passed upon a roll call vote.

4B. HL-0013: Request for Additional Funds:

Background

The MPO currently receives roughly \$6.5 million per year in a direct allotment of federal funds that it programs for both planning and capital expenditures in the region. These funds come from three federal programs:

- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)

In past years, the MPO has combined these allotments into one Locally Administered Projects Program and programmed funds to different projects, largely sponsored by local governments, with some sponsored by NCDOT.

Project Information

Project: HL-0013

Description: 9th Avenue Bridge Replacement Sponsor: Town of Black Mountain

The MPO awarded \$365,000 in federal funds to the Town of Black Mountain in 2020 to replace a local bridge that had received a poor structural review. That amount was increased to \$800,000 in 2021 based on updated estimates from NCDOT.

The project recently went to bid for construction, and the bids came back at more than \$1.9 million, including NCDOT oversight fees. The Town of Black Mountain is requesting additional federal funds to allow the project to move forward.

Previously Awarded Federal Construction Funds	Total Request for Federal Construction Funds	Change in Federal Funds
\$800,000	\$1,566,110	\$766,110

Impact on MPO Funding

MPO staff coordinated with NCDOT staff to review available funding through FY 2030. The total amount of funds expected to be available is \$17,493,000, after the additional funds already programmed to the Clear Creek Greenway.

If additional funding is awarded to HL-0013, the future balance of available MPO funds would be reduced by \$766,110.

All funding assumptions are based on current federal allotments and are subject to change if a new federal transportation law is adopted.

Staff, TCC, & Prioritization Subcommittee Recommendation

Recommend a TIP modification for additional federal funds for HL-0013 in the amount of \$766,110 as well as the required local match.

Discussion around seeing increase in bid calls since 2020 and post Helene. Discussion on if similar contractors are bidding higher each time or if they are all different contractors. Discussion around a way to reach out to contractors who are not currently bidding for DOT to see if they can be brought in, especially helping smaller contractors to get qualified.

Kevin Ensley moved to approve the TIP Modification for additional federal funds for HL-0013. Jennifer Hensley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.



RESOLUTION APPROVING AMENDMENT TO HL-0013 - 9TH STREET BRIDGE REPLACEMENT - IN THE 2026-2035 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

WHEREAS, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Asheville Urbanized Area and is responsible for transportation planning and programming in accordance with federal and state requirements; and

WHEREAS, the FBRMPO maintains a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) identifying transportation projects and associated funding over a multi-year period; and

WHEREAS, Project HL-0013 (9th Street Bridge Replacement) is a locally administered project in the Town of Black Mountain, currently programmed with Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds and local matching funds; and

WHEREAS, the project has advanced to the construction bidding phase and bids received exceed the currently programmed construction funding; and

WHEREAS, to proceed with the lowest responsive bid, the project requires an increase of \$766,110 in federal STBG-DA funds and \$255,527 in local matching funds; and

WHEREAS, the proposed modification is consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and applicable federal requirements;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization hereby approves an amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to:

- Increase federal funding for Project HL-0013 by \$766,110 in STBG Direct Attributable (DA) funds;
- Increase local matching funds by \$255,527; and
- Revise the total construction cost of the project accordingly to reflect current bid amounts;

ADOPTED: This the 18th Day of June, 2026

Anthony Sutton, FBRMPO Board Chair

Attest, Tristan Winkler, Director, FBRMPO

4C. U-5019A: Request for Additional Funds:

Background

The MPO currently receives roughly \$6.5 million per year in a direct allotment of federal funds that it programs for both planning and capital expenditures in the region. These funds come from three federal programs:

- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)

In past years, the MPO has combined these allotments into one Locally Administered Projects Program and programmed funds to different projects, largely sponsored by local governments, with some sponsored by NCDOT.

Project Information

Project: U-5019A

Description: Nasty Branch Greenway from the Dr. Wesley Grant Southside Center to Phifer Street Sponsor: City of Asheville

The Nasty Branch Greenway, formerly known as the Town Branch Greenway, was originally part of the RADTIP project, which was funded through the USDOT TIGER program. When costs for the larger project increased, this section was removed from the rest of the TIGER-funded project.

The MPO has previously supplemented the City of Asheville's TIGER-funded projects with Direct Attributable funds, including the Craven Street Bike/Ped Bridge in 2014, the French Broad River West Greenway in 2015, and the Town Branch/Nasty Branch Greenway in 2018.

The Nasty Branch Greenway project is preparing to go to bid later this year, and its cost estimate has increased. The City of Asheville has requested additional funds, with much of the increased cost related to NCDOT oversight and Construction Engineering and Inspection expenses.

Previously Awarded Federal Construction Funds	Total Request for Federal Construction Funds	Change in Federal Funds
\$3,412,000	\$4,253,000	\$841,000

Impact on MPO Funding

MPO staff coordinated with NCDOT staff to review available funding through FY 2030. The total amount of funds expected to be available is \$17,493,000, after the additional funds already programmed to the Clear Creek Greenway.

If additional funding is awarded to U-5019A, the future balance of available MPO funds would be reduced by \$841,000.

All funding assumptions are based on current federal allotments and are subject to change if a new federal transportation law is adopted.

Staff, TCC, & Prioritization Subcommittee Recommendation

Recommend a TIP modification for additional federal funds for U-5019A in the amount of \$841,000 as well as the

required local match.

Discussion did not occur.

Chuck McGrady moved to approve the TIP modification for additional federal funds for U-5019A. Mark Endries seconded the motion and it passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

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**RESOLUTION APPROVING AMENDMENT TO U-5019A - NASTY BRANCH GREENWAY- IN THE
2026-2035 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)**

WHEREAS, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Asheville Urbanized Area and is responsible for transportation planning and programming in accordance with federal and state requirements; and

WHEREAS, the FBRMPO maintains a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) identifying transportation projects and associated funding over a multi-year period; and

WHEREAS, Project U-5019A (Nasty Branch Greenway) is a locally administered project in the City of Asheville, currently programmed with Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds and local matching funds; and

WHEREAS, the project has advanced to 90% design and is preparing to be let for construction; and

WHEREAS, to proceed with bidding the project and continued management of the project, the project requires an increase of \$841,000 in federal STBG-DA funds and \$210,000 in local matching funds; and

WHEREAS, the proposed modification is consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and applicable federal requirements;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization hereby approves an amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to:

- Increase federal funding for Project U-5019A by \$841,000 in STBG Direct Attributable (DA) funds;
- Increase local matching funds by \$210,000; and
- Revise the total construction cost of the project accordingly to reflect current bid amounts;

ADOPTED: This the 18th Day of June, 2026

Anthony Sutton, FBRMPO Board Chair

Attest, Tristan Winkler, Director, FBRMPO

4D. Resolution of Support: US 25 (Hendersonville Road) @ Old Brickyard Road Proposed Improvements and Old Hendersonville Road @ Old Brickyard Road:

NCDOT is proposing an additional turn lane at the intersection of US 25 (Hendersonville Road) and Old Brickyard Road and intersection improvements at Old Hendersonville Road @ Old Brickyard Road. The plan sheets are provided.

A resolution of support has been requested from the MPO.

TCC Recommendation: Approve the Resolution of Support

Discussion did not occur.

Chuck McGrady moved to approve the Resolution of Support for US 25 (Hendersonville Rd) @ Old Brickyard Rd Proposed Improvements and Old Hendersonville Rd @ Old Brickyard Rd. Sheila Franklin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING PROPOSED INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS AT OLD BRICKYARD ROAD, OLD HENDERSONVILLE ROAD, AND US 25 (HENDERSONVILLE ROAD) IN HENDERSON COUNTY

WHEREAS, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization is responsible for regional transportation planning and programming in the Asheville urbanized area, including portions of Henderson County; and

WHEREAS, NCDOT has identified the need for intersection and roadway improvements along Old Brickyard Road to improve safety, operations, and access for residents, businesses, freight traffic, and other roadway users; and

WHEREAS, the proposed improvements include modifications at the intersection of Old Brickyard Road and Old Hendersonville Road, including roadway widening, turn-lane/storage improvements, and associated operational improvements as shown in the preliminary design plan; and

WHEREAS, the proposed improvements also include modifications at the intersection of Old Brickyard Road and US 25 (Hendersonville Road), including roadway widening, geometric improvements, and turning-radius improvements to better accommodate traffic movements at the intersection; and

WHEREAS, these intersections serve an area with commercial, industrial, and local access needs and provide important connections between US 25 (Hendersonville Road), Old Brickyard Road, and the surrounding transportation network; and

WHEREAS, improvements to these intersections are expected to enhance roadway safety, reduce operational conflicts, improve turning movements, and support more reliable travel for passenger vehicles, service vehicles, and freight traffic;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization supports the proposed intersection improvements at **Old Brickyard Road and Old Hendersonville Road** and at Old Brickyard

Road and US 25/Hendersonville Road in Henderson County.

ADOPTED this the 18th day of June, 2026.

4E. Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) Grant Application:

What is Advanced Air Mobility (AAM)?

Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) refers to a new generation of aviation technologies that enable safe, sustainable, affordable, and accessible transportation using electric aircraft, drones, and other emerging aviation systems. AAM applications can include passenger transportation, cargo delivery, emergency response, medical transport, infrastructure inspection, and other public service functions.

AAM is not intended to replace existing transportation modes. Rather, it serves as an additional component of a multimodal transportation network that can improve connectivity, accessibility, and system resilience.

What is the NCDOT AAM Planning Grant Program?

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Division of Aviation has established the Advanced Air Mobility Planning Grant Program to assist local governments, MPOs, RPOs, airports, and other eligible entities in evaluating the potential role of AAM within their communities.

The program provides funding for planning activities such as:

- Transportation needs assessments
- Infrastructure and vertiport siting studies
- Feasibility analyses
- Multimodal integration planning
- Public engagement and outreach
- Policy and implementation strategies

The grant program supports planning efforts only and does not fund infrastructure construction.

Why Could AAM Be Relevant to the French Broad River MPO Region?

The French Broad River MPO region possesses several characteristics that may make it well-suited for future AAM applications:

- Mountainous terrain that can create transportation challenges and limit connectivity
- Vulnerability to natural disasters, flooding, and landslides that may disrupt traditional transportation networks
- Growing tourism and visitor travel demand
- Rural communities that may benefit from improved regional accessibility

Potential regional use cases could include:

- Emergency medical transportation
- Disaster response and recovery operations
- Search and rescue missions
- Rural and regional cargo delivery
- Infrastructure and utility inspections

- Future passenger mobility connections

What Could a Regional AAM Plan Accomplish?

A regional AAM planning effort could:

- Identify priority transportation needs and potential use cases
- Evaluate opportunities for integration with existing transportation systems
- Assess potential vertiport, airport, and landing facility locations
- Analyze community, environmental, and equity considerations
- Support future resilience and emergency management initiatives
- Position the region to pursue future state and federal funding opportunities
- Inform future updates to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and related regional planning efforts

Action Required: Consider Recommending Application to the NCDOT AAM Grant Program.

TCC & Staff Recommendation: Recommend Application to the NCDOT AAM Grant Program

Discussion around the excitement of this program from a BOT point of view.

Chuck McGrady moved to approve the Application to the NCDOT AAM Grant Program. Kim Roney seconded the motion and it passed upon a roll call vote.



June 18, 2026

NCDOT Division of Aviation
1560 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1560

RE: Commitment of Local Match Funding for FY26 Advanced Air Mobility Planning Program

Dear Grant Review Committee,

On behalf of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization, I am pleased to provide this commitment letter supporting the MPO's application to the North Carolina Department of Transportation Division of Aviation's FY26 Advanced Air Mobility Planning Program.

The MPO is requesting \$250,000 to complete an Advanced Air Mobility Readiness and Integration Planning Study for the region. This effort will assess opportunities to integrate emerging aviation technologies into the

multimodal transportation system and identify strategies to improve connectivity, resiliency, emergency response, and access to critical services.

The FBRMPO Board approved submission of this grant application at its June 18, 2026 meeting and committed the required local cash match.

If selected, the MPO will provide \$25,000, representing the required 10 percent local contribution toward the total project cost.

The MPO will also provide staff resources, project oversight, stakeholder coordination, and financial support needed to complete the study and advance responsible Advanced Air Mobility integration in Western North Carolina.

Thank you for your consideration. We appreciate the Division of Aviation's leadership and look forward to partnering on this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Anthony Sutton, French Broad River MPO Board Chair

5A. Lennie's Law/Bike Safety Zones:

The Town of Woodfin has requested discussion of proposed legislation commonly referred to as "Lennie's Law" and the establishment of Bicycle Safety Zones. The proposal emerged following the deaths of two bicyclists on NC 251 (Riverside Drive) in Buncombe County in 2025 and seeks to provide additional tools to improve safety on corridors with significant bicycle activity.

The concept would allow designated roadways with high levels of bicycle use to be identified as Bicycle Safety Zones, within which enhanced penalties could be applied for certain traffic violations, such as speeding. Similar safety zone concepts have been used in other contexts, including school zones and highway work zones, where increased penalties are intended to encourage safer driving behavior.

The Town of Woodfin has adopted a resolution supporting the concept and has requested that the MPO discuss the issue. MPO staff are presenting this item for informational purposes only. MPOs generally do not engage in legislative advocacy except as directed by their governing boards and in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements.

Should the Board wish to take a position on the proposal, it may do so through future Board action. Staff would recommend that any MPO involvement remain limited to providing information and facilitating discussion unless otherwise directed by the Board.

Leonard Antonelli and Jacob Hill Bicycle Safety Zone Act of 2025 ***Aka: Lennie's Law***

To honor the lives of Leonard Antonelli (Lennie, 27) and Jacob Hill (Jake, 32) - who tragically lost their lives on July 1st, 2025 when a commercial vehicle crossed the center line on a weekly group cycling ride near Asheville, NC on a popular cycling route - this bill proposes a simple solution to encourage and enforce stricter adherence to posted speed limits on popular cycling routes in North Carolina.

Similar to school zones with reduced speed limits and higher penalties for speeding, **Lennie's Law** proposes to designate certain popular cycling routes as **Bicycle Safety Zones** with higher penalties for speeding.

Local and State officials shall make road designations based on data of cycling related accidents and feedback from cycling groups in communities. Once a stretch of road is designated as a Bicycle Safety Zone, new signage should be put up along the route utilizing the existing "share the road" sign with this additional signage:

Bicycle Safety Zone
Fines Higher for Speeding
Next 15 Miles



This simple, cost effective measure will raise awareness of cyclists on the road and impose a greater penalty for disobeying posted speed limits - a leading cause of cyclist/vehicle related accidents.

It's time we had safer places to ride in Western North Carolina, and Lennie's Law is one easy piece of legislation that will move us further down the road in honor of two young cyclists who should still be riding today.



Town of Woodfin

90 Elk Mountain Road
Woodfin, NC 28804
PH: (828) 253-4887
FX: (828) 253-4700

Resolution: 2026-03

Passed _____

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE LEONARD ANTONELLI AND JACOB HILL BICYCLE SAFETY ZONE ACT OF 2025 ("LENNIE'S LAW")

WHEREAS, the Town of Woodfin is committed to promoting the safety, health, and well-being of all residents and visitors, including those who utilize public roadways for cycling and other forms of active transportation; and

WHEREAS, Western North Carolina is home to a vibrant and growing cycling community, with many roadways—particularly in and around Woodfin—serving as popular and heavily trafficked cycling routes; and

WHEREAS, on July 1, 2025, Leonard Antonelli ("Lennie", age 27) and Jacob Hill ("Jake", age 32) were tragically killed, while Griffin Tichenor was injured, when a commercial vehicle crossed the center line and struck them during a weekly group cycling ride near Woodfin, North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, this tragic crash underscores the urgent need for enhanced roadway safety measures to protect cyclists and prevent future loss of life; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Leonard Antonelli and Jacob Hill Bicycle Safety Zone Act of 2025, also known as "Lennie's Law," seeks to establish designated Bicycle Safety Zones on popular cycling routes across North Carolina, where stricter enforcement of posted speed limits and increased penalties for violations would apply; and

WHEREAS, "Lennie's Law" proposes a practical, cost-effective approach—modeled after school zone safety measures—that is non-invasive to private property owners and existing roadways, including the installation of clear signage designating bicycle safety zones to increase driver awareness and accountability; and

WHEREAS, data consistently identify excessive speed as a leading contributing factor in vehicle-cyclist collisions, and enhanced enforcement mechanisms can play a critical role in reducing such crashes; and

WHEREAS, local leaders and advocates have expressed support for the concept of bicyclist safety zones as a proactive step toward improving roadway safety; and

WHEREAS, regional partners, including the French Broad Metropolitan Planning Organization and the North Carolina Department of Transportation, are actively evaluating strategies to improve safety along key corridors further demonstrating the need for coordinated action; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Woodfin recognizes that safer roadways benefit all users, including motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians, and contribute to a more livable, connected, and resilient community;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of Woodfin that:

1. The Town of Woodfin formally expresses its strong support for the establishment of a law that increases awareness and consequences for speeding on designated roadways that meet prescribed criteria for bicycle safety; and
2. The Town supports collaboration with state and regional agencies to identify and designate appropriate Bicycle Safety Zones within and near Woodfin, based on data, community input, and demonstrated need; and
3. The Town encourages the North Carolina General Assembly to adopt this legislation to enhance cyclist safety through the establishment of Bicycle Safety Zones and increased penalties for speeding violations within those zones; and
4. The Town honors the memory of Leonard Antonelli and Jacob Hill and recognizes this legislation as a meaningful step toward preventing future tragedies.

This resolution shall become effective upon adoption. Adopted: MM/DD/YYYY (date of adoption)

Effective: MM/DD/YYYY (date resolution effective)

Ayes _____

Nays _____

Attest: _____

James C. McAllister Gena Powers

Mayor Town Clerk

Discussion occurred it would be difficult for the Board to take a stance on this in general, but that it is a great idea to bring it back to the individual town and city councils. Discussion around that there are so many limitations and restrictions that the Board can't do, but that this is something that the Board can get behind. Discussion around resolutions around a law is political and while it is important it shouldn't be an MPO action, that it would be more impactful coming from the many members of our region.

Kim Roney moved to recommend to support this action and move it to an action item. Archie Pertiller seconded the motion and the motion failed upon a roll call vote. 9 Y, 9N.

6A. Division Project Updates

Division 13: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/Division13_June2026_Updates.pdf

Division 14: https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/Division14_June2026_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 May 19th, next meeting August 18th.

Points of Business/Discussion:

- Grant management update by the City of Asheville including discussion of funds at risk of lapsing
- Shared document repository discussion
- Locally Coordinated Plan update
- ConCPT Grant application requirements
- Driver/Workforce Issues
- Knowledge-sharing opportunities within current group composition

MPO Studies Status

Study	Managing Entity	Year Programmed	Status
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	Underway
Travel Survey/Model Upgrades	FBRMPO	2024	Contracting Underway
Staffing & Compensation Study	LOSRC	2024	Not Started

(*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 3:04PM as there was no further business before the Board.