

RURAL PLANNING RURAL ORGANIZATION

RPO Technical Coordinating Committee

October 8th, 2020 – 10:00 A.M., Zoom Platform

Agenda

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Welcome and Introductions
Agenda Approval/Modifications

William High
William High

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

3. Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes from the RPO TCC June 11, 2020 Meeting
- B. Agenda Approval/Modifications

William High

4. RPO BUSINESS

- A. Rural FTA 5310 Letters of support
- B. Hellbender Regional Trail Adoption
- C. NCDOT STIP Revision/NCDOT Funding
- D. SPOT 6.0 Update

Vicki Eastland
Vicki Eastland
Hanna Cook, NCDOT Programing
Vicki Eastland

5. REGULAR UPDATES

- A. NCDOT Division 13 and 14 updates
- B. Transportation Planning Division Updates
- C. Staff Updates

Division Staff
Daniel Sellers
Vicki Eastland

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

7. ADJOURNMENT

Upcoming Meetings

Land of Sky RPO TAC – Thursday October 25th, 2020 - 11:30 PM Zoom Platform

Land of Sky RPO TCC- February 11th, 2021-10:00 AM Location to be Determined

3. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS TCC MEETING MINUTES

A. Minutes from the RPO TCC June 11, 2020 TCC Meeting

RPO Technical Coordinating Committee

Virtual Meeting via the Zoom Platform

June 11, 2020 – 10:00 A.M.

Minutes

Remote Attendance:

Chair William High	Erica Anderson	Steve Williams	Nancy Allen
Troy Wilson	Daniel Sellers	Chris Medlin	Brian Burch
April Alm	Stephen Sparks	Jodie Ferguson	Aaron Bland
Allen McNeil	Matt Cable		

In-Person Attendance:

Vicki Eastland	Zia Rifkin
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WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING

Chair High called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00am, welcomed everyone in attending remotely and in-person, and called the roll. A quorum was present to conduct business.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were made.

ADOPTION OF THE PREVIOUS TCC MINUTES

Steve Williams moved to approve the March 12, 2020 TCC minutes as presented. Jodie Ferguson seconded, and the motion passed upon a roll call vote, and without further discussion.

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RPO BUSINESS

P6.0 Update: Vicki Eastland shared the following updated P6.0 schedule:

Prioritization Task	Estimated Date
Final Project List Approved by LOS TAC	March 2020
SPOT Online Closes for submitting projects	July 31, 2020
DRAFT Identified Needs Due for Hwy Projects	September 11, 2020
Area Specific Weights due	October 23, 2020
Final Identified Needs and Complete Streets Project sheets due for all projects (Hwy and Non-Hwy)	April 23, 2021
DRAFT Programmed Statewide Mobility Projects and Quantitative Scores for all projects released	End of May, 2021
Local Input Point Assignment Methodologies Due	June 1, 2021
Local Input Points for Regional Impact Projects Due	August 27 th , 2021
DRAFT list of Programmed Regional Impact Projects	End of October, 2021
Local Input Points for Division Needs Projects Due	January 28 th , 2022
DRAFT 2023 – 2032 STIP Released	May 2022

Vicki Eastland shared that the SPOT schedule changes have pushed the prioritization process out two-months.

Discussion occurred regarding regional impact assignments. Vicki Eastland shared that the window for Division Needs projects ends in January 2021. The Draft STIP is usually received in January of each year, but the schedule changes have moved that out to May of 2021.

Project List

Both the TCC and TAC approved the final project list at their March meetings. RPO staff continues to enter projects into the SPOT Online tool working with NCDOT Division 13/14 staff as well as SPOT office staff to improve submitted projects.

<http://landofskyrpo.org/prioritization/>

Information only. No action requested.

LOSRPO PWP Amendment:

The Land of Sky Rural Planning Organization (LOSRPO) is seeking Transportation Planning Division (TPD) approval for the amended FY 2020 Planning Work Program. RPO staff deem this amendment necessary after reviewing the current fiscal year planning work program and budget, and identifying necessary funding shifts to reflect actual work demands through the remaining three months of the fiscal year. After the Technical Coordinating Committee recommends the proposed changes, the TAC should endorse these on June 25, 2020. As there is no change to the RPO's overall budget, RPO members would not be asked for additional money.

The following changes are recommended:

IV-3 Lodging, Meals, Incidentals

- Due to the impacts of COVID-19, LOSRPO staff did not undertake the types of travel as staff would normally. For this reason, LOSRPO staff requests to shift funding to programs with ongoing work tasks. There are no changes to the specified deliverables, but the amount of money allocated for Lodging, Meals, and Incidentals is **reduced** by (\$1,744.68).

IV-5 Registration / Training

- Due to the impacts of COVID-19, LOSRPO staff did not attend anticipated Conferences. For this reason, LOSRPO staff requests to shift funding to programs with ongoing work tasks. There are no changes to the specified deliverables, but the level of funding allocated for Registration/Training is **reduced** by (\$735.00),

IV-6 Travel

- Due to the impacts of COVID-19, LOSRPO staff did not undertake the types of travel that staff normally would have undertaken. For this reason, LOSRPO staff requests to shift funding to programs with ongoing work tasks. There are no changes to the specified deliverables, but the amount of money allocated for Travel is **reduced** by (\$3,591.28).

II-4 General Transportation Planning

- Additional work for NCARPO items and Western RPO Meetings – **increased** by \$1,163.07.

II-2 Prioritization and Program Development

- Additional work demands for SPOT6.0 – **increased** by \$4,907.89.

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Nancy Allen moved to recommend the PWP amendment, with the revisions noted by Vicki Eastland, for approval to the TAC at their June 25 meeting. Aaron Bland seconded, and the motion carried upon a roll call vote, and without further discussion.

Resolution of Support, City of Brevard Bike/Ped Planning Grant: City of Brevard staff are submitting for an NCDOT Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning Grant through the TPD. A resolution of support is required from the RTAC. The deadline for application is June 30, 2020.

Vicki Eastland noted that receiving this grant would allow the City of Brevard to develop a bike and pedestrian plan with the Assistance of a consultant in the planning process. There is a 20% local match for these planning grant funds.

April Alm moved to recommend the resolution of support for the City of Brevard Bike/Ped Planning Grant to the TAC for approval. Steve Williams seconded, and the motion carried upon a roll call vote, and without further discussion.

REGULAR UPDATES

NCDOT Division 13 and Division 14 Updates
TPB Updates
Legislative Updates
Staff Updates

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments.

ADJOURNMENT-

Chair High adjourned the meeting, as there was no further business.

Staff Recommendation:

Review and adopt the minutes.

4. RPO Business

Item 4A Rural Transit Providers FTA 5310 Elderly and Persons Living w/ Disabilities Application RPO Letters of Support

NCDOT Public Transit Division (PTD) requires public transit providers to reach out to their MPO/RPO planning partners for letters of support for their applications for Federal Transit Agency (FTA) Section 5310 funds. The (FTA) **Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility for seniors and Individuals with Disabilities** provides funds for programs and projects that aim to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation services and expanding mobility options.

Due to several factors, COVID-19, CARES Act funds additional reporting burdens etc. The Grant filing deadline has been pushed back to December 1st. This deadline is usually in November. Because of this delay, some systems do not have their grant request numbers finalized. The RPO TCC and TAC will not meet again before the December deadline. There is no action required today, this is just a reminder that RPO staff will provide the transit systems and any other eligible applicant, i.e., the Land of Sky Senior Companion Program, with letters of support.

Staff Recommendation:

No action required, information only.



Item 4B Hellbender Regional Trail Adoption

At the September 2019 RPO TCC meeting, Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO Director, provided a presentation to the TCC on the concept of a regional trail plan with a goal of documenting a vision of a connected trail system based on locally adopted plans stitched together, as well as a brand for the system.

The development of the plan was guided by the Regional Trail Workgroup comprised of the MPO's Prioritization Subcommittee and advocates appointed to represent Buncombe, Henderson, Haywood, Transylvania, and Madison counties. Additional local staff that play a major role in trail development in the region were invited to attend these meetings, as well as representatives from local governments and non-profits across the region

The workgroup developed, vetted and approved the Hellbender Regional Trail Plan, based primarily on locally adopted plans for greenway, multi-use path, and other bike/ped facilities focused on paved trails but with exceptions for other infrastructure, where necessary. Sections of the Hellbender that do not currently exist in a locally adopted plan include the link from Weaverville to Mars Hill, a short section through Downtown Canton along Park Street, and a section from the Pigeon River to Lake Junaluska in Haywood County.

Due to COVID-19, traditional in person public meetings, workshops and presentations were not possible. The draft plan was emailed to various stakeholder groups and media outlets requesting groups share with their networks.

A total of 363 comments were received during the public comment period for the Hellbender Regional Trail Plan.

349 responses or (96%) expressed **support**. Common themes included: Health/wellness, community benefit, economic opportunities, tourism benefits, safety of users, environmental protection, congestion mitigation, increased connectivity/accessibility

9 responses or (2.5%) were **impartial** with questions of timeline/implementation, inclusion of local trail networks, preference for impervious surface, rails-to-trails questions, and inclusion of broadband connectivity

5 responses or (1.3%) **disapproved** or raised concerns citing Right-of-Way impacts, concerns about crime, degradation of environment and issues with name/branding.

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At their September 2020 meeting, the FBRMPO Board approved the adoption of the Hellbender Regional Trail.



The Hellbender consists of four “lines” that connect the region:

The Orange Line- Mars Hill to Blue Ridge Community College (just south of Hendersonville)

The Gold Line- Hendersonville to Brevard

The Blue Line- Westfield Park to Rosman

The Green Line- Waynesville to Black Mountain

The Hellbender Regional Trail Plan provides our region a document that connects local plans into a regional system, highlights planned trails that would have a regional significance, and provides a vision for what a regional trail system could look like. Such a system could

provide residents and visitors options to get outside to recreate and exercise while also providing opportunities for environmental enhancements and economic development.

It is important to note that the Hellbender is a long-term vision. Currently there are 12 miles of the estimated 150 miles system on the ground. This is a major infrastructure project spread across multiple jurisdictions. Given current transportation funding policies and investment levels, a 50-year timeframe is realistic for completion of a system of this magnitude.

The adoption of the Hellbender regional Trail Plan is a first step. The Regional Trail work group, FBRMPO, and LOSRPO will continue to raise awareness of on-going activities and consider further marketing and partnerships to assist local and regional efforts for advancing the Hellbender Trail.

The Hellbender Regional Trail Plan is available here:
<http://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/multimodal/>

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE HELLBENDER REGIONAL TRAIL PLAN

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statutes 136-211 enacted July 6, 2000, provides for the establishment of Rural Transportation Planning Organizations (RPOs) to provide rural entities a cooperative and unified voice in project selection and funding, and enhance their involvement in integrated multi-model transportation planning; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Advisory Committee is the duly recognized transportation decision-making body of the Land-of-Sky Rural Planning Organization; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Transportation maintains a Complete Streets Policy whose cost share formulas are based on planned bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure being documented in adopted plans; and

WHEREAS, numerous communities in the Land of Sky Rural Planning Organization (LOSRPO) and the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) have developed bicycle, pedestrian, and/or greenway plans; and

WHEREAS the LOSRPO Transportation Advisory Committee supports safe transportation infrastructure for all modes and users.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Land-of-Sky Rural Planning Organization Transportation Advisory Committee hereby endorses and approves the Hellbender Regional Trail Plan.

ADOPTED: This the 22nd day of October 2020.

Commissioner Matthew Wechtel, Chairman, Land-of-Sky RPO TAC

ATTEST:

Vicki L. Eastland, Land-of-Sky RPO

Staff Recommendations:

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Review and vote to recommend adoption to TAC at their October 22nd Meeting.

Item 4C NCDOT STIP Revision/NCDOT Funding

Due to several factors impacting NCDOT revenues, a revised 2020 – 2029 STIP was presented to the NC BOT at their September meeting. The BOT will/has voted on this revised document at their October 7th meeting.

Hanna Cook, NCDOT Senior Program Engineer, Western STIP Region is with us today to provide a presentation explaining the factors effecting revenues and the project scheduling impacts for LOSRPO projects.

Staff Recommendation:

No action required, update only.

Item 4D SPOT6.0 Update

The TCC members will be provided an update on potential changes to the Prioritization 6.0 timeline and process.

Staff Recommendation:

No action required, update only.

5. REGULAR UPDATES

- D. NCDOT Division 13 and 14 updates
- E. Transportation Planning Division Updates
- F. Staff Updates

Division Staff
Daniel Sellers
Vicki Eastland

ADJOURNMENT

Upcoming Meetings

Land of Sky RPO TAC – October 22, 2020 – Zoom Platform

Land of Sky RPO TCC- February 11th, 2021-10:00 AM Location to be Determined