



RPO Technical Coordinating Committee

January 11, 2024 – 10:00 A.M., Land of Sky Regional Council and Zoom Platform.

[Join LOSRPO TCC Meeting](#)

or call in: (646) 558-8656

Meeting Id: 847 5520 1676 Passcode: 544728

Agenda

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Welcome and Introductions,

William High

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

3. Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda

A. October 12, 2023, TCC minutes

William High

4. RPO BUSINESS

A. LOSRPO DRAFT FY 2025 PWP

Vicki Eastland

B. Transylvania Co/Brevard SPR Grant App. Resolution of Support

Vicki Eastland

C. Madison County Transit CRP App. Resolution of Support

Vicki Eastland

D. I 40 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lane Study Letter of Support.

Tristan Winkler

5. REGULAR UPDATES

A. NCDOT Division 13 and 14 updates

Division Staff

B. Transportation Planning Division Updates

Daniel Sellers

C. NCDOT Integrated Mobility Updates

Alexius Farris

D. Staff Updates

Vicki Eastland

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

7. ADJOURNMENT

Upcoming Meetings

Land of Sky RPO TAC – Thursday January 18th, 2024 - 11:30 AM LOSRC Offices and Zoom

Land of Sky RPO TCC- Thursday March 11th, 2024 – 10:00AM LOSRC Offices and Zoom

3. Consent Agenda

Minutes from the RPO TCC October 12th 2023, Meeting

Remote and in Person Attendance:

Chair William High	Vicki Eastland	Stephen Sparks	Alexius Farris
Hannah Cook	Jodie Ferguson	Forrest Gilliam	Asha Rado (Minutes)
Steve Williams	Dylan Casper	Tristan Winkler	Chris Medlin
Daniel Metcalf	Katherine Buzby	Jeff Adams	Erica Anderson
Daniel Seller	Chris Deyton		

WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING

Chair William High called the meeting to order at approximately 10: am, welcomed everyone, and roll was called. A quorum was announced to conduct business.

PUBLIC COMMENT

William High opened the floor for public comment. No public comments were received.

CONSENT AGENDA

LOSRPO PWP Amendment

NCDOT Transportation Planning Division, the division that administers the Rural Planning Organizations, (RPO's) provided each RPO with a 15% funding increase to take effect July 1, 2023, SFY 2024. This amendment to the PWP reflects this increase in funding.

[LOSRPO FY 2024 PWP Amendment](#)

LOSRPO Public Involvement Plan Edits

The Land of Sky RPO maintains a Public Involvement Plan PIP that guides public involvement of LOSRPO Rural Transportation planning activities.

The LOSRPO PIP was last updated in May of 2015. The PIP was reviewed and there are a few minor edits. These edits do not impact the length of public comment windows or the means that comment will be collected. The changes include removing a planning document that the RPO does not maintain, removing some confusing language, and removing language stating that the RPO will put copies of CTPs in local libraries. The changes can be reviewed in the marked-up PIP. This was first shared at the May TCC and TAC meetings and is now back for final adoption.



Steve Williams moved to approve the agenda, consent agenda, August 2023 minutes, LOSRPO PWP Amendment and the LOSRPO Public Involvement Plan Edits. Jodie Ferguson seconded, and the motion passed upon a roll call vote.

RPO BUSINESS

Item 4A: LOSRPO Prioritization 7.0 DRAFT Submittal list

Prioritization the process that NCDOT follows to determine most capital improvement projects utilizing both NCDOT state funds and NCDOT's allotted federal funds in the development of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The prioritization process is governed by the Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) Law of 2013. STI provides the framework for a more transparent data driven process utilizing local input

from MPO's, RPO's and NCDOT Divisions. Prioritization 7.0, P7.0 (aka SPOT 7.0) indicates it is the seventh iteration of the prioritization process.

RPO staff has been working with NCDOT division staff on entering projects. The LOSRPO and FBRMPO combined to advertise our projects lists for public input. The LOSRPO DRAFT P7.0 Project can be viewed on the at www.landofskyrpo.org or by using the link below.

[LOSRPO DRAFT SPOT7.0 Project List](#)

Current schedule for P7.0.

P7.0 Schedule.

• Prioritization Task	• Estimated Date
• Prioritization Workgroup meets Done	• October 2022 - June, 2023
• NC Board of Transportation Adopts Methodology Done	• June, 2023
• SPOT Online Go-live Project submittal window opens	• July 2023 – October, 2023 ***
• NCDOT Data Review and Scoring (Partner Rev. Feb 2024)	• November 2023 – April, 2024
• Project Prioritization Public Survey	• Winter - Spring 2024
• Alternate Criteria Deadline/LOSRPO Local Input Point	• May, 2024
• Methodology Due	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DRAFT Statewide Programmed Projects and SPOT Scores Released 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of May 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Impact Local Input Points Window 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June - August, 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DRAFT Regional Impact Programmed Projects Released 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> September, 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Division Needs Local Input Points Window 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October – December, 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Division Needs Projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 2024 – February, 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DRAFT 2026-2035 STIP Released 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of February, 2025

Steve Williams moved to recommend the draft list of Prioritization 7.0 to the Board for approval. Jodie Ferguson seconded the motion which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

Item 4B: Wildlife Crossings Identified Needs

Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO Director, will present a brief overview of a draft report *Potential Wildlife Crossings for the French Broad River MPO & Land of Sky RPO Planning Areas* (August 30, 2023). This report was completed by former MPO staff members Scott Adams.

Excerpt from FBRMPO Board agenda, prepared by Scott Adams

Two recent studies (Pigeon River Gorge, June 2022; NC Statewide Study, Fall 2022) have identified a number of potential sites in the Land of Sky RPO and French Broad River MPO areas where additional infrastructure for Wildlife Crossings (i.e. retrofit of existing bridges, culverts, plus possible new structures and fencing) need to be considered.

What's in the report?

This report reflects an initial review of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Land of Sky Rural Planning Organization (RPO) planning areas for potential wildlife crossing locations along area roads and highways. The MPO/RPO's primary goals of this report are to begin identifying specific geographic areas and wildlife crossing typologies (eg.

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*Deflection Fencing) that can be incorporated into the larger transportation planning process, notably the state's **Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT)** project scoring process, and the **State Transportation Improvement Programs (STIP)**.*

These two processes identify specific projects, so the early identification of wildlife crossing needs, in addition to other design factors like bicycle/pedestrian accommodation and climate resilience, can reduce project scope and cost revisions later on. This effort stems from initial contact in December 2022 with members of Safe Passage: The I-40 Pigeon River Gorge Wildlife Crossing Project. This project is an outgrowth of a June 2022 study by Wildlands Network and the National Parks Conservation Association. The Pigeon River study and some early pilot projects stemming from it (e.g. A new replacement bridge at I-40, Exit 7 [Harmon Den] designed with flat wildlife paths underneath it.) may provide a template for future projects across the region and state.

The report introduces previous studies and research, provides an overview of the methodology used to identify recommendations, identifies Top Recommendations as well as additional recommendations by county.

The full report Can be reviewed on the RPO website <https://landofskyrpo.org/documents-and-resources/>

Scott's Conclusion and Next Steps from the report

*Smart and proactive planning best occurs when data, stakeholders, and site conditions are consulted early and often. As such, locations identified in this report should be studied further for possible incorporation into the larger transportation planning process, notably the state's **Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT)** project scoring process, which then leads local and statewide **Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP)**.*

These two processes identify specific projects, so the early identification of wildlife crossing needs, in addition to other design factors like bicycle/pedestrian accommodation and climate resilience, can reduce project scope and cost revisions later on.

The French Broad River MPO and Land of Sky RPO can act as convening entities between wildlife crossing experts (eg. Wildlands Network, National Parks Conservation Association, N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, and local land trusts) and

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transportation experts (eg. staff from NCDOT Divisions 13 and 14, plus other construction and maintenance experts).

In addition to the existing Top Recommendations (noted previously in report and on next page), stakeholders should look for “right time, right place” opportunities for the incorporation of wildlife crossing features as part of the transportation network.

NCDOT’s existing Complete Streets Policy looks for opportunities for “routine accommodation” in both new construction and maintenance projects, so with the incorporation of data like Wildlife Vehicle Collision (WVC) counts and severity, plus asset management and maintenance/replacement schedules for transportation infrastructure, a similar approach can be taken for wildlife crossings.

Katherine Buzby moved to recommend to the board the adoption of Potential Wildlife Crossings for the French Broad River MPO & Land of Sky RPO Planning Areas Report. Jodie Ferguson seconded the motion which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

Discussion occurred about crossings that have been working in other locations. Also, how much would it cost for the overpasses and if we could utilize prioritization for these types of projects. More likely incorporating these into other larger projects.

Item 4C: New FBRMPO LOSRPO Planning Boundary

MPO and RPO Planning Area Boundaries

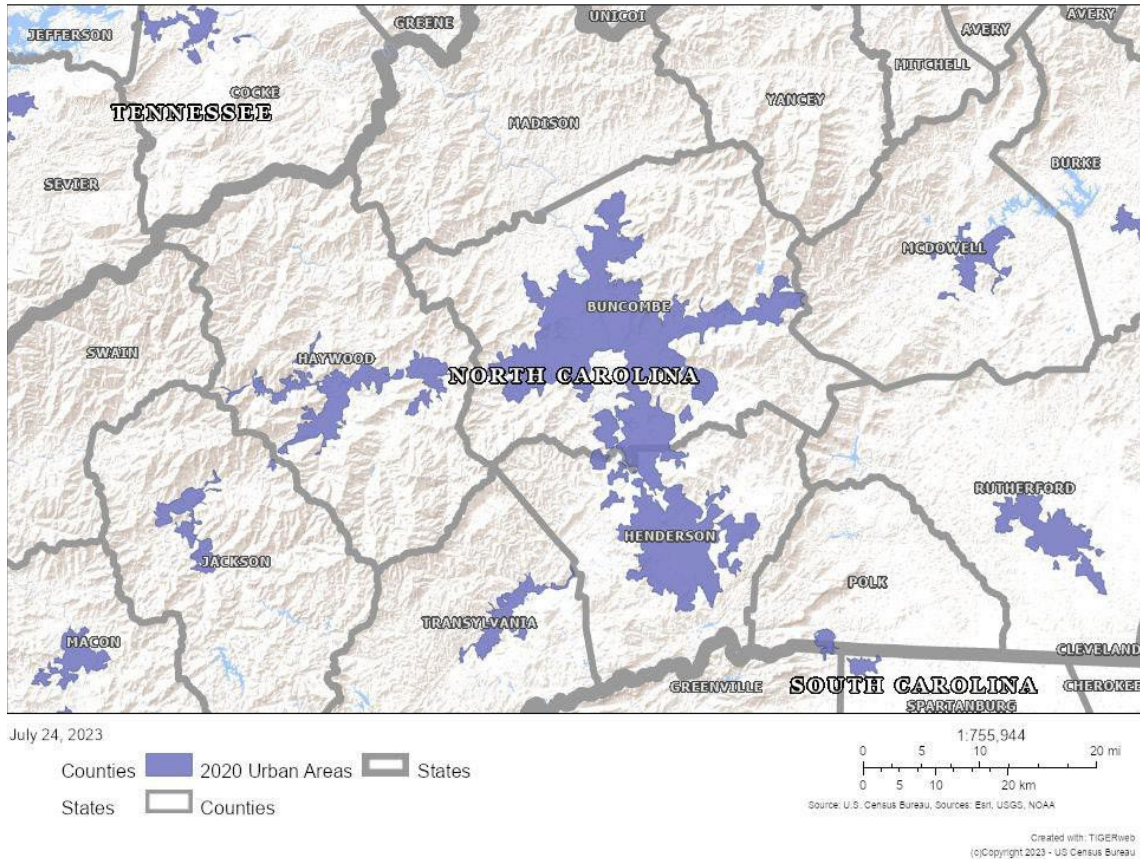
FBRMPO staff has developed an updated Planning Area for the French Broad River MPO.

What Changed with the 2020 Census Urban Area?

A number of criteria used for determining the urban area were changed. For our area, the most significant change involved hops and jumps, which are considerations for bridging areas of urbanization. The hops and jumps were reduced and large areas of the 2010 Asheville Urban Area, including Haywood County and parts of Madison County, were removed from the 2020 Asheville Urban Area.

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WNC Urban Areas



How Are MPO Planning Areas Determined?

The regulations require that the MPO Planning Area include the Urban Area as well as what is anticipated to urbanize in the next 20 years. Beyond that, there are not many requirements. In discussions with other MPOs from across the country, most MPO's tend to determine their planning boundaries by taking any census tract or census block group intersecting the urban area and make those census tracts/block groups their boundary.

How Was the Draft Planning Area Drawn for the French Broad River MPO?

Each of the counties in the region have been approached somewhat differently based on unique considerations but generally the planning area was determined pulling in any block group that intersects the Asheville Urban Area, Canton Urban Area, or Waynesville Urban Area (within Haywood County.)

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Buncombe County

Situation: Buncombe County is primarily within the urban area but is a member of both the MPO and RPO.

Boundary Development: any block group intersecting the urban area was made part of the Draft Planning Area.

Changes: some territory was added in Eastern Buncombe due to a simplified methodology. The current boundaries are somewhat arbitrary and not built on any census geography. One block group in NW Buncombe was removed from the MPO and added to the RPO due to a lack of urban area. No changes in member jurisdiction. MPO Population: 258,694

Haywood County

Situation: Haywood County, after being part of the Asheville Urban Area since 2000, has no part of the Asheville Urban Area due to changes in the 2020 Census. Instead, there are two small urban areas- Canton and Waynesville. However, there is a very high likelihood Haywood County will rejoin the Asheville Urban Area within the next 20 years. **Boundary Development:** MPO staff met with County and municipal representatives, and they requested to stay within the MPO. All block groups that intersected Canton or Waynesville Urban Areas were brought into the MPO Planning Area (note: part of the Waynesville Urban Area goes into Jackson County. This was not considered or discussed with Jackson County.) One block group that intersected Waynesville Urban Area was not added at the request of Land of Sky RPO.

Changes: a significant amount of land south of Canton and Clyde with roughly 3,600 residents will change from MPO to RPO but some land north and south of Waynesville with roughly 1,100 residents will change from RPO to MPO. No change in member jurisdictions.

MPO Population: 51,673

Henderson County

Situation: Henderson County elected to be fully within the MPO in 2010. The urbanized area changed somewhat within Henderson, but the County retains a significant amount of Asheville Urban Area.

Boundary Development: all of Henderson County is considered part of the MPO Planning Area. **Changes:** No Changes

MPO Population: 116,281

Madison County

Situation: Madison County joined the MPO and Asheville Urban Area after the 2010 Census but fell out of the Asheville Urban Area in 2020.

Boundary Development: Madison County and the Town of Mars Hill requested to stay within the MPO. All block groups that intersect the Town of Mars Hill were

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added as well as an additional block group (371150106021) in order to keep P 7.0 submittals within the MPO. Changes: three block groups will move from MPO to RPO and the population within the MPO will be reduced by roughly 3,600. No changes in member jurisdictions.

MPO Population: 5,834

Transylvania County

Situation: Transylvania County is currently a non-voting member of the MPO due to a small enclave from the Asheville Urban Area in the 2010 Census. This enclave was removed from the Asheville Urban Area in 2020.

Boundary Development: Transylvania County was removed from the MPO Planning Area. Changes: no part of Transylvania County is part of the MPO Planning Area. One block group with approximately 1,100 residents will switch from MPO to RPO.

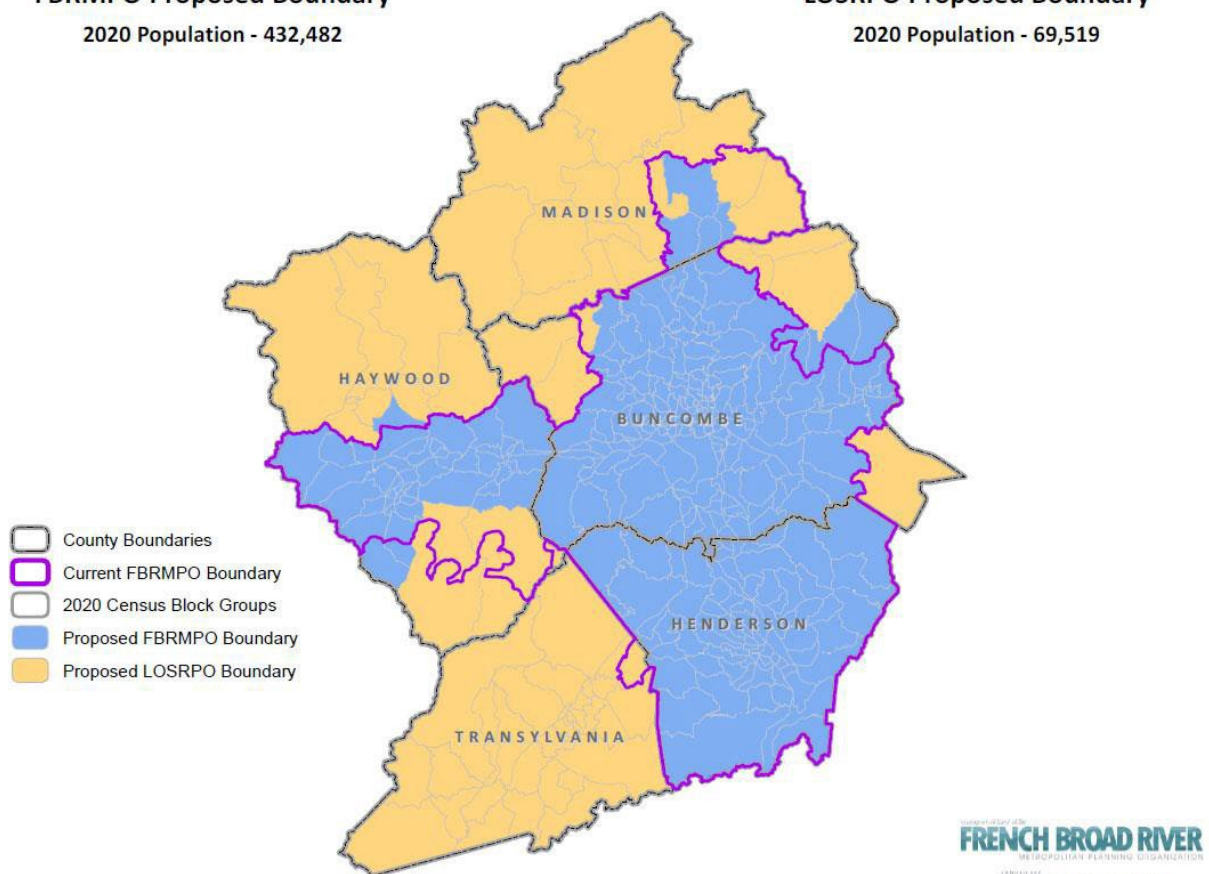
MPO Population: 0

FBRMPO Proposed Boundary

2020 Population - 432,482

LOSRPO Proposed Boundary

2020 Population - 69,519



July 2023

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Discussion around when this will be adopted and who adopts it. Vicki shared that the MPO Board adopts the boundaries, then it is sent to NCDOT and FHWA.

Information only for RPO.

5. REGULAR UPDATES

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| A. NCDOT Division 13 and 14 updates
https://landofskyrpo.org/division-13-updates/
https://landofskyrpo.org/division-14-updates/ | Division Staff |
| B. NCDOT Transportation Planning Division Updates
PE
https://landofskyrpo.org/ncdot-tpd-news/ | Daniel Sellers, |
| C. NCDOT Integrated mobility Division | Alexius Farris |
| D. Staff Updates | Vicki Eastland |

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair High opened the floor a second time for public comment. No public comments were received.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair High adjourned the meeting at 10:58 AM as there was no further business.

Staff Recommendation

Approve the Consent Agenda

RPO BUSINESS

Item 4A: LOSRPO DRAFT FY 2025 PWP

LOSRPO staff has developed the DRAFT LOSRPO Planning Work Program, (PWP) and submitted the FY 2025 Draft PWP to NCDOT TPD for review. Like most years, the PWP is a continuation of ongoing RPO projects. The Transylvania County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) is being drafted and will be adopted in FY 2025 if it has not been by the end of FY 2024. There is a sizable percentage of the planning funds in the

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General Transportation category, LOSRPO staff serve on a few statewide work groups and committees, as well as ones with more regional significance, this is also the category that special studies such as the upcoming Safe Streets 4 All Regional Action Plan, potential SPR project, Regional Transit Plan and other general planning activities fall into. SPOT 7.0 will account for much funding this calendar year and requires a significant amount of funding. Data Collection, Project Development and Admin make up the bulk of the remaining funding except for RPO Direct charges, Travel, and indirect funds.

[LOSRPO DRAFT FY 2025 PWP](#)

Staff Recommendations:

Information only the PWP will come to the TCC and TAC once approved by NCDOT.

Item 4B: Transylvania Co/Brevard SPR Grant App. Resolution of Support

NCDOT Transportation Planning Division (TPD) holds an annual call for projects to MPO's and RPO's for State Planning and Research (SP&R) funding program. SP&R funds are only eligible to be spent on transportation planning projects and functions, not design or engineering. Funding available for this call for projects will be available for FY 2025.

Transylvania County and the City of Brevard are pursuing funding for a Downtown Brevard circulation study. This study would look at different scenarios to improve access to downtown destinations for all modes of travel, and to provide more efficient through put for individuals and freight accessing destinations beyond downtown Brevard, such as Rosman, Lake Toxaway and other rural parts of Transylvania County.

Land of Sky RPO will be the applicant for SPR funds. These funds are only eligible to pay a consultant to do the requested work, there are no admin funds available with this funding. RPO planning funds must be used for RPO work on awarded projects.

SPR funds are federal funds and require a 20% match, however, like RPO planning funds, NCDOT will be a portion of the local match as stated below:

****For MPO/RPO's: In accordance with §136-214, matching funds for federal State Planning and Research Program funds:***

- ***MPO's are only eligible if population is 500,000 or less, as determined by the most recent census.***
- ***Projects within an MPO/RPO with at least one representative from a Tier 1 County will require 5% local match and State funds will cover the remaining 15% match.***
- ***Projects within an MPO/RPO with at least one representative from a Tier 2 County will require 10% local match and State's funds will cover the remaining 10%***
- ***Projects within an MPO/RPO with at least one representative from a Tier 3 County will require 20% local match.***

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If funds are awarded, the notice to proceed will be issued in early July.

Staff Recommendations:

Recommend RPO TAC provide a resolution of support at the January 18th meeting.

Item 4C: Madison County Transit CRP App. Resolution of Support

The Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) establishes the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP),

Carbon Reduction Program Overview

- States are to develop **Carbon Reduction Strategies**
- **\$6.4 Billion** in formula funding for Fiscal Years 2022 through Fiscal Years 2026
- Funding for **projects to support transportation emissions reductions.**

***Transportation Emissions** means carbon dioxide emissions from on-road highway sources of those emissions within a State (23 U.S.C. 175(a)(2)).

NCDOT has made the CRP funding for rural areas available for RPO's to submit projects for funding consideration. For the first round of submittals LOSRPO had three CRP projects. Tannery Park Greenway had designs and a recent cost estimate therefore it was submitted as the #1 priority. Funds to construct Tannery Park Greenway were awarded to the City of Brevard.

LOSRPO CRP List March 2023

RPO Priority	Project Name	Submitter	Status	Costs
1	Tannery Park Greenway	Brevard	Construction Ready	\$660,000.00 FUNDED!
2	TIMS Transit Shelters 2 shelters	Transylvania County	In development	Unknown
3	US 64 Ped crossing and sidewalks	Brevard	In development	Unknown

After the first round of submittals, it is an open call for projects. LOSRPO has been working with Madison County Transit for CRP funds to purchase two additional transit vehicles, with WC lifts and all required additional equipment including propane conversions. The approximate total CRP funds requested will be \$224,000.00. Because this is a transit project, the CRP funds will be flexed to FTA funds and administered by IMD, therefore there will be no 10% NCDOT Admin cost on this project.

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CARBON REDUCTION CALCULATOR	
Project Name	i.e., Left Turn Lane Main/First Street
Estimated project Cost	100000
NCDOT Admin Cost 10%	10000
Estimated Overall Cost	110000
Federal Grant 80%	88000
Local Match 20%	22000

RPO staff will continue to work with members to develop projects for submission. Contact me to discuss potential projects to submit.

Staff Recommendations:

Recommend RPO TAC support this project for CRP funding.

Item 4D: I 40 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lane Study Letter of Support.

NCDOT has requested a letter of support for a study to look at the potential for High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes to be added as part of the planned (currently unfunded) widening of I-40 to the west of I-26.

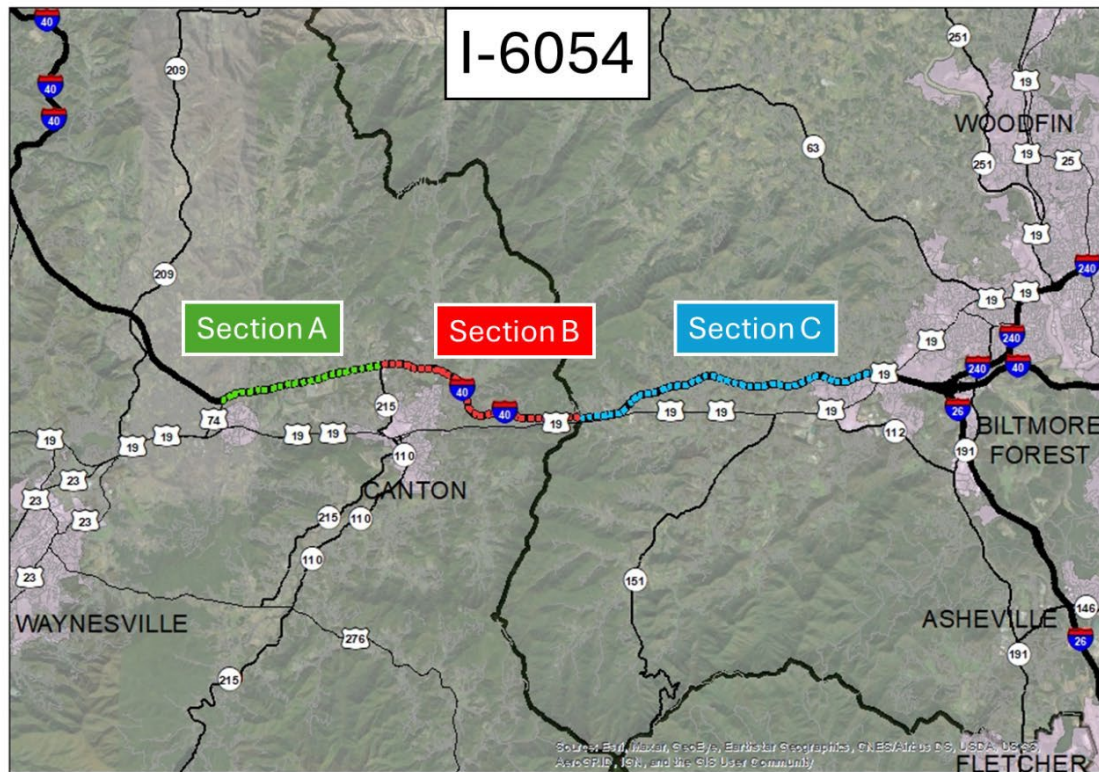
There are three sections of the I-6054 project:

Section A: US 23/74 (Smokey Mountain Expressway) to NC 215 (Champion Drive)

Section B: NC 215 (Champion Drive) to Exit 37 (Wiggins Road)

Section C: Exit 37 (Wiggins Road) to Monte Vista Road

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Topic for Discussion

Each of these projects are currently in P 7.0 as carryover widening projects. NCDOT has requested a letter of support from the RPO to conduct a study on adding HOT lanes. Conducting the study does not make any commitment to managed lanes but just looks at the feasibility of including them as part of the planned widening.

Information from FHWA:

What Are HOT Lanes?

Traditional high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes require passenger vehicles to have a minimum number of passengers. "HOT" lanes is short for "high-occupancy toll" lanes. HOT lanes are HOV lanes that allow vehicles that don't meet occupancy requirements to pay a toll to use the lane. Variable pricing is used to manage the lane so that reliable performance is maintained at all times. HOT lanes have proven to be more efficient than traditional HOV lanes. In addition, in many cases the adjacent General Purpose lanes also benefit from the resulting reallocation of vehicles in the corridor. While communities may call them by different names, such as Fast Lanes or Express Lanes, the basic operation is the same—HOT lanes encourage carpooling and other transit alternatives while offering vehicles that do not meet standard occupancy requirements another option.

What Are the Benefits of HOT Lanes?



Future I-495 Express Lane, Virginia

HOT lanes provide mobility options for individual drivers while encouraging the use of transit and carpooling. Tolls collected from HOT lanes can supplement the operations, enforcement, and maintenance costs for the facilities. Even buses benefit from HOT lanes—research shows that communities with HOT lanes are often able to increase transit service as was the case with I-15 in San Diego. Solo drivers know they can count on getting where they need to be on time. For example, Minneapolis has increased the number of vehicles using the I-394 MnPASS lanes by 33 percent since the facility's opening in 2005 without degrading transit and HOV use. Furthermore, travel speeds of 50 to 55 mph have been maintained for 95 percent of the time in the lanes. Denver originally projected 500 toll payers during the peak hour travel along I-25 but in fact achieved 1,400 in the first year of operation. Use of the I-25 HOT lanes has grown by almost 18 percent since the HOT lanes opened in 2006 and the lanes remain uncongested. Additionally, transit ridership in the HOT lanes has remained high.

Why Charge Travelers for Using Roadways?

By charging travelers for use of roadways, agencies can help mitigate traffic congestion while generating revenues to supplement operating costs. Common sense dictates that for a user to be willing to pay for a service, then he/she must benefit in some way from it. For priced facility users, this benefit is most likely travel-time savings or reliable travel. Often, a priced facility will offer a more reliable trip than an adjacent or nearby route. Drivers can choose to use the priced facility if they judge the travel-time savings worth paying the requisite toll.

Do HOT Lanes Help the Environment?



I-25 Express Lane, Denver

Like their HOV counterparts, HOT lanes have the potential to help improve air quality where they are implemented. High-occupancy lanes might help to reduce harmful impacts to the environment associated with congestion, especially by encouraging the use of multi-passenger vehicles or mass transit systems. On SR 167 in Seattle, general purpose lane speeds increased 10 percent and HOT lane speeds increased 7-8 percent and transit ridership increased 16 percent from the year before implementation of the HOT lane. As a result, the federal government allows HOV lanes to be considered a transportation control measure (TCM) for air quality conformity analysis.

Why Are Variable Tolls Used for HOT Lanes?

Congestion pricing, or “variable pricing,” changes the amount charged for road use based on demand. On a typical roadway, a flat toll would not be the optimal toll throughout the day. During off-peak periods it may be too high for drivers to benefit from paying it. Conversely, during times of peak demand, the toll may not be high enough to make optimal use of the facility. Variable pricing offers a solution to this problem by increasing the toll during periods of peak demand and reducing it during off-peak times.

Who Is Implementing HOT Lanes?

Communities around the nation are installing HOT lanes in response to increased congestion. There are 10 HOT lanes currently operating in eight states:

- I-15 FasTrak in San Diego, California
- US 290 Northwest Freeway QuickRide HOT Lanes in Houston, Texas
- I-394 and I-35W MnPass in Minneapolis, Minnesota
- I-25 Express Lanes in Denver, Colorado
- I-15 Express Lanes in Salt Lake City, Utah
- SR 167 HOT Lanes Pilot Project in Seattle, Washington

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- I-95 Express Lanes in Miami, Florida
- I-680, Alameda County, California
- I-85, Atlanta, Georgia

Where are HOT Lanes Operating?



HOT lanes have been implemented in eight states.

There are currently ten operating HOT lane projects for a total of over 100 miles in the U.S., and many states have projects in the planning stages. All of the operating projects were conversions of HOV lanes to HOT lanes, although some have extended the HOT lanes. The average length is approximately 12 miles.

How are the Current Projects Operating?

The operating projects are either one- or two-lane facilities in each direction. Most strive to maintain speeds of at least 45 miles per hour. The variable toll ranges from \$0.25 in the off-peak to \$9.00 in heavily congested periods.

What does the Public Think about HOT Lanes?

The operating projects enjoy support from both users and non-users. While most people don't use the HOT lane every day, research shows that travelers like having a choice in their travel options. On I-25 in Denver, 62 percent of survey respondents say they use the Express Lanes because it saves time. Likewise in Houston, focus group respondents thought that using the HOT lane saved them as much as 50 percent of total commute travel time. Reliability is also often cited as a benefit of the HOT lane. In San Diego and Miami, users there want the projects expanded.

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What about Equity? Are HOT Lanes More of a Burden on Lower-Income Drivers?



I-394 MnPass

Research on I-394, SR 167, and I-15 indicates that drivers of all socioeconomic backgrounds support HOT lanes. In fact, data from the San Diego Association of Governments indicate that the lowest income group expressed stronger support from the project than the highest income group. Research shows that people of all income levels support HOT lanes. Users of all incomes see the value in having a reliable trip when they need it. A 2004-2006 longitudinal panel survey of I-394 residents in Minnesota found support levels at over 60 percent for the congestion priced HOT lane. This number varies only slightly when sorted by income levels, gender, and education levels, suggesting that the arrangement is perceived as equitable. I-15 in San Diego had a 77 percent approval rating after opening with nominal differences between high- and low-income users. Specific focus groups of low-income travelers in Washington found that low-income drivers are typically as supportive, if not more supportive, of the HOT lanes concept than other drivers.

Other Examples on I-40

One point of discussion at the MPO's Prioritization Subcommittee was the fact that there are currently no managed lanes on I-40 in the United States. However, there are several projects currently under development or consideration, including projects in North Carolina, Tennessee, Arizona, and California.

(All content taken from FBRMPO TCC agenda)

Staff Recommendations:

Recommend RPO TAC provide a letter of support for HOT Lanes on I-40.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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5. REGULAR UPDATES

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
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ADJOURNMENT

Upcoming Meetings

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