

LAND OF SKY

RURAL PLANNING RURAL ORGANIZATION

Technical Advisory Committee
Hybrid Meeting with the Zoom Platform
May 15th, 2025 – 11:30 A.M.
Minutes

Attendance in Person:

Kevin Ensley (Haywood Commission)	Vicki Eastland (LOSRPO)
Steve Williams (NCDOT Div 14)	Asha Rado (Minutes)
Brendan Merithew (NCDOT 13)	

Attendance Remote via Zoom:

Mac Morrow (City of Brevard)	Chase McKelvey (Transylvania County)
Stephen Sparks (NCDOT Div 13)	Daniel Sellers (NCDOT TPD)
Matt Wechtel (Madison County)	Brian Burch (NCDOT)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Kevin Ensley called the meeting to order at 11:32AM and welcomed attendees. He read the Ethics Statement, and inquired if there were any conflicts, which could preclude TAC members from participating in and voting on any business items, to state such for the record, and to refrain from participation in the matter. No conflicts were heard from the TAC members.

Chair Kevin Ensley called the roll and quorum was announced.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Kevin Ensley opened the floor for public comment. No public comments were received.

Consent Agenda

March 2025 Meeting Minutes:

https://landofskyrpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2025_03_20_DRAFT.RPO_TAC_Minutes.pdf

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Kevin Ensley requested approval of the agenda and the consent agenda, which included the March 2025 meeting minutes, and the TAC agenda.

Matt Wechtel moved to approve the agenda and the consent agenda, which included the March 2025 Meeting Minutes and the TAC agenda. Chase McKelvey seconded the motion which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

LAND OF SKY RPO TAC BUSINESS

Item 4A: LOSRPO DRAFT FY 2026 Planning Work Program PWP

LOSRPO staff has developed the DRAFT LOSRPO Planning Work Program, (PWP) and submitted the FY 2026 Draft PWP to NCDOT TPD for review. The PWP is a continuation of ongoing RPO projects. The Transylvania County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) has been drafted and RPO staff has provided comments to TPD, once those comments are addressed, the CTP will be reviewed by Transylvania Co. CTP committee and TAC and will then go to adoption. There is funding in the PWP to accommodate the adoption process. There is a sizable percentage of the planning funds in the 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 Safe Streets 4 All Regional Action Plan, and the Downtown Brevard Circulation study funded with SPR funds, as well as the Regional Transit Plan and other general planning activities fall into. SPOT 8.0 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-FY-2026-Draft-PWP](#)

No Discussion was heard.

Mac Morrow moved to approve the DRAFT FY 2026 Planning Work Program PWP. Chase McKelvey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

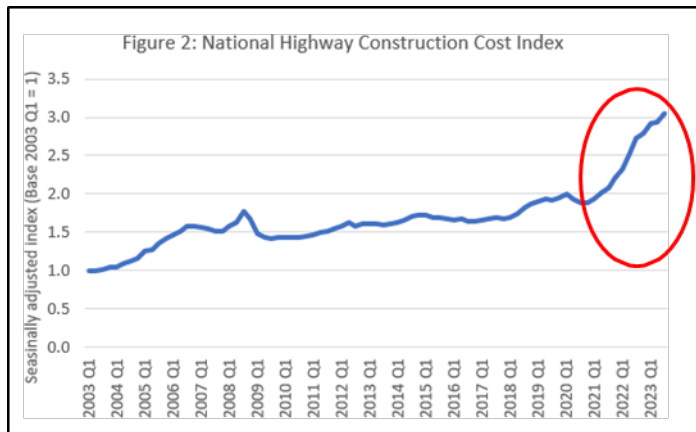
Item 4B: NCDOT Prioritization 8.0 Potential changes & updates:

The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is North Carolina's document that reflects planned transportation investments over a ten-year period. The STIP describes each project, has a schedule for implementation, funding sources, and estimated costs. NCDOT updates the STIP on a two-year cycle based on projects selected for funding from the NCDOT Prioritization process. The DRAFT 2026 – 2035 STIP was developed from P7.0 and released January 31, 2025.

Visit [NCDOT DRAFT 2026-2035 STIP Map](#) to see a map of projects in the DRAFT STIP.

The NC Board of Transportation is scheduled to approve the DRAFT STIP at the June 2025 meeting.

Due to rising costs for existing projects funded in the current adopted STIP 2024 – 2033, there was very little funding available across the state and very few new projects were added to the DRAFT STIP.



There is no funding available for new projects in Region G or Divisions 13 or 14. Projects funded for construction in the current STIP will experience schedule changes to balance the STIP. See the funding availability numbers for Division Needs from September 18, 2024.

Draft 2026-2035 STIP Funding Availability for Selecting Division Needs Projects from
Prioritization 7.0
As of September 18, 2024

STI Funding Category	Funding Availability
Division 1	-\$199M
Division 2	-\$228M
Division 3	-\$61M
Division 4	-\$21M
Division 5	-\$187M
Division 6	\$79M
Division 7	\$64M
Division 8	-\$12M
Division 9	-\$119M
Division 10	-\$201M
Division 11	-\$18M
Division 12	-\$128M
Division 13	-\$144M
Division 14	-\$35M

*** Values are as of September 18, 2024, and will change due to, but not limited to, updated project cost estimates and schedule changes for committed projects ***

Due to construction cost increases, several projects funded for construction in the 2024 – 2033 STIP have been “Decommited” or “Defunded”. No projects in the LOSRPO planning boundary were removed, but several in the FBRMPO have been removed from the STIP. Two projects in Transylvania County have had changes to the schedule but are still in the DRAFT STIP for Construction. This is necessary to keep the STIP fiscally constrained, as required by FHWA.

P8.0 is scheduled to begin this summer with project submittal window opening in July and closing in September, **unless the schedule is adjusted**. There are several proposed changes being discussed at the Prioritization Work Group meetings.

1. Reduction in the number of project submittals by 30% for all RPO's/MPO's and division. LOSRPO had 15 in P7.0 my potentially have 11 in P8.0.
2. Discussion of a reduction in Local Input Points, (LIP's). Nothing decided yet, percentages of reduction to be discussed at the May 13th WG meeting.

3. NCDOT would like for most if not all projects being submitted in **P9.0**. To have at a minimum an express design. This was not well received by many work group members and is still being discussed. If this happens it will require additional pre- work before project submittal begins.
4. In **P7.0** LOSRPO had **9 CARRYOVER** projects that were scored along with our **15** Highway submittals for a total of **24 highway projects** considered for funding. In **P8.0** there will be **1 carryover project**. If project submittals are reduced, LOSRPO will only have **approx. 11 submittals for each mode**. This will mean we will be submitting **half of the highway projects** as we submitted in P7.0. We have work to do to figure out what projects to submit.
5. Project meetings will be held in June and July with each county and NCDOT Division Staff. I will share the P7.0 project list with you all to review and start thinking about.

Discussion did not occur.

Information Only.

Item 4C: NCDOT Helene Recovery Major Projects Update

Brian Burch, PE, Senior Project Manager, HNTB will provide the TAC with an update on I 40 and the work going on there as well as the next steps for that project.

Information Only

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Kevin Ensley opened the floor for public comment. No public comments were received.

REGULAR UPDATES

- NCDOT Division 13 and 14 updates
Most Recent Updates
<https://landofskyrpo.org/division-13-updates/>
<https://landofskyrpo.org/division-14-updates/>
- Transportation Planning Division updates
- Staff Updates

NCDOT Staff

Daniel Sellers
Vicki Eastland

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Kevin Ensley moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:36PM.

Upcoming Meeting

Land of Sky RPO TCC – Meeting on Thursday August 14th, 2025 – 10:00AM
LOSRC Offices and Zoom

Land of Sky RPO TAC – Meeting on Thursday August 21st, 2025 – 11:30 AM Land
of Sky Regional Council and Zoom