



High Country Rural Planning Organization (RPO)

Municipalities and Counties of
Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey

*“Serving North Carolina’s High Country with Continuing, Cooperative, and
Comprehensive Transportation Planning”*



Woodie Young, RTAC Chair

David Graham, Transportation Planner

David Jackson, RTCC Chair

**High Country Rural Planning Organization (RPO)
Rural Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC)
Virtual Zoom Meeting
Wednesday December 16, 2020
11:00 AM**

Meeting registration will be emailed to all RTAC Members. Any members of the public who are interested in joining the meeting, please email info@hccog.org for more information.

View the livestream of the RTAC meeting here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1s68WKuUQaeypt82hhCluQ>

Public Comments received by 9 AM on Wednesday December 16, 2020 will be available to be read by RPO staff during the public comment section of the RTAC meeting. RTAC members will have the ability to hear and respond to any public comments.

All public comments must be received by 9 AM on Wednesday, December 16, 2020.

Public comments may be submitted by email to dgraham@hccog.org



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RURAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RTAC)

Agenda

December 16, 2020

11:00 AM

Via Zoom

1. Call to Order & Ethics Statement (Woodie Young, RTAC Chair)

Action Items

2. Approval of August 19, 2020 Minutes (RTAC Chair)
3. Appointment Request for RTAC Vice Chair’s Remaining Term (David Graham)

Informational Items

4. NCDOT STIP Reprogramming (Hannah Cook PE, NCDOT Senior Program Engineer)
5. Project Development Update (David Graham)
6. NCDOT Integrated Mobility Division (IMD) (TBD)
7. Division Engineers’ Report (NCDOT Division 11 and Division 13 Representatives)
8. Transportation Planning Division Update (Pam Cook PE, NCDOT)

Other Items

9. Committee Member Comments/Other Business
10. Public Comment
11. Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the RTAC is February 17, 2021 at 2:00 PM.

This information is available in Spanish or any other language upon request. Please contact High Country RPO Transportation Planner at (828) 265-5434 ext. 135 or at 468 New Market Blvd. Boone, NC 28607 for accommodations for this request.

Esta información está disponible en español o en cualquier otro idioma bajo petición. Por favor, póngase en contacto con High Country RPO Transportación Planner al (828) 265-5434 ext. 135 o en 468 New Market Blvd. Boone, NC 28607 de alojamiento para esta solicitud.

**High Country RPO
Rural Transportation Coordinating Committee (RTAC)
August 19, 2020
Minutes**

The Rural Transportation Coordinating Committee held their quarterly meeting, August 19, 2020 at 2pm Via Zoom. The following members were present:

Cullie Tarleton-NCBOT	Robert Johnson-Town of North Wilkesboro
Brenda Lyerly- Town of Banner Elk	Wood Hall Young, Jr.- Avery County
David Harwood- Town of Blowing Rock	Denise Collier- Town of Burnsville
Larry Prince- Alleghany County	Larry Turnbow- Watauga County
John Reeves- Ashe County	

Guests present were: Kusandra King- NCDOT and Natasha Earle-Young- NCDOT

The following staff members were present from the High Country Council of Governments: David Graham- Transportation Planner, Julie Wiggins- Executive Director, Phil Trew- Planning & Development Director, and Angie Holman- Receptionist.

Call to Order:

David Graham read the ethics statement and roll call was conducted. Brenda Lyerly called the meeting to order.

Approval of (June 17, 2020) Minutes

Brenda asked for motion for approval of the June 17, 2020 minutes. Motion was made by Robert Johnson. Motion was seconded by Cullie Tarleton. Motion carried.

Approval of NCDOT Division 11 & 13 Alternate Division Needs Criteria for P6.0 Projects

David Graham went over the proposed criteria for P6.0 projects and Stephan Sparks went over details of the proposed criteria and project scores. Brenda Lyerly asked for a motion for approval. Larry Turnbow gave motion for approval and Cullie Tarleton seconded motion. Motion carried.

US 321 Strategic Transportation Corridor (STC) Resolution of Support

NCDOT Representative, Kusandra King gave a presentation on the US 321 STC. She took questions from RTAC members and requested a US 321 STC letter of support by September 30, 2020. Brenda asked for motion for approval. Motion made by Cullie Tarleton. Motion seconded by Robert Johnson. Motion carried.

Prioritization 6.0 Schedule Update

David Graham provided the RTAC updates on the Prioritization 6.0 Schedule.

Project Development Update

David Graham went over updates and schedule changes for projects in the region.

Division Engineers' Report

Sean Sizemore gave updates for Division 11 and Stephan Sparks gave updates for Division 13.

Transportation Planning Division Update

Pam Cook went over the NCDOT TPD Newsletter which covered Traffic Forecasts, Yancey County CTP, the NCDOT Logistics & Freight Bulletin, and DMV adjustments to requirements for Drivers 18 and over.

Committee Member Comments/Other Business

There was no other business or committee member comments.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

Brenda Lyerly asked for motion to adjourn the meeting. Robert Johnson made motion and Larry Turnbow seconded motion to adjourn meeting. Meeting adjourned.

Wood Hall Young, Jr., Chair

David Graham, Secretary



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Woodie Young, RTAC Chair

David Graham, Transportation Planner

David Jackson, RTCC Chair

To: High Country RPO RTAC
From: David Graham, High Country RPO Transportation Planner
Subject: Appointment of RTAC Vice Chair’s Remaining Term

Chuck Vines, Bakersville Mayor and current RTAC Vice Chair’s term on the RTAC will expire on December 31, 2020. Mayor Vines is not seeking reappointment to the RTAC. Therefore, I am requesting an RTAC member to fill the remaining term as Vice Chair on the RTAC which will expire in February 2022.

DECEMBER 2020 PROJECT UPDATE

(October 2020 NCDOT BOT Reprogrammed 2020-2029 STIP)

HIGHWAY PROJECTS

US 221 (R-2915): US 421 to US 221 Business/NC 88 – Ashe County

Description: *US 221, US 421 in Watauga County to US 221 Business/ NC 88 in Jefferson. Widen to four lanes divided*

Section A: Under Construction with B Section
Section B: Under Construction with A Section
Section C: Under Construction
Section D: Complete
Section E: Right of Way in Progress
Construction 2020

Estimated Completion Date: Sections A & B: 7/11/21, Section C: 1/11/21
Section D: 5/11/19, Section E: NA

NC 88, NC 88 to NC 194 (R-5832) – Ashe County

Description: *Upgrade roadway.*

Right-of-Way 2022
Construction 2024

US 19E, East of Spruce Pine to Mullin Hill Road (R-2520-A) – Avery/Mitchell Counties

Description: *Widen to multi-lanes.*

Right-of-Way 2029
Construction Future Years – Committed Project

NC 194/US 19E Intersection (R-5911) – Avery County

Description: *Construct right turn lane from US 19E northbound to NC 194 eastbound.*

Right-of-Way 2021
Construction 2022

NC 105 (R-2566B): NC 105, Clarks Creek Road to NC 105 Bypass (Boone) – Avery/Watauga Counties

Description: *NC 105, Old Shulls Mill (SR 1568) to SR NC 105 Bypass (SR1107) in Boone. Widen to multi-lanes (includes R-2566BA - Bridge over Watauga River at Broadstone Road).*

Section B:	Right-of-Way	2022
	Construction	2024
Section BA:	Right-of-Way	In progress
	Construction	2023

US 421/US 321 (R-2615): US 321/US421 Junction Near Vilas to 105 Bypass – Watauga County

Description: *Widen to Multi-Lanes*

Right-of-Way	2024
Construction	2027

US 421 & Poplar Grove Connector Intersection (R-5872) – Watauga County

Description: *Construct Roundabout*

Right-of-Way	2028
Construction	Future Years – Committed Project

SR 1522 (Deerfield Road), State Farm Road to SR 1523 (Wilson Ridge Road) (R-5830) – Watauga County

Description: *Upgrade Roadway.*

Right-of-Way	2024
Construction	2025

Bamboo Road (SR 1514); Wilson Ridge Road (SR 1523), US 421/US221 to Deerfield Road (SR 1522) (U-5810) – Watauga County

Description: *Widen Roadway to 12 foot lanes with 4 foot paved shoulders.*

Right-of-Way	2022
Construction	2024

NC 115, From US 421 to 2nd Street (R-5759) – Wilkes County

Description: *Widen Existing Roadway.*

Right-of-Way 2020
Construction 2024

NC 268 (R-2603): NC 18 to Airport Road – Wilkes County

Description: *NC 268, Multi-lanes east of NC 18 to SR 1966. Widen to multi-lanes.*

Under Construction

SR 1001 (Oakwoods Road), From US 421 to NC268 (East Main St.) (R-5772) – Wilkes County

Description: *Upgrade Existing Roadway.*

Right-of-Way 2026
Construction 2028 – Committed Project

Wilkesboro-North Wilkesboro Bypass, NC 18 to US 421 (R-0616) – Wilkes County

Description: *Construct multi-lane facility, part on new location.*

Right-of-Way 2026
Construction 2029 – Committed Project

US 421 (U-5312): Yadkin River Bridge to Westgate Drive – Wilkes County

Description: *US 421, NC 16 to US 421 Business. Convert existing roadway to superstreet and add service roads.*

Right-of-Way in Progress
Construction 2023

US 19E (R-2519B): Jacks Creek Rd to Spruce Pine – Mitchell/Yancey Counties

Description: *US 19E, SR 1336 (Jacks Creek Road) to multi-lane section west of Spruce Pine. Widen to multi-lanes. (Includes B-3268)*

Section B: Construction complete

NC 226, From Blue Ridge Parkway to Summit Avenue (R-5804) – Mitchell County

Description: *Widen Roadway to 3 Lanes.*

Right-of-Way 2029
Construction Future Years – Committed Project

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Yancey County Transit Facility (TA-6723)

Description: *Construct office, training, maintenance facility.*

Construction 2022

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PROJECTS

US 221 Sidewalk from Moses H. Cone Memorial Park to Main Street Blowing Rock (EB-5798)

Description: *Construct sidewalk along US 221*

Construction 2020

Middle Fork Greenway Section I From Blowing Rock along US 321 to the Blue Ridge Parkway (EB-5924)

Description: *Construct Greenway along US 321*

Right-of-Way 2021
Construction 2022

US 421 Multi-Use Path from Grove Street to Brookshire Road (EB-5983)

Description: *Construct multi-use path.*

Right-of-Way 2024
Construction 2025

AVIATION PROJECTS

Ashe County Airport (AV-5750)

Description: *Acquire land and existing hangars north of runway 10 threshold and adjacent to airport property*

Right-of-Way in Progress

Ashe County Airport (AV-5848)

Description: *Construct apron expansions*

Construction 2021

Wilkes County Airport (AV-5894)

Description: *Extend runway to 7,000 feet*

Right-of-Way 2022

Construction 2024

NCDOT TPD NEWS



NCDOT TPD HCRPO Newsletter

December 2020

Traffic Forecasts (TF)

Project Level Traffic Forecasting is an essential part of the planning process. The traffic forecast informs the design of STIP projects. There are no ongoing traffic forecasts at this time.

Yancey County CTP

The Yancey County CTP study has continued using virtual meeting platforms. The Yancey County CTP Steering Committee has been working to develop draft highway, public transportation, bicycle, and pedestrian recommendations. The next steps will be to get local officials and then citizens input on the draft recommendations.

US 19E

NCDOT has completed the eight miles of US 19E from its intersection with NC 80 in Yancey County to the multi-lane section of highway just west of Spruce Pine in Mitchell County. Long-range plans for US 19E include extending four lane sections east of Spruce Pine into Avery County.

The eastbound and westbound lanes are divided by a grassed median matching the first 21 miles from I-26 in Madison County. Additional drainage, signage and pavement markings bring the highway up to modern safety standards. Crews also built six new bridges, six new box culverts, and seven retaining walls. In addition, they built 14 bulb-out turnarounds for additional safety and mobility.

New Drainage Coming to US 421 in Wilkesboro

Crews from Triangle Grading & Paving may begin working the last week of November on a significant drainage project along US 421 in an area known for drainage issues. The contract calls for work to be completed by November 30, 2021. The project includes installing about 900 feet of 66-inch diameter welded steel pipe to replace the existing 60-inch pipe. About half of the new system will be installed along the north side of US 421 and the other half will be placed under US 421 toward the Yadkin River.

“Connecting people, products and places safely and efficiently with customer focus, accountability and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy and vitality of North Carolina....”

- NCDOT Mission Statement

FHWA News

Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian (STEP)

Pedestrians now account for a larger proportion of traffic fatalities (16%) than they have in the past 33 years. More than 72% of pedestrian fatalities occurred at non-intersection locations (mid-block). What is FHWA STEP innovation: Enhanced crossings at crossing locations by promoting cost-effective countermeasures known as the “Spectacular Seven”. These measures include:

- Crosswalk Visibility Enhancements
- Raised Crosswalks
- Pedestrian Refuge Islands
- Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon
- Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
- Road Diets

Contact Us

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Ashe County Airport

In its November meeting, the N.C. Board of Transportation approved state and federal grants for safety and airfield improvement projects at five North Carolina airports. \$3,285,000 in federal apportionment funds were awarded to the Ashe County Airport in Jefferson. The funds will be used to construct a new, partial parallel taxiway so more aircraft can safely maneuver on the airfield and reduce possible safety hazards.

Roadway Death Rates Drop Across NC

There's promising news on our roadways—NC's traffic deaths decreased in 2019 by 4.4% according to data released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The decrease is nearly twice the national rate. According to the report 1,373 people were killed in North Carolina traffic crashes in 2019, which is 63 fewer than 2018.

In 2017, North Carolina initiated the program named NC Vision Zero which brings together law enforcement personnel, emergency responders, engineers, and drivers to work toward a future that's free of auto accident deaths. In 2015, there were 1,387 traffic deaths, NCDOT goal is to reduce that figure by 50 percent by 2030 with the eventual goal of eliminating these deaths completely.

Drone Bridge Inspections

NCDOT was awarded the first-ever waiver for drone bridge inspections. The Federal Aviation Administration approved a waiver that allows NCDOT to operate drones beyond visual line of sight while conducting bridge inspections.

Drones have been used since 2016 to conduct bridge inspections. But by enabling the drones to move beyond the pilot's line of sight, the inspections will be able to collect more high-resolution images in difficult to see places so inspectors can better analyze the bridge's integrity and identify possible problems.

Upcoming	Date
2nd Quarter invoice and work summary due	February 11, 2021
Draft PWP and Indirect Cost Allocation Plan for FY 22 due	February 26, 2021
3rd Quarter invoice and work summary due	May 10, 2021
Last day to submit adopted FY 22 PWP	May 31, 2021
Last day to submit revised FY 21 PWPs with signatures	June 29, 2021
NCDOT TPD approves FY 22 PWPs and Indirect Cost Allocation Plan	June 29, 2021