



## 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

Brantley Price, RTCC Chair

### **RURAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE (RTCC)**

#### **Agenda**

**November 16, 2022**

**10:00 AM**

#### **Action Items**

1. Approval of August 17, 2022 Minutes (RTCC Chair)

#### **Informational Items**

2. NCDOT Right-of-Way Unit Presentation (Heather Fulghum, NCDOT ROW Unit Manager)
3. NCDOT Project Prioritization Presentation (Dean Ledbetter PE, NCDOT Division 11 Corridor Development Engineer)
4. Draft 2024-2033 STIP & Project Development Update (David Graham)
5. Public Transit Update (Local Transit Agency Representatives)
6. Division Engineers’ Report (NCDOT Division 11 and Division 13 Representatives)
7. Transportation Planning Division Report (NCDOT Transportation Planning Representative)

#### **Other Items**

8. Committee Member Comments/Other Business (RTCC Chair)
9. Public Comment (RTCC Chair)
10. Adjournment (RTCC Chair)

***The next regularly scheduled meeting of the RTCC is February 15, 2023 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.*

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**High Country RPO**  
**Rural Transportation Coordinating Committee (RTCC)**  
**August 17, 2022**  
**Minutes**

The Rural Transportation Coordinating Committee held their quarterly meeting, August 17, 2022, at 10am in the High Country Council of Governments Board Room. The following members were present:

Allen Cook- Mitchell County	Charles Hardin- Blowing Rock Chamber
David Jackson- Boone Chamber	Matthew Levi- Ashe County
Ken Noland- Town of Wilkesboro	Christy Wood- Yancey Chamber
Craig Hughes- AppalCART	Linda Cheek- Wilkes Chamber
Brantley Price- Town of West Jefferson	Debbie Smith- Avery County Trans
Shelia Blalock- Mitchell County Transportation	Hannah Cook- NCDOT Division 13
Joe Furman- Watauga County	Darlene Butler- Town of Spruce Pine
Stephen Sparks- NCDOT Division 13	Sarah Call- Wilkes County
Sean Sizemore- NCDOT Division 11	Neal Winebarger- ASU
Kevin Rothrock- Town of Blowing Rock	Phil Trew- HCCOG
Randy Steskal- NCDOT Regional Engineer	Rick Owen- Town of Banner Elk

Guests present: Loretta Barren-FHWA NC Division, Heather Hildebrandt-NCDOT Statewide Initiatives (Zoom), Stephen Wright-Ashe County, Tylor Shelton-NCDOT Division 13 District 1, and Chris Medlin-NCDOT Division 13 District 2

The following staff members were present from High Country Council of Governments: David Graham-Transportation Planner, Cory Osborne-Director of Recovery and Resilience, and Victoria Oxentine-Communications Manager.

**Call to Order**

Chairman Brantley Price called the meeting to order.

**Approval of May 18, 2022 Minutes**

Brantley Price asked for motion for approval of the May 18, 2022 minutes. Motion was made by Ken Noland and seconded by David Jackson. Motion carried and minutes approved.

**Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Update Presentation**

Loretta Barren, Transportation Planner for USDOT Federal Highway Administration presented a slideshow on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) update. In November 2021 US Congress approved \$350 billion for the BIL. Mrs. Barren reviewed highlights of the updated BIL and new programs and grant funding available.

### **NCDOT Freight Presentation**

Heather Hildebrandt, NCDOT Statewide Initiatives Supervisor presented a slideshow via Zoom overviewing the NC Statewide Multimodal Freight Plan Update. Ms. Hildebrandt discussed the background, vision/goals, stakeholder engagement, analysis, and key takeaways/next steps of the plan update.

### **Draft 2024-2033 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Update**

David Graham explained that the Draft 2024-2033 STIP has been revised again due to the 2023 budget being signed into law on July 11, 2022. The 2023 budget increases the amount of funding available for the STIP. Mr. Graham noted that Division 11 and 13 will hold public drop-in sessions in the Fall for the Draft 2024-2033 STIP. Mr. Graham will work with town and county managers regarding Project Swaps for the STIP due to the deadline being extended. Mr. Graham highlighted regional project updates that have changed since the May 2022 meeting.

### **Public Transit Updates**

Shelia Blalock announced that Mitchell County Trans Authority is working on FY2024 grants and closing out FY2022. Craig Hughes discussed an AppalCART EV bus coming soon.

### **Division Engineers' Report**

Sean Sizemore gave updates for Division 11 and Hannah Cook gave updates for Division 13.

### **Transportation Planning Division Update**

Pam Cook was unable to attend the meeting, therefore David Graham presented the NCDOT TPD Newsletter and noted that Pam has taken a different position within NCDOT. James Upchurch will be the interim HCPRO TBD Coordinator until the position is filled.

### **Committee Member Comments/Other Business**

Sarah Call announced that the Wilkes County Commissioners have passed a resolution for future interstate designation. David Graham noted RTAC membership terms that will be up in December 2022.

### **Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

### **Adjournment**

Brantley Price adjourned the meeting with there being no other business.

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Brantley Price, Chair

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David Graham, Secretary

# NOVEMBER 2022 PROJECT UPDATE

(DRAFT 2024-2033 STIP)

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## HIGHWAY PROJECTS

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### **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: Complete  
Section D: Complete  
Section E: Under Construction

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

**Description:** *Upgrade roadway.*

Right-of-Way 2023  
Construction 2025

### **American Emergency Vehicles Lane, Northwest Drive (HA-0006): NC 88 to Benfield Drive and American Emergency Vehicles Lane from Northwest Drive to American Emergency Vehicles Facility – Ashe County**

**Description:** *Widen roadway and install signal at NC 88 and Northwest Drive.*

Right-of-way 2023  
Construction: 2024

### **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 2023

**NC 105 (R-2566B): NC 105, Clarks Creek Road to NC 105 Bypass (Boone) – Watauga County**

**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 and R-2566BB – Realignment with Old Shulls Mill Road).*

Section B:	Right-of-Way	2022
	Construction	2025
Section BA:	Construction	In progress
Section BB	Construction	2023

**US 421 (Daniel Boone Parkway) (R-5915B): NC 105 to US 221/321 South of Boone – Watauga County**

**Description:** Construct freeway on new location south of Boone.

Right-of-way	2028
Construction:	2031

**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	2027
Construction	2030

**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            2022  
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

**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.*

Construction            2023

**NC 268 (R-5906), From SR 1966 (Airport Road) to Four Lanes West of SR 2026 Austin Traphill Road – Wilkes County**

**Description:** *Modernize Roadway*

Right-of-Way            2026  
Construction            2029

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***PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS***

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**Yancey County Transit Facility (TA-6723)**

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

Construction                    2023

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***BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PROJECTS***

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**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                    2022

Construction                    2023

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

***Description:** Construct multi-use path.*

Right-of-Way                    2024

Construction                    2025

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***AVIATION PROJECTS***

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**Ashe County Airport (AV-5848)**

***Description:** Construct apron expansions*

Under Construction

**Wilkes County Airport (AV-5894)**

***Description:** Extend runway to 7,000 feet*

Right-of-Way                    2023

Construction                    2024