



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 Coordinating Committee (RTCC)
Virtual Zoom Meeting
Wednesday May 19, 2021
10:00 AM**

Meeting registration will be emailed to all RTCC 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 RTCC meeting here:

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

Public Comments received by 9 AM on Wednesday May 19, 2021 will be available to be read by RPO staff during the public comment section of the RTCC meeting. RTCC members will have the ability to hear and respond to any public comments.

All public comments must be received by 9 AM on Wednesday May 19, 2021.

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



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RURAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE (RTCC)

Agenda

May 19, 2021

10:00 AM

Via Zoom

1. Call to Order (David Jackson, RTCC Chair)

Action Items

2. Approval of February 17, 2021 Minutes (RTCC Chair)
3. Resolution of Support for Town of Burnsville Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Grant (David Graham)
4. Approval of FY 21-22 RPO Planning Work Program (David Graham)
5. Approval of High Country RPO Prioritization 6.0 Methodology (David Graham)

Informational Items

6. Prioritization 6.0 Update (David Graham)
7. Project Development Update (David Graham)
8. Public Transit Update (Local Transit Agencies)
9. Division Engineers’ Report (NCDOT Division 11 and Division 13 Representatives)
10. Transportation Planning Division Update (Pam Cook PE, NCDOT)

Other Items

11. Committee Member Comments/Other Business
13. Public Comment
14. Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the RTCC is August 18, 2021 at 10:00 AM.

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 (RTCC)
February 17, 2021
Minutes**

The Rural Transportation Coordinating Committee held their quarterly meeting, February 17, 2021 at 10am via ZOOM. The following members were present:

| | |
|--|---|
| David Jackson- Boone Chamber | Phil Trew- HCCOG |
| John Yates- Wilkes County | Pam Cook- NCDOT TPD |
| Brantley Price- Town of West Jefferson | Chris Guffey- NCDOT Division 13 |
| Charles Hardin- Blowing Rock Chamber | Debbie Powers- Town of Seven Devils |
| Debbie Smith- Avery Transportation | Ken Noland- Town of Wilkesboro |
| Joe Furman- Watauga County | Lynn Austin- Yancey County |
| McCray Coates- NCDOT Division 13 | Kevin Rothrock- Town of Blowing Rock |
| Neal Winebarger- ASU | Rob Weisz- NCDOT Division 11 |
| Melynda Pepple- Avery County Chamber | Cathy Howell- Town of Jefferson |
| Sheila Blalock- Mitchell County Transportation | Christy Jones- Yancey Chamber |
| Kate Gavenus- Beech Mountain Chamber | Adam Stumb- Ashe County |
| Rick Owen- Town of Banner Elk | Michael Harris- Mitchell Transportation |
| Stephan Sparks- NCDOT Division 13 | Linda Cheek- Wilkes Chamber |

Others present: Hannah Cook- NCDOT STIP Unit, Ted Silver

Guests present were: Amna Cameron-NCDOT Office of Strategic Initiatives and Whitney McFadden- NCDOT Office of Civil Rights Representative.

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

Call to Order

David Graham conducted roll call and Chair, David Jackson called the meeting to order.

Approval of November 18, 2020 Minutes

David Jackson asked for motion for approval of the November 18, 2020 minutes. Motion was made by Charles Hardin and seconded by Ken Noland. Motion carried and minutes approved.

NCDOT Title VI Program Presentation

Whitney McFadden with the NCDOT Office of Civil Rights gave a presentation that went over what the program is and how it works. Title VI (federal law) specifically states, “No person in the United States shall on the ground of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance”. The 1987 Civil Rights Restoration Act states that there will be no discrimination across all NCDOT programs, activities, and modes, whether federally assisted or state-funded with the notable exception of creed/religion. She also covered Title VI protected classes (race, color, sex, national origin, limited English proficiency, disability, low-income, creed/religion and age), What is Discrimination, Discrimination Complaints (what and how they are handled), RPO Responsibilities (compliance review, recognize and review potential Title VI issues, complete and submit Title VI Plans that include but not limited to: a policy statement, complaint procedures, data analysis and public outreach. Regarding Limited English Proficiency (LEP), NCDOT must provide language assistance services free of charge to LEP individuals so they have meaningful access to programs and activities intended to prohibit national origin discrimination. A LEP person is someone who reads, writes, speaks, or understands English “less than very well”). Whitney provided contact information for the NCDOT Title VI program.

NC First Commission Presentation

Amna Cameron with NCDOT Office of Strategic Initiatives gave a presentation on NC First Commission. Amna stated that the NC First Commission was formed in March 2019 to develop recommendations for sustainable transportation revenue sources. The key findings of the NC First Commission include: NC needs greater investments, recommendations, and options to achieve a “good” infrastructure rating and increase the level of investment by at least \$20 billion over the next 10 years. Amna encouraged the RTCC to spread the word, meet with legislative delegation, participate in mileage-based user fee pilot in Fall 2021, and join the NC Chamber’s Destination 2030.

Project Development Update

David Graham went over the updates and any changes in the region.

Prioritization 6.0 Update

David Graham went over updates.

Public Transit Updates

Sheila Blalock and Debbie Smith went over the Public Transit updates for the region.

Division Engineers’ Report

Rob Weisz gave updates for Division 11 and McCray Coates gave updates for Division 13.

Transportation Planning Division Update

Pam Cook went over the NCDOT TPD Newsletter which covered Traffic Forecasts, Yancey County CTP, NCDOT Traffic Survey Group New Webpage, FHWA News, NCDOT Division of Aviation, First Commission Final Report, The NCDOT Annual Performance Report and Upcoming information and dates.

Committee Member Comments/Other Business

Charles Hardin asked about liter pick-up and McCray Coates said that it should resume around the end of Spring and to contact NCDOT County Maintenance Offices for more information. Pam Cook provided a link and informed the RTCC that April 10-24th is the NCDOT Liter Sweep where NCDOT and volunteers can partner to pick up trash along roadways.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

David Jackson adjourned the meeting with there being no other business.

David Jackson, Chair

David Graham, Secretary



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Municipalities and Counties of
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**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE APPLICATION FOR
BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PLANNING GRANT FUNDS BY THE
TOWN OF BURNSVILLE**

Whereas, the Transportation Advisory Committee is the duly recognized transportation decision making body for the High Country Rural Transportation Planning Organization (RPO); and

Whereas, the North Carolina Department of Transportation – Integrated Mobility Division has funding available for Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grants; and

Whereas, the Town of Burnsville intends to apply for funds for developing a Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan; and

Whereas, the High Country RPO recognizes the benefits of bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities, including economic development, safety, health benefits, less vehicle congestion, and less pollution; and

Whereas, adequate planning for transportation facilities is necessary to ensure that public funds are spent efficiently.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the High Country RPO supports the Town of Burnsville in applying for the Integrated Mobility Division Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Planning Grant funds.

Adopted May 19, 2021

Woodie Young, Chair, RTAC

Date

David Graham, Secretary, RTAC

Date

**FY 2021-2022
PLANNING WORK PROGRAM
ANNUAL PROPOSED FUNDING SOURCES TABLE
High Country Rural Planning Organization**

| TASK CODE | WORK CATEGORY | RPO PROGRAM FUNDS | | |
|--|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | | LOCAL 20% | STATE 80% | TOTAL |
| I. DATA COLLECTION AND ASSESSMENT | | | | |
| I-1 | DATA COLLECTION AND ASSESSMENT | \$ 1,600 | \$ 6,400 | \$ 8,000 |
| I-1.1 | Highway | | | |
| I-1.2 | Other Modes | | | |
| I-1.3 | Socioeconomic | | | |
| I-1.4 | Title VI | | | |
| II. TRANSPORTATION PLANNING | | | | |
| II-1 | COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (CTP) DEVELOPMENT | \$ 6,200 | \$ 24,800 | \$ 31,000 |
| II-1.1 | Develop CTP Vision | | | |
| II-1.2 | Conduct CTP Needs Assessment | | | |
| II-1.3 | Analyze Alternatives and Environmental Screening | | | |
| II-1.4 | Develop Final Plan | | | |
| II-1.5 | Adopt Plan | | | |
| II-2 | PRIORITIZATION | \$ 4,200 | \$ 16,800 | \$ 21,000 |
| II-2.1 | Project Prioritization | | | |
| II-3 | PROGRAM AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT | \$ 1,000 | \$ 4,000 | \$ 5,000 |
| II-3.1 | STIP Participation | | | |
| II-3.2 | Merger / Project Development | | | |
| II-4 | GENERAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING | \$ 2,900 | \$ 11,600 | \$ 14,500 |
| II-4.1 | Regional and Statewide Planning | | | |
| II-4.2 | Special Studies, Projects and Other Trainings | | | |
| III. ADMINISTRATION OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND POLICIES | | | | |
| III-1 | ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES | \$ 4,191 | \$ 16,766 | \$ 20,957 |
| III-1.1 | Administrative Documents | | | |
| III-1.2 | TCC / TAC Work Facilitation; Ethics Compliance | | | |
| III-1.3 | Program Administration | | | |
| IV. DIRECT COSTS | | | | |
| IV-1 | PROGRAMMATIC DIRECT CHARGES | \$ 20 | \$ 80 | \$ 100 |
| IV-1.1 | Program-wide Direct Costs | | | |
| IV-2 | ADVERTISING | \$ 20 | \$ 80 | \$ 100 |
| IV-2.1 | News Media Ads | | | |
| IV-3 | LODGING, MEALS, INCIDENTALS | \$ 240 | \$ 960 | \$ 1,200 |
| IV-3.1 | Hotel Costs | | | |
| IV-3.2 | Meal Costs | | | |
| IV-3.3 | Incidentals | | | |
| IV-4 | POSTAGE | \$ 10 | \$ 40 | \$ 50 |
| IV-4.1 | Mailings | | | |
| IV-5 | REGISTRATION / TRAINING | \$ 40 | \$ 160 | \$ 200 |
| IV-5.1 | Conference Registration | | | |
| IV-5.2 | Meeting / Workshop / Training Fees | | | |
| IV-6 | TRAVEL | \$ 240 | \$ 960 | \$ 1,200 |
| IV-6.1 | Mileage Reimbursement | | | |
| IV-6.2 | Car Rental Costs | | | |
| IV-6.3 | Other Travel Expenses | | | |
| V. INDIRECT COSTS | | | | |
| V-1 | INDIRECT COSTS APPROVED BY COGNIZANT AGENCY FY 21-22 | \$ 11,251 | \$ 45,005 | \$ 56,256 |
| V-1.1 | Incurred Indirect Costs | | | |
| TOTAL | | \$ 31,913 | \$ 127,650 | \$ 159,563 |

Approved by the TAC on: _____ 20__

Signature, TAC Chairman

Signature, RPO Secretary

**FY 2021-2022
PLANNING WORK PROGRAM
Narrative
High Country Rural Planning Organization**

| | | |
|--|---|----------------------|
| I. DATA COLLECTION AND ASSESSMENT | | |
| I-1 DATA COLLECTION AND ASSESSMENT | | \$ 8,000.00 |
| I-1.1 | Highway Project Mapping, E911 Centerline Database Management | |
| I-1.2 | Other Modes | |
| I-1.3 | Socioeconomic Maintain Socioeconomic Data for all Counties | |
| I-1.4 | Title VI Maintain Compliance with Title VI | |
| II. TRANSPORTATION PLANNING | | |
| II-1 COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (CTP) DEVELOPMENT | | \$ 31,000.00 |
| II-1.1 | Develop CTP Vision Complete Yancey County CTP Planning Process, Begin Ashe County CTP Planning Process | |
| II-1.2 | Conduct CTP Needs Assessment | |
| II-1.3 | Analyze Alternatives and Environmental Screening | |
| II-1.4 | Develop Final Plan | |
| II-1.5 | Adopt Plan | |
| II-2 PRIORITIZATION | | \$ 21,000.00 |
| II-2.1 | Project Prioritization Solicitation of Priority P6.0 Projects, Scoring and Ranking of Projects, Development of HCRPO Priority Needs List, Local Point Allocation, Methodology Updates | |
| II-3 PROGRAM AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT | | \$ 5,000.00 |
| II-3.1 | STIP Participation Review and Report Status of STIP projects to RTCC/RTAC, Attend STIP Meetings | |
| II-3.2 | Merger / Project Development Attend Merger Meetings and Provide Local Input on Projects | |
| II-4 GENERAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING | | \$ 14,500.00 |
| II-4.1 | Regional and Statewide Planning Attend NCARPO Quarterly Meetings | |
| II-4.2 | Special Studies, Projects and Other Trainings NCARPO Administrative Document Committee Participation, NCDOT Resiliency Plan Participation | |
| III. ADMINISTRATION OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND POLICIES | | |
| III-1 ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES | | \$ 20,957.00 |
| III-1.1 | Administrative Documents Prepare, Obtain Approval and Submit PWP and any Necessary Amendments. Prepare and submit quarterly reports to NCDOT TPD | |
| III-1.2 | TCC / TAC Work Facilitation; Ethics Compliance Facilitate HCRPO Meetings, Membership, and RTAC Ethics Requirements | |
| III-1.3 | Program Administration Provide Transportation Information and Data, Coordinate with NCDOT staff Regarding Inquiries from Local Officials, Citizens, and RTCC/RTAC Members. | |
| IV. DIRECT COSTS | | |
| IV-1 PROGRAMMATIC DIRECT CHARGES | | \$ 100.00 |
| IV-1.1 | Program-wide Direct Costs Regular Costs of Operation of the HCRPO Program | |
| IV-2 ADVERTISING | | \$ 100.00 |
| IV-2.1 | News Media Ads HCRPO Meeting Notices | |
| IV-3 LODGING, MEALS, INCIDENTALS | | \$ 1,200.00 |
| IV-3.1 | Hotel Costs Costs for Overnight Stays at NCARPO Quarterly Meetings and Other Meetings and Trainings | |
| IV-3.2 | Meal Costs Meal Costs while on Overnight or Extended Travel | |
| IV-3.3 | Incidentals Parking, Tips | |
| IV-4 POSTAGE | | \$ 50.00 |
| IV-4.1 | Mailings Costs for Mailing Materials | |
| IV-5 REGISTRATION / TRAINING | | \$ 200.00 |
| IV-5.1 | Conference Registration Conference Registration | |
| IV-5.2 | Meeting / Workshop / Training Fees Training Registration | |
| IV-6 TRAVEL | | \$ 1,200.00 |
| IV-6.1 | Mileage Reimbursement Reimbursement for Total Miles Traveled (.575 per mile) | |
| IV-6.2 | Car Rental Costs | |
| IV-6.3 | Other Travel Expenses Parking Etc... | |
| V. INDIRECT COSTS | | |
| V-1 INDIRECT COSTS APPROVED BY COGNIZANT AGENCY FY 21-22 | | \$ 56,256.00 |
| V-1.1 | Incurred Indirect Costs Indirect costs incurred for the RPO program | |
| TOTAL | | \$ 159,563.00 |

MEMORANDUM

To: High Country RPO RTCC/RTAC
From: David Graham, High Country RPO Transportation Planner
Re: HCRPO Prioritization 6.0 (P6.0) Methodology Update

On August 19, 2020 the RTCC approved the formation of the P6.0 Methodology Subcommittee to update the HCRPO process for scoring, ranking, and local input point allocation for local transportation projects for consideration in the 2023-2032 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The following individuals volunteered to serve on the P6.0 Methodology Subcommittee:

- Joe Furman, Watauga County Planning Director
- Ken Noland, Wilkesboro Town Manager
- Stephen Sparks, NCDOT Division 13 Corridor Development Engineer
- Rob Weisz, NCDOT Division 11 Corridor Development Engineer
- Phil Trew, High Country Council of Governments Planning Director
- David Graham, High Country Council of Governments Transportation Planner

The Subcommittee met December 4, 2020 and January 29, 2021 to discuss and update the P6.0 methodology. The following are the main updates recommended by the Subcommittee that have been approved by NCDOT and shown in the updated P6.0 methodology document:

- 1) Allocation of 1500 NCDOT local input points for both Regional Impact and Division Needs projects. (NCDOT had allocated 1400 local input points for the last prioritization cycle (P5.0)).
- 2) Reduced highway scoring criteria from 9 criteria to 4 criteria with emphasis on NCDOT SPOT scores to pick up as many projects as possible at the Regional Impact and Division Needs categories.
- 3) Reduced bicycle and pedestrian scoring criteria from 5 criteria to 4 criteria with emphasis on NCDOT SPOT scores to pick up as many projects as possible at the Division Needs category.
- 4) Maximum of 20 points for bicycle and pedestrian projects connectivity criteria (project provides connection to existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities = 20 points)
- 5) Maximum of 10 points for bicycle and pedestrian projects right-of-way acquisition status (right-of way acquired = 10 points, no right-of-way acquired = 0 points)
- 6) Included NCDOT flexibility provision to transfer up to 500 points between Regional Impact and Division Needs categories

The P6.0 methodology was made available for public comment during the month of April. The RTAC will hold a public hearing on the P6.0 methodology during the May RTAC meeting.

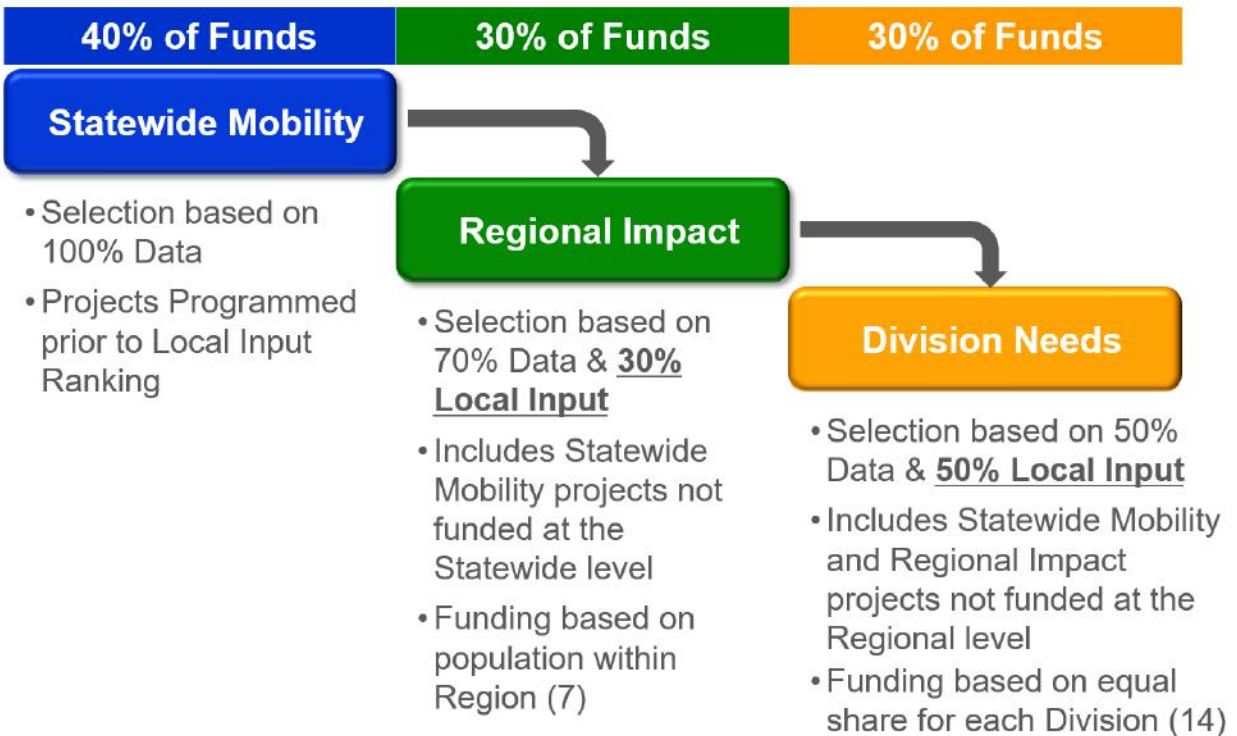
**HIGH COUNTRY RURAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION (RPO)
PRIORITIZATION 6.0 METHODOLOGY**

Introduction

The Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) law (GS 136-189.10 and .11), enacted in 2013, directs NCDOT to select and fund major capital improvement projects using a data-driven prioritization process in combination with local input. Under STI, all major capital mobility/expansion and modernization projects across all six modes of transportation compete for funding. Each project is classified into one of three funding categories – Statewide Mobility, Regional Impact, or Division Needs – where it competes for funds with other eligible projects.

Statewide Mobility eligible projects compete against all other projects in this category across the state, and project selection is based 100% on the data-driven quantitative score. Regional Impact projects compete against all other projects in this category within the same funding region (consisting of two NCDOT Transportation Divisions), and selection is based 70% on the quantitative score and 30% on local input (15% MPO/RPO priority and 15% NCDOT Division Engineer priority). Division Needs projects compete against all other projects within the same NCDOT Transportation Division, and selection is based 50% on quantitative score and 50% on local input (25% MPO/RPO priority and 25% NCDOT Division Engineer priority).

The STI law includes an innovative component known as cascading, where projects not funded in the Statewide Mobility category are eligible for funding in the Regional Impact category. Similarly, projects not funded in the Regional Impact category are eligible for Division Needs funds. Projects that cascade down are then subject to the scoring criteria and local input for the respective funding category.



The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and North Carolina General Assembly have required that all rural planning organizations develop a project solicitation and ranking methodology to evaluate projects for the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for highway, bicycle & pedestrian, public transportation, aviation, and rail modes of transportation.

The methodology for ranking projects will include the following steps:

1. Submittal of new projects to NCDOT
2. Solicitation of transportation project priorities from the counties in the High Country RPO region
3. Ranking of solicited projects received from High Country RPO counties for the development of a Priority Needs list
4. Assignment of 1500 points to the top Regional Impact and Division Needs projects on the Priority Needs list

Applicability

This methodology applies to all projects ranked by the High Country RPO in Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey counties that fall in the regional impact and division needs categories as defined in the 2013 Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) legislation. For example: US 321, US 421, and NC 226 are considered eligible regional impact category facilities. All county State Road (SR) Routes, airports, transit agencies, and bicycle and pedestrian projects are eligible division needs projects.

Statewide mobility projects will be 100% quantitative data driven by NCDOT with no local input from the RPO or Divisions. Regional projects will be 70% quantitative data driven by NCDOT with 30% local input (15% NCDOT Division 11 or 13 and 15% RPO). Division level projects will be 50% quantitative data driven by NCDOT with 50% local input (25% NCDOT Division 11 or 13 and 25% RPO). Other factors like local government priorities will also be considered when scoring, ranking, and allocating local points to projects for the development of a priority needs list.

New Project Solicitation

High Country RPO staff will request new projects from the seven High Country Counties and the Town of Boone and submit them to the Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT) office for inclusion in the Project Prioritization (P6.0) Projects list. Each county and the Town of Boone can submit up to the requisite number of new projects within each mode (highway, bicycle & pedestrian, transit, aviation, and rail) as follows:

Alleghany – 2; Ashe – 4; Avery – 3; Mitchell – 2; Watauga – 4; Wilkes – 6; Yancey – 3; Boone - 1

| RPO Steps | Target Dates |
|--|------------------------------|
| Staff to solicit new transportation projects from County Managers (highway, bicycle & pedestrian, public transportation, aviation, and rail modes) | June 3, 2019 – July 12, 2019 |
| New projects scheduled for RTCC consideration and recommendation of approval to RTAC. | August 21, 2019 |
| New projects scheduled for consideration and approval by the RTAC. | August 21, 2019 |
| RPO staff submittal of approved RTCC/RTAC new projects to NCDOT for project evaluation and scoring. | October 2019 |

Solicitation of Priority Projects for Local Scoring and Ranking

High Country RPO staff will solicit priority ranking of all eligible projects in NCDOT’s P6.0 database for the High Country RPO which includes submittals from the RPO, and NCDOT’s Divisions 11 and 13. All eligible projects (highway, bicycle & pedestrian, public transportation, aviation, and rail modes of transportation) from the seven High Country counties and the Town of Boone to be ranked will be in priority order and will serve as the basis for the priority needs list.

Scoring and Project Ranking Approach

Projects submitted will be evaluated by the criteria and scoring as detailed on pages 6 – 8 of the methodology. The resulting project scores and rankings will be adopted by the RPO as the High Country RPO Priority Needs List and will serve as the basis for assignment of points to transportation projects which include all modes of transportation.

Local Point Assignment Process

The Priority Needs List will guide in the assignment of points. Projects not funded at the Statewide Mobility tier will cascade down to the Regional Impact tier for RPO scoring and ranking. After projects are locally scored and ranked, the top 15 projects receive 100 points each. **The top 15 projects in the Regional Impact tier receive 100 points.** The Division Needs category projects including the projects that cascade down from the Regional Impact category will be re-ranked for point allocation. For example: If Ashe County submits 5 Priority Projects for scoring and ranking in priority order (#1 - #5) and only the top 2 projects are funded at the Regional Impact category the remaining projects (#3 - #5) will cascade to the Division Needs category and will be scored and ranked as follows: Project #3 becomes priority #1, Project #4 becomes priority #2, and Project #5 becomes priority #3. Once Division Needs projects are re-ranked for point allocation, **the top 15 projects in the Division Needs category will receive 100 points.** High Country counties and the Town of Boone will have an opportunity to revise division projects if desired.

(1)

(1)

Regional Impact Projects: Eligible regional impact routes in the High Country RPO include US 19, US 19E, US 19W, US 21, US 221, US 321 and US 421 not otherwise eligible at the statewide level. In addition, all NC routes (NC 197, NC 194, NC 16, NC 18 ...). The Class I railroad in Mitchell County is also an eligible regional rail line. If a project is not funded at the Regional Impact category it will shift down to the Division Needs category for RPO scoring and ranking.

Division Needs Projects: Eligible Division Needs routes in the High Country RPO include all State highways, secondary roads, and all other modes of transportation (bicycle/pedestrian, remaining rail, airport, and transit projects).

Public Input Process

Public input for the STIP prioritization process shall be in accordance with the High Country RPO Public Participation Plan. The scoring and ranking methodology will be shared with the public through press releases and posting on the High Country RPO website at <https://hccog.org/planning/#Transport> and will consider any public input. The RPO will issue a press release regarding the adoption of the Priority Needs list and provide for public comment at applicable RTCC and RTAC meetings. The prioritization of projects from the Priority Needs list will be presented at applicable RTCC and RTAC meetings and will include a public hearing component. The Priority Needs list and public input comments received will be posted on the High Country RPO website at <https://hccog.org/planning/#Transport>. In addition, any comments received during a public hearing held by the High Country RPO's RTCC or RTAC will be included in the meeting minutes. The final assignment of points by the RPO and local project scores will also be available via the High Country RPO's website.

Materials Sharing

Materials will be provided on the High Country RPO website at <https://hccog.org/planning/#Transport> and will include: 1) A link to the NCDOT STI Prioritization Resources website. 2) The adopted High Country RPO Prioritization 6.0 Methodology document and 3) Regional Impact and Division Needs local input point assignment documentation. All materials will be posted until adoption of the final STIP by the Board of Transportation.

Schedule

| RPO Steps | Target Dates |
|---|--------------------|
| The High Country RPO staff to submit the updated P6.0 draft methodology for ranking and scoring of projects to NCDOT for review and approval. | March 1, 2021 |
| Draft methodology available for public comment through press releases and the posting of the document on the High Country RPO website at https://hccog.org/planning/#Transport . | April 1 – 30, 2021 |
| Consideration and approval of methodology by RTCC & RTAC at RPO meetings with public hearing during RTAC meeting. | May 19, 2021 |
| RPO staff to solicit priority projects with a supplemental overall project scores list (after scores are released from NCDOT) from local governments for scoring and ranking. | September 1, 2021 |
| RPO consideration and approval of Prioritization 6.0 Priority Needs list at RPO meetings with public hearing during special RTAC meeting. | November 17, 2021 |
| RPO assigns 100 points to top 15 ranking regional projects. | November 30, 2021 |
| RPO assigns 100 points to top 15 ranking division projects. | February 4, 2022 |
| All public comments received and all final point assignments including any justification for point assignment which deviates from this local methodology will be placed on the High Country RPO website at https://hccog.org/planning/#Transport by the end of February 2022. | February 28, 2022 |

HIGH COUNTRY RPO

Prioritization 6.0 Criteria and Scoring

| HIGHWAY REGIONAL IMPACT PROJECTS | | |
|---|----------------|--|
| CRITERIA | MAXIMUM POINTS | SCORE METHODOLOGY |
| SPOT P 6.0 Score | 70 | SPOT P 6.0 Score |
| Local Priority | 20 | 1 = 20 2 = 15 3 = 10 4 = 5 5 = 0 |
| Plan Consistency (project identified in a locally adopted plan) | 5 | Yes = 5 No = 0 |
| Scheduled in current STIP | 5 | Yes = 5 No = 0 |
| TOTAL | 100 | |

(2)

| HIGHWAY DIVISION NEEDS PROJECTS | | |
|---|----------------|--|
| CRITERIA | MAXIMUM POINTS | SCORE METHODOLOGY |
| SPOT P 6.0 Score | 50 | SPOT P 6.0 Score |
| Local Priority | 20 | 1 = 20 2 = 15 3 = 10 4 = 5 5 = 0 |
| Plan Consistency (project identified in a locally adopted plan) | 15 | Yes = 15 No = 0 |
| Scheduled in current STIP | 15 | Yes = 15 No = 0 |
| TOTAL | 100 | |

(2)

Project Example: If a project scores the maximum or near the maximum number of points for each criterion listed above it will rank near the top of the priority needs list and be allocated 100 points. However, if a project does not score well based on the criteria, it is not likely to be allocated 100 points.

| BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN DIVISION NEEDS PROJECTS | | |
|--|----------------|---|
| CRITERIA | MAXIMUM POINTS | SCORE METHODOLOGY |
| SPOT P 6.0 Score | 50 | SPOT P 6.0 Score |
| Local Priority | 20 | 1 = 20 2 = 15 3 = 10 4 = 5 5 = 0 |
| Project Connectivity (project provides connection to existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities) | 20 | Yes = 20 No = 0 |
| Right-of-way status | 10 | Right-of-way acquired = 10 None acquired = 0 |
| TOTAL | 100 | |

(3)

(4)

(5)

| AVIATION DIVISION NEEDS PROJECTS | | |
|---|----------------|--|
| CRITERIA | MAXIMUM POINTS | SCORE METHODOLOGY |
| SPOT P 6.0 Score X 1.6 | 80 | SPOT P 6.0 Score X 1.6 |
| Local Priority | 20 | 1 = 20 2 = 15 3 = 10 4 = 5 5 = 0 |
| TOTAL | 100 | |

| TRANSIT DIVISION NEEDS PROJECTS | | |
|--|----------------|--|
| CRITERIA | MAXIMUM POINTS | SCORE METHODOLOGY |
| SPOT P 6.0 Score X 1.6 | 80 | SPOT P 6.0 Score X 1.6 |
| Local Priority | 20 | 1 = 20 2 = 15 3 = 10 4 = 5 5 = 0 |
| TOTAL | 100 | |

| RAIL DIVISION NEEDS PROJECTS | | |
|------------------------------|----------------|--|
| CRITERIA | MAXIMUM POINTS | SCORE METHODOLOGY |
| SPOT P 6.0 Score X 1.6 | 80 | SPOT P 6.0 Score X 1.6 |
| Local Priority | 20 | 1 = 20 2 = 15 3 = 10 4 = 5 5 = 0 |
| TOTAL | 100 | |

RURAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RTAC) POINT FLEXIBILITY

The methodology shall serve as a guide for the RTAC to assign points to projects located within the High Country RPO planning jurisdiction. The RTAC will have the flexibility to assign points as the committee desires including the use of the Local Input Point (LIP) Flex Policy to transfer up to 500 points between Regional Impact and Division Needs categories. Flexing of Local Input Points between categories will be coordinated with the NCDOT Prioritization Office. Deviation from the methodology shall require justification/rationale to be made during a public meeting of the RTAC as advertised and documented to be posted on the RPO’s website.

(6)

Prioritization 6.0 Update

- The NCDOT Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT) is currently in the process of scoring all projects in the state for the prioritization 6.0 (P6.0) cycle.
- The review period of all project data and costs for scoring is scheduled for April 1 to May 31, 2021.
- The programming of Statewide Mobility projects by SPOT is scheduled for the month of August 2021.
- Solicitation of P6.0 priority ranked projects from local governments is scheduled for early September 2021.
- P6.0 schedule is subject to change.

MAY 2021 PROJECT UPDATE

(March NCBOT Amended 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: Complete
Section B: Complete
Section C: Under Construction
Section D: Complete
Section E: Under Construction

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 2022
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 | Accelerate from 2023 to 2022 (BOT Item N) |

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 |

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*

Under Construction

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 hangers 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