



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

Kevin Rothrock, RTCC Chair

RURAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RTAC)

Agenda **November 19, 2025** **2:00 PM**

Action Items

1. Approval of August 20, 2025 Minutes (RTAC Chair)
2. Approval of Functional Classification Updates (David Graham/RTAC Chair)
3. Selection of RTAC Chair and Vice Chair (David Graham/RTAC Chair)

Informational Items

4. RTAC Membership Terms Update (David Graham)
5. NCDOT Feasibility Studies Unit Presentation (Matt Quesenberry PE, NCDOT Feasibility Studies Unit Manager)
6. Prioritization 8.0 Update (David Graham)
7. Project Development Update (David Graham)
8. Division Engineers Report (NCDOT Division 11 and Division 13 Representatives)
9. Transportation Planning Division Report (NCDOT Transportation Planning Representative)

Other Items

10. Committee Member Comments/Other Business (RTAC Chair)
11. Public Comment (RTAC Chair)
12. Adjournment (RTAC Chair)

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the RTAC is February 18, 2026 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 Advisory Committee (RTAC)
August 20, 2025
Minutes**

The Rural Transportation Advisory Committee held their quarterly meeting on August 20, 2025 in the High Country Council of Governments Board Room in Boone. The following members were present:

Brenda Lyerly – Town of Banner Elk
John Shepherd – Town of Jefferson
Melissa Pickett – Town of Blowing Rock
Mark Ledford – Yancey County
Meagan Phillips – NCBOT

Dale Blevins – Mitchell County
Marc Hauser – Town of North Wilkesboro
Rocky Buchanan – Town of Spruce Pine
Tim Futrelle – Town of Boone

Guests Present: Michael Poe – NCDOT Div. 11, Doug Phillips – NCDOT Div. 13, Stephen Sparks – NCDOT Div. 13, Pam Cook – NCDOT, David Wayne – NCDOT Div.11, Reuben Crummy – NCDOT TPD, Randy Steskal – NCDOT ATE, Luke Bender – NCDOT.

Staff Present: David Graham - Transportation Planner, Chris Grubb - Director of Planning & Development, Julie Wiggins – Executive Director, Victoria Oxentine – Communications Manager.

Call to Order

Vice Chairwoman Brenda Lyerly called the meeting to order and read the Ethics Statement.

Approval of Minutes

Tim Futrelle moved to accept the minutes of the May 21, 2025 meeting, seconded by John Shepherd. Motion carried.

Approval of Prioritization 8.0 New Projects List

David Graham, Transportation Planner presented the Prioritization 8.0 New Projects List for the region, which includes 17 highway, 10 bike/ped, and 6 aviation projects that have been submitted. John Shepherd made a motion to approve the Prioritization 8.0 New Projects List. Mark Ledford seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Functional Classification Updates

David Graham, Transportation Planner presented the Functional Classification Updates after the evaluation of average daily traffic, length, speed, and other characteristics. Mr. Graham explained that RPO and TPD staff identified roadways that needed upgrades or could stay the same in the region. Mark Ledford made a motion to approve the Functional Classification Updates. Melissa Pickett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

NCDOT Project Prioritization Process Presentation

Stephen Sparks, Division 13 Corridor Development Engineer, presented a slideshow of the broad overview of the NCDOT Project Prioritization Process noting that we are currently in the project submittal stage of Prioritization 8.0. Mr. Sparks discussed the CTP, Prioritization, STIP, and funding formula for how projects score for funding.

NCDOT Resiliency Presentation

Pam Cook, Statewide Initiatives Engineer, presented a slideshow outlining the vision, goals, and objectives of the Resilience Taskforce in times of need. Mrs. Cook discussed the tools used, like flood water gauges, mobile alerts, and asset management during times of crisis. Mrs. Cook also noted that there will be a resilience section added to future CTPs.

Prioritization 8.0 Update

David Graham, Transportation Planner discussed the schedule and timeline for P8.0 and nine potential “Express Designs” to assist with feasibility and more accurate estimates.

Project Development Update

David Graham highlighted important Project Development updates.

Division Engineers’ Report (Division 11 and 13 Representatives)

Michael Poe and David Wayne discussed Division 11 projects and updates. Doug Phillips discussed Division 13 projects and updates.

Transportation Planning Division Report

Reuben Crummy, NCDOT TPD reviewed his newsletter and important upcoming events for the Region 4 Travel Demand Model.

Committee Member Comments/Other Business

Tim Futrelle thanked all of the NCDOT staff for their hard work post Helene.

There being no public comments, Mark Ledford moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Tim Futrelle. The meeting adjourned at 3:09 PM.

Woodie Young, Chair

David Graham, Secretary

MEMORANDUM

To: High Country RPO RTCC/RTAC

From: David Graham, High Country RPO Transportation Planner

Re: Additional Statewide Functional Classification Updates

Functional classification is the process of grouping streets and highways into classes according to the character of service they are intended to provide and include evaluation of annual average daily traffic (AADT) data, speed limit, length, and other roadway characteristics. Accurate roadway functional classification ensures that federal aid funds are allocated where they are needed most.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Transportation Planning Division (TPD) is responsible for processing updates to the Federal Functional Classification System in North Carolina every 10 years in partnership with planning organizations (MPO's & RPO's) for submission to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for approval.

Functional classification for roadways is categorized into the 7 classifications noted below:

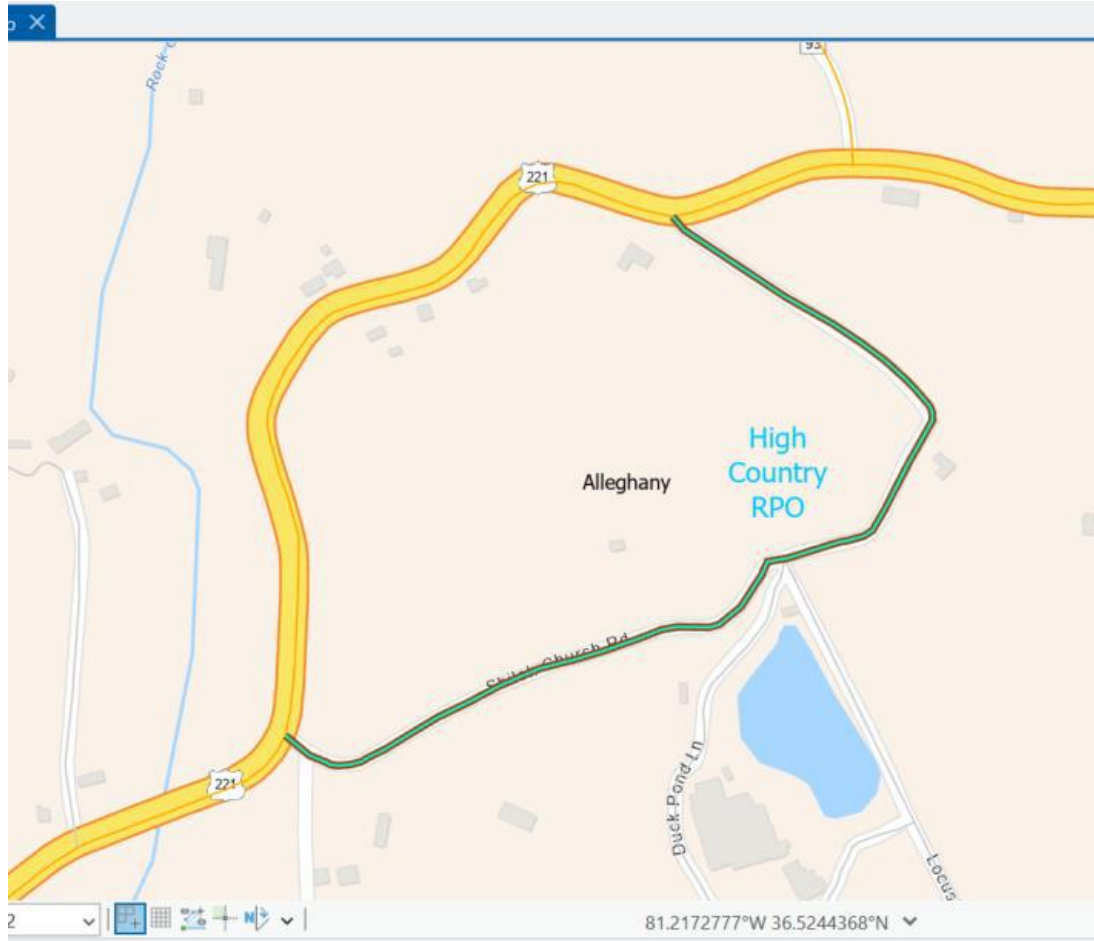
- 1 – Interstate – Principal Arterial
- 2 – Freeway – Principal Arterial
- 3 – Other – Principal Arterial
- 4 – Minor Arterial
- 5 – Major Collector
- 6 – Minor Collector
- 7 – Local

For the High Country RPO, NCDOT TPD identified additional roadways on the attached *2025 High Country RPO Functional Classification Updates* list and map for functional classification updates. Of the 3 additional updates, 2 roadways identified for updates are to be upgraded and 1 is to be downgraded due to very low traffic volume and narrow lanes. NCDOT TPD is requesting approval of the additional updates.

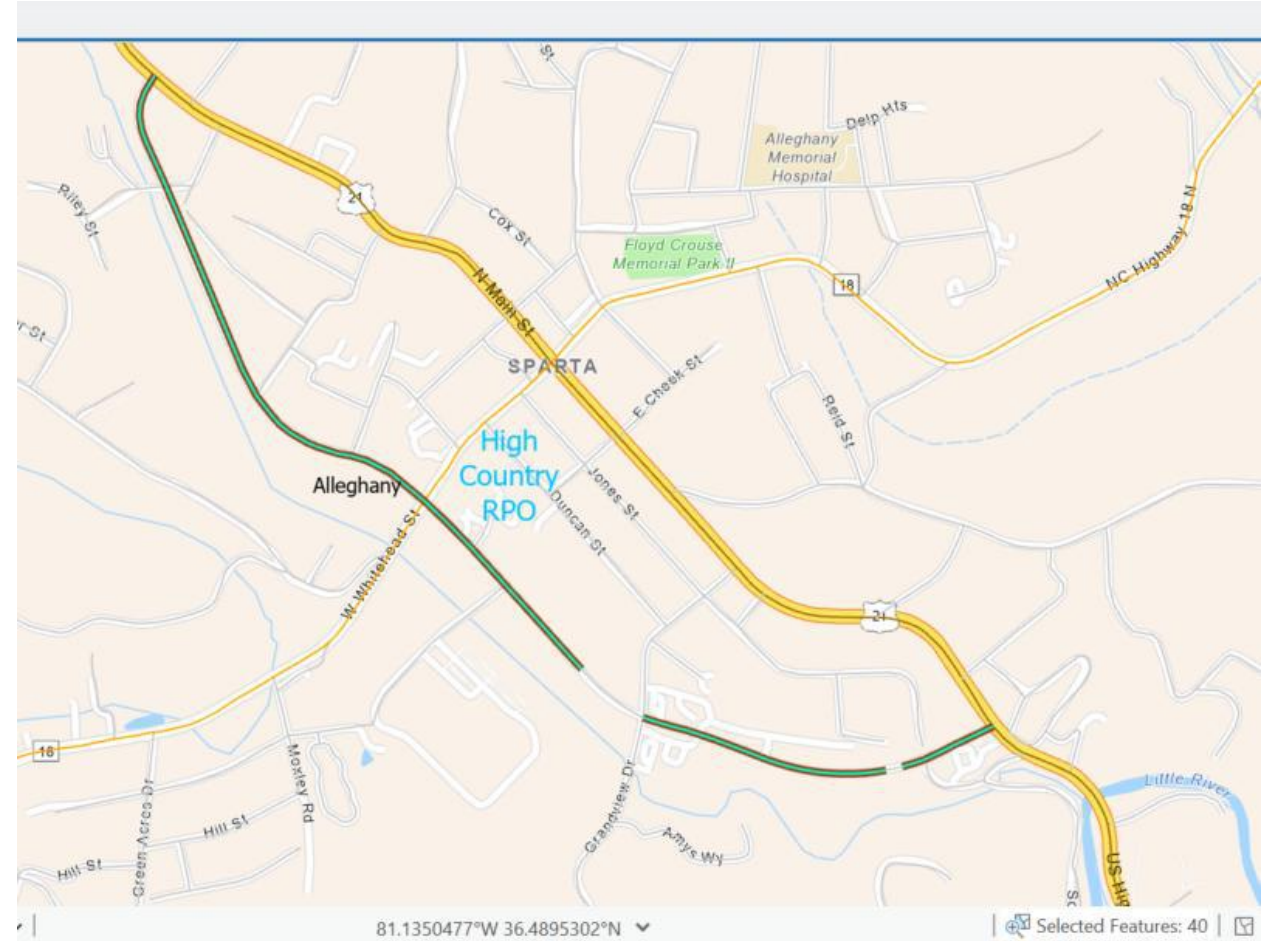
2025 High Country RPO Functional Classification Updates

Request ID	MPO/RPO	Roadway	FromRoad	ToRoad	ProposedFC	ExistingFC	AADT	SpeedLimit	Descriptions	County
4	HCRPO	S. Sparta Pkwy	US 21	NC 18	5 - Major Collector	7 - Local	1700-2,300-2,500	35	Upgrade - Truck traffic and used as a bypass for thru traffic	Alleghany
4	HCRPO	S. Sparta Pkwy	NC 18	US 21	5 - Major Collector	7 - Local	3,100-3,500	35	Upgrade - Truck traffic and used as a bypass for thru traffic	Alleghany
5	HCRPO	Shiloh Church Rd (SR 1165)	US 221	US 221	7 - Local	5 - Major Collector	50	55	Downgrade - Traffic volumes are very low, narrow, and unpaved	Alleghany

Functional Reclassification Review



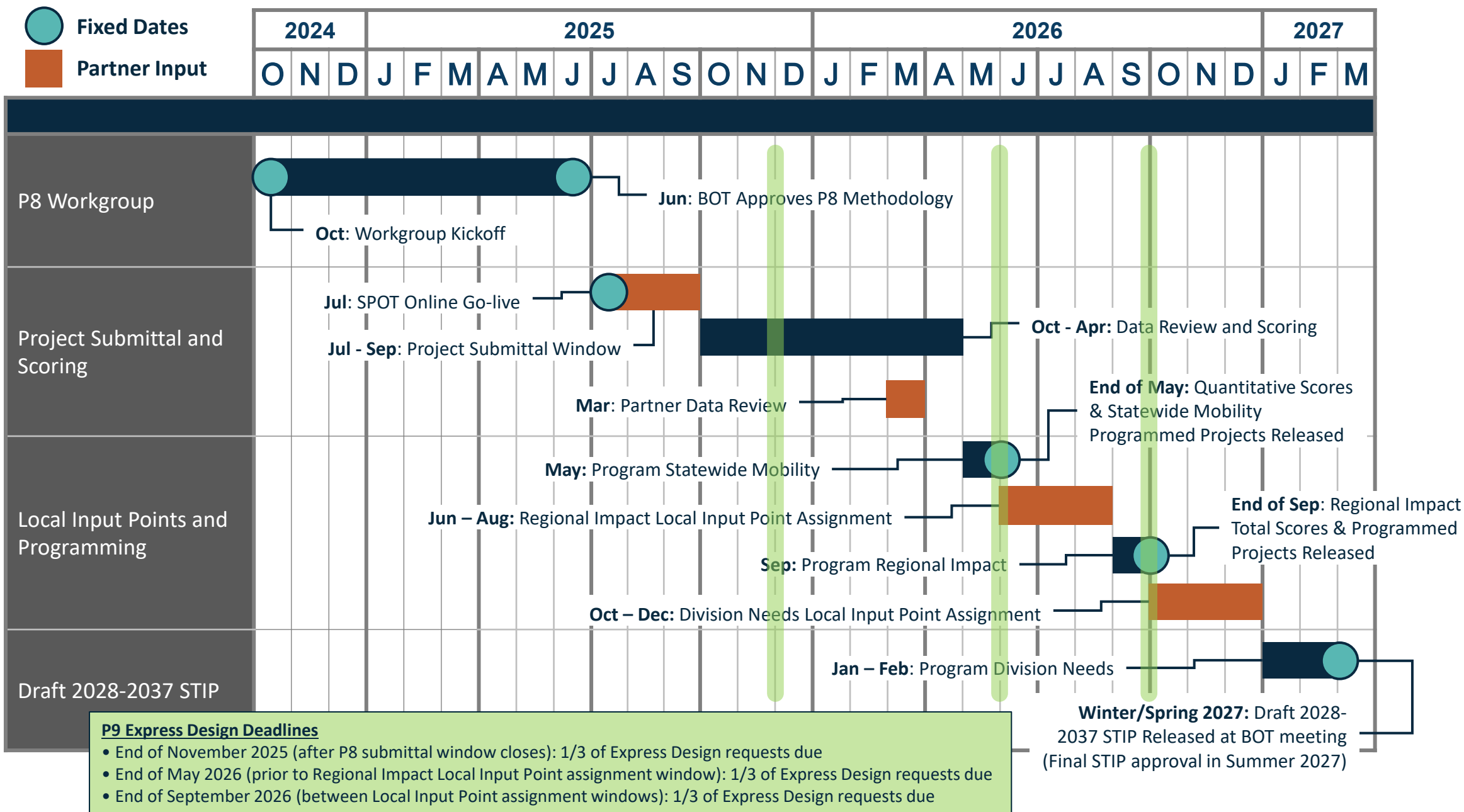
Shiloh Church Road (SR 1165) – Downgrade from a Major Collector (5) to a Local Road (7).



US 21 Bypass (Truck Route) – Upgrade from a Local Road (7) to a Major Collector (5).

(with P9 Express Design deadlines)

October 2024
(format updated July 2025)



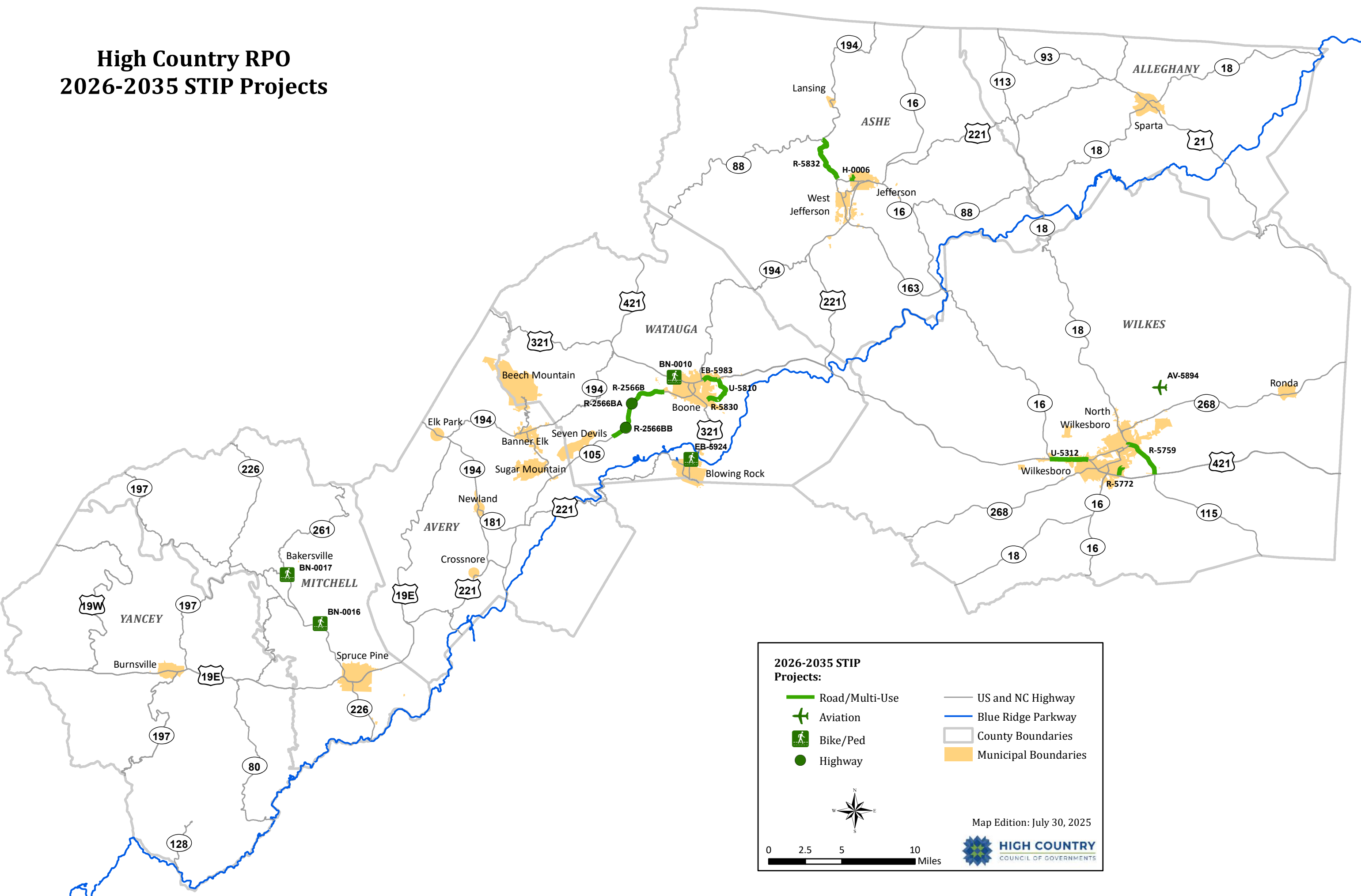
November 2025 Project Development Update

COUNTY	ROUTE	DESCRIPTION	MODE	PROJECT ID	RIGHT-OF-WAY SCHEDULE	CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE
ASHE	NORTHWEST DRIVE, AEV LANE	NORTHWEST DRIVE FROM NC 88 TO BENFIELD DRIVE AND AMERICAN EMERGENCY VEHICLES LANE FROM NORTHWEST DRIVE TO AMERICAN EMERGENCY VEHICLES FACILITY. WIDEN ROAD TO 12' LANES.	Highway	HA-0006	2025	2025
ASHE	NC 88	NC 88 TO NC 194. UPGRADE ROADWAY.	Highway	R-5832	2025	2028
MITCHELL	SR 1193 (LEDGER SCHOOL ROAD)	NC 226 TO MITCHELL HIGH SCHOOL. CONSTRUCT SIDEWALK.	Bike & Ped	BN-0016	2025	2026
MITCHELL	SR 1260	NORTH OF SR 1278 (BAKERS LANE) TO WILLIS COVE ROAD. CONSTRUCT SIDEWALK.	Bike & Ped	BN-0017		2025
WATAUGA	TOWN OF BLOWING ROCK	MIDDLE FORK GREENWAY, SECTION 1. CONSTRUCT GREENWAY. NC FLAP BLOWING ROCK 321(1).	Bike & Ped	EB-5924	2025	2026

COUNTY	ROUTE	DESCRIPTION	MODE	PROJECT ID	RIGHT-OF-WAY SCHEDULE	CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE
WATAUGA	US 421/ US 321 (WEST KING STREET)	SR 1180 (POPLAR GROVE CONNECTOR ROAD) TO WESTWOOD APARTMENTS IN BOONE. CONSTRUCT SIDEWALK AND OTHER CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS.	Bike & Ped	BN-0010	2026	2027
WATAUGA	US 421 (KING STREET) MULTI-USE PATH	GROVE STREET TO BROOKSHIRE ROAD. CONSTRUCT MULTI-USE PATH.	Bike & Ped	EB-5983	2026	2027
WATAUGA	NC 105	SR 1136 (CLARKS CREEK ROAD) TO SR 1107 (NC 105 BYPASS) IN BOONE.	Highway	R-2566B	2022	2031
WATAUGA	NC 105	CONSTRUCT NEW BRIDGE OVER WATAUGA RIVER AND LEFT-TURN LANE AT SR 1112 (BROADSTONE ROAD).	Highway	R-2566BA		Under Construction
WATAUGA	NC 105	SR 1658 (OLD SHULLS MILL ROAD) INTERSECTION. REALIGN SR 1658 (OLD SHULLS MILL ROAD).	Highway	R-2566BB		2025
WATAUGA	SR 1522 (DEERFIELD ROAD)	STATE FARM ROAD TO SR 1523 (WILSON RIDGE ROAD). UPGRADE ROADWAY.	Highway	R-5830	2026	2028

COUNTY	ROUTE	DESCRIPTION	MODE	PROJECT ID	RIGHT-OF-WAY SCHEDULE	CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE
WATAUGA	SR 1514 (BAMBOO ROAD); SR 1523 (WILSON RIDGE)	US 421/US 221 TO SR 1522 (DEERFIELD ROAD). MODERNIZE ROADWAY.	Highway	U-5810	2022	2026
WILKES	WILKES COUNTY AIRPORT (UKF)	EXTEND RUNWAY TO 7,000 FEET.	Aviation	AV-5894	2026	2027
WILKES	SR 1001 (OAKWOODS ROAD)	US 421 TO FOREST HILLS DRIVE. UPGRADE ROADWAY.	Highway	R-5772	2026	2027
Wilkes	NC 115	WIDEN EXISTING ROADWAY FROM US 421 TO 2ND STREET	Highway	R-5759	2022	2027
WILKES	US 421	NC 16 TO US 421 BUSINESS. CONVERT EXISTING ROADWAY TO REDUCED CONFLICT INTERSECTIONS AND ADD SERVICE ROADS.	Highway	U-5312		Under Construction

High Country RPO 2026-2035 STIP Projects



2026-2035 STIP
Projects:

Road/Multi-Use

Aviation

Bike/Ped

Highway

US and NC Highway

Blue Ridge Parkway

County Boundaries

Municipal Boundaries

N
W
E
S

0

2.5

5

10

Miles

Map Edition: July 30, 2025

HIGH COUNTRY

COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

NCDOT TPD NEWS



NCDOT TPD HCRPO Newsletter

November 2025

Traffic Forecasts (TF)

A Project Level Traffic Forecasting is an essential part of the planning process. There are no traffic forecasts currently underway in the RPO area. There is a map that provides information about past and current traffic forecasts: [NCDOT Traffic Forecasting Data Map](#)

"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

IMD Multimodal Updates Webinar

NCDOT's Integrated Mobility Division (IMD) held its quarterly [Multimodal Updates Webinars](#) on November 5th, 2025 at 11:00am. The meeting was designed to inform some of our partners on planning, policy, and programming initiatives that our Division is currently leading. Webinar slides and a recording have been uploaded at the link provided. We would like to welcome **Nikki Abija Elsheimer** as the Mountains Regional Planner for Integration Mobility Division (IMD).

High Country Travel Demand Model (TDM) and Watauga County CTP Update

The High Country TDM Team and NCDOT-TPD will be presenting an update on the High Country TDM and has initiated the Watauga County CTP, which will be presented at the HCRPO RTCC/ RTAC meetings on November 19th in the HCCOG Boardroom. We would like to thank you all for the local participation and support in this process.



The Alleghany County CTP

The Alleghany County CTP has been adopted by the NC Board of Transportation on November 6th, 2025. Congratulations and thank you for your patience during this CTP process. Please see link: [connect.ncdot.gov/projects/planning/Pages/CTP-Details.aspx?study_id=Alleghany County](https://connect.ncdot.gov/projects/planning/Pages/CTP-Details.aspx?study_id=Alleghany%20County)

The Ashe County CTP

The Ashe County CTP has been adopted by the NC Board of Transportation in November 6th, 2025. Congratulations and thank you for your patience during this CTP process. Please see link: [connect.ncdot.gov/projects/planning/Pages/CTP-Details.aspx?study_id=Ashe County](https://connect.ncdot.gov/projects/planning/Pages/CTP-Details.aspx?study_id=Ashe%20County)

Contact Us

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Upcoming	Date
Federal FY26 Begins	October 1, 2025
TPD provides MPO/RPO planning fund allocations for FY27	November 1, 2025
1st Quarter invoice and work summary due	November 14, 2025

NCDOT Statewide Plans:

To learn more, click on the following links or go to ncdot.gov and search using names in [blue](#) unless otherwise noted:

- [NC Moves 2050 Plan](#)
- [NCDOT Strategic Transportation Corridors](#)
- [NCDOT Comprehensive State Rail Plan \(25-Year Vision\)](#) Currently being updated
- [NC Statewide Multimodal Freight Plan \(2023\)](#)
- [NCDOT: Integrated Mobility Division - Great Trails State Plan](#)
- [NCDOT: Integrated Mobility Division - Statewide Strategic Plan](#)
- [NCDOT Resilience Strategy Report \(2021\)](#)
- [Statewide Pedestrian & Bicycle Plan \(2013\)](#)
- [Strategic Highway Safety Plan \(2024\)](#)

Other Plans:

- [N.C. Climate Risk Assessment and Resilience Plan by Department of Environmental Quality](#) (or Google search: 2020-Climate-Risk-Assessment-and-Resilience-Plan.pdf)
- [NC FIRST Commission](#)

Helpful Links:

To learn more, click on the following links or go to ncdot.gov and search using names in [blue](#) unless otherwise noted:

- NCDOT home page—ncdot.gov
- Real-Time Traffic—drivenc.gov | [North Carolina Traffic & Travel Information](#)
- Report a pothole—[NCDOT Contact Us Form](#) (ncdot.gov & search “Report a pothole”)
- NCDOT: State Transportation Improvement Program - ncdot.gov/sti
- Interactive Bicycle Routes Map—<https://www.ncdot.gov/bikeped/ncbikeways/default.aspx>—
- Links to all traffic count data information - [Traffic Survey Group \(connect.ncdot.gov & then search\)](#)
- NCDOT Interactive Traffic Volume Map—[Traffic Volume Maps \(ncdot.gov\)](#)
- Traffic Safety Data & Engineering—[NCDOT: Traffic Safety Data & Engineering](#)
- Federal Functional Classification Map—[NCDOT Functional Class Map \(ncdot.maps.arcgis.com\)](#)
- NCDOT Flickr Account: [NCDOTcommunications | Flickr](#)