



# Western Piedmont Council of Governments

Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization

## Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)

Wednesday, June 24, 2026, 1:00 PM

WPCOG Offices—1880 2nd Ave NW

[wpcog.org/metropolitan-planning-org](http://wpcog.org/metropolitan-planning-org)

| Agenda Item                                                               | Presenter                        | Attachment                     | Action                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Call to Order /Introductions                                              | Laurie LoCicero                  |                                |                              |
| Consent Agenda Items:                                                     |                                  |                                |                              |
| A. Minutes of May 27, 2026 Meeting                                        | Laurie LoCicero                  | <a href="#">Attachment I</a>   | Approve Consent Agenda Items |
| B. Transportation Improvement Program Revisions for Release               |                                  |                                |                              |
| Transportation Improvement Program Revisions for Approval                 | Averi Ritchie                    | <a href="#">Attachment II</a>  | Adopt via Resolution         |
| Locally Administered Project Program: Spring 2026 Project Applications    | Daniel Odom                      | <a href="#">Attachment III</a> | Adopt via Resolution         |
| Results of the GHMPO Federal Recertification Review                       | Averi Ritchie                    | <a href="#">Attachment IV</a>  | Discussion                   |
| 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan - Goals, Policies, and Vision Draft | Averi Ritchie                    | <a href="#">Attachment V</a>   | Presentation                 |
| Express Design Project Submittals & Statewide Tier Results                | Averi Ritchie & Casey Fullbright | <a href="#">Attachment VI</a>  | Presentation                 |
| NCDOT Updates                                                             |                                  |                                |                              |
| Division 11                                                               | Sean Sizemore                    |                                |                              |
| Division 12                                                               | Travis Jordan                    |                                |                              |
| Division 13                                                               | Doug Phillips                    |                                |                              |
| Transportation Planning Division                                          | Reuben Crummy                    |                                |                              |
| Integrated Mobility Division                                              | Nikki Elsheimer                  |                                |                              |
| Reminders                                                                 | Averi Ritchie                    |                                |                              |
| Public Comment / Announcements                                            | Laurie LoCicero                  |                                |                              |
| Adjournment                                                               |                                  |                                |                              |
| Next Meeting: July 22, 2026                                               | Laurie LoCicero                  |                                |                              |



# GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)

1880 2nd Avenue NW, PO Box 9026

Hickory, NC 28603



## MINUTES

### GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (GHMPO)

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TCC)

Wednesday, May 27, 2026 @ 1:00 PM In-person meeting and via online participation

| Present    |           |                   | Absent     |             |                        |
|------------|-----------|-------------------|------------|-------------|------------------------|
| First Name | Last Name | Representing      | First Name | Last Name   | Representing           |
| John       | Marshall  | City of Hickory   | Erik       | Schlichting | City of Conover        |
| Blake      | Wright    | Town of Maiden    | Wendy      | Smith       | Town of Morganton      |
| Laurie     | LoCicero  | Catawba County    | Dustin     | Milsap      | Town of Sawmills       |
| Rick       | Justice   | Town of Rhodhiss  | Wilson     | Elliott     | City of Hickory        |
| Jon        | Greer     | Town of Hudson    | Caroline   | Kone        | City of Hickory        |
| Michael    | Rapp      | Town of Valdese   | Randy      | Williams    | City of Newton         |
| Hannah     | Williams  | City of Lenoir    | Michael    | Berley      | City of Morganton      |
| Logan      | Shook     | Town of Hildebran | Patrick    | Reach       | Alexander County       |
| Danny      | Hipps     | Town of Catawba   | Brian      | Burgess     | Alexander/Taylorsville |
| Patrick    | Dickinson | City of Morganton | Patrick    | Creech      | Alexander County       |
| Bryce      | Carter    | City of Claremont | Randy      | Feirabend   | Town of Cajah's Mtn    |
| Bradley    | Kirkley   | Burke County      | Chris      | Timberlake  | Catawba County         |
| Steve      | Miller    | City of Hickory   | Greg       | Wilson      | Town of Granite Falls  |
| Karen      | Dickerson | City of Hickory   | Nathan     | Hester      | Town of Taylorsville   |
|            |           |                   | Shelly     | Stevens     | Caldwell County        |

|                                       |  |  |                                   |         |                       |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|---------|-----------------------|
|                                       |  |  | Wayne                             | Rash    | Caldwell County       |
|                                       |  |  | Jon                               | Hogan   | City of Lenoir        |
|                                       |  |  | Bill                              | Carroll | Town of Drexel        |
|                                       |  |  | Amy                               | Bucknam | Alexander County      |
|                                       |  |  | Bonnie                            | Caudie  | Town of Gamewell      |
|                                       |  |  | Daniel                            | Cobb    | Town of Granite Falls |
| <b><u>WPCOG, FHWA &amp; GUEST</u></b> |  |  | <b><u>NC DOT STAFF</u></b>        |         |                       |
| Averi Ritchie – WPCOG                 |  |  | Sean Sizemore – Div 11            |         |                       |
| Casey Fullbright – WPCOG              |  |  | Travis Chrisawn – Div 11          |         |                       |
| Daniel Odom – WPCOG                   |  |  | Travis Jordan – Div 12            |         |                       |
| Katelyn Smith – WPCOG                 |  |  | Stephen Sparks – Div 13           |         |                       |
| Rusty Bost – Labella Associates       |  |  | Reuben Crummy – NC DOT TPD        |         |                       |
|                                       |  |  | Jason Myers – NCDOT Rail Division |         |                       |
|                                       |  |  | Nikki Elsheimer – IMD             |         |                       |
|                                       |  |  | Steven Cannon - NCDOT             |         |                       |
|                                       |  |  |                                   |         |                       |
|                                       |  |  |                                   |         |                       |

**Call to Order/ Introductions:** Chair LoCicero called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM and welcomed all present. Introductions were conducted, followed by the Introduction of online viewers.

**Action Items:**

**I. Approval of Consent Agenda:** Chair LoCicero called for a motion to approve the consent agenda, which included the Minutes of the April 22, 2026 meeting and the Transportation Improvement Program Revisions for Release. Upon a motion made by Mr. Rapp and a second by Mrs. Williams, the Committee approved the consent agenda.

**II. Transportation Improvement Program Revisions for Approval:** Ms. Ritchie presented the Transportation Improvement Program Revisions for Approval. Upon a motion made by Mr. Wright and seconded by Mrs. Williams, the committee approved the revisions.

**III. Locally Administered Project Program: Spring 2026 Project Applications:** Mr. Odom presented the Locally Administered Project Program (LAPP) Spring 2026 Call for New Projects. He noted the MPO receives roughly \$3.5 million annually in federal transportation grant funding. The Spring Call received three applications: two from the City of Hickory (5th Street NE and 10th Ave Drive NE Intersection Improvements; 13th Ave Drive SE Connector) and one from the City of Lenoir (Harper Avenue Streetscape). Total requested project funding is \$17.237 million, with a target investment of \$6.5 million. The presentation was delivered to the committee to release the project applications for public comment.

**IV. WNC Passenger Rail Update:** Mr. Myers provided an update on the status of WNC passenger rail. He reported that passenger rail ridership is currently 59% higher than pre-COVID levels in 2019. The proposed route would run from Charlotte to Asheville, keeping the maintenance facility in Charlotte to allow for faster implementation without the need to construct a new facility. The service is projected to provide 1.5 round trips per day utilizing 3 trains. He noted that match funding could possibly be supplied through STI, and the option of renting trains rather than purchasing them is being considered to reduce capital costs. A Service Development Plan is anticipated to be complete in two years or sooner.

**V. 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Introduction:** Ms. Ritchie introduced the 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) to the committee via presentation. She explained that the MTP is a federally required, fiscally constrained, long-range planning document with a 20+ year horizon that guides multimodal transportation investments across the region. The next update is underway, with final plan adoption scheduled for July 2028.

#### **NCDOT Update –**

**Division 11:** Mr. Sizemore stated that there were no new updates.

**Division 12:** Mr. Jordan reported that there were no new updates.

**Division 13:** Mr. Sparks reported that there is no new project development, but noted construction updates on three projects that Division 12 had picked up. This includes pavement and patching at 9th Ave Dr NW in Burke and Rutherford, a bridge replacement over the NS railroad in Morganton, and resurfacing work in Burke County.

**NCDOT-TPD:** Mr. Crummy provided an update regarding the TPD Newsletter.

**NCDOT-IMD:** Ms. Elsheimer reported on a multimodal planning grant up for approval for a City of Hickory project. She also noted that the Alexander Track Plan was approved. Additionally, she shared that new staff has joined and regional planning is now fully staffed.

**Reminders:** Ms. Ritchie reminded the committee about the recent audit recommendations and formally introduced Katelyn, the new LAPP planner.

**Public Comment/Announcements:** None

**Adjournment:** Upon a motion made by Mr. Wright and seconded by Mrs. Williams, Chair LoCicero adjourned the meeting at 1:55 PM. The next meeting will be Wednesday, June 24, 2026.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Greater Hickory MPO/TCC Chair

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Averi Ritchie, TAC Secretary

**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION  
GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
TCC/TAC**

**MEETING DATE:** June 24, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Transportation Improvement Program Revisions for Release

**PRESENTER:** Averil Ritchie, Transportation Planning Director

**ATTACHMENTS:** Transportation Improvement Program Revisions for Release

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) revisions include modifications and amendments to regional and statewide transportation projects. STIP revisions are released for public comment and approved following a 30 day public comment period by TAC. All approved revisions are submitted for Board of Transportation approval. Modifications and revisions often include funding and fiscal year changes. Revisions are released monthly by NCDOT.

**BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:** Release for public comment.

**Suggested Motion:** *Approval to release for public comment*

**REVISIONS TO THE 2026-2035 STIP  
HIGHWAY PROGRAM**

STATEWIDE PROJECT

**STIP DELETIONS**

|                                                              |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                      |              |                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TC-0003<br>STATEWIDE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>PUBLIC TRANS | - STATEWIDE PROJECT | NCDOT; VARIOUS LOCATIONS, FUNDING FOR 5311(B) CAPITAL FUNDING FOR RURAL PROJECTS.<br><b><u>REMOVE PROJECT AT THE REQUEST OF THE INTEGRATED MOBILITY DIVISION.</u></b>                | CAPITAL      | FY 2023 - \$137,000 (S)<br>FY 2023 - \$137,000 (L)<br>FY 2023 - <u>\$1,097,000</u> (5311)<br>\$1,371,000                                 |
| TC-0005<br>STATEWIDE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>PUBLIC TRANS | - STATEWIDE PROJECT | STATEWIDE; VARIOUS LOCATIONS, FUNDING FOR 5339(B) DISCRETIONARY GRANT FOR FACILITY CONSTRUCTION.<br><b><u>REMOVE PROJECT AT THE REQUEST OF THE INTEGRATED MOBILITY DIVISION.</u></b> | CONSTRUCTION | FY 2022 - \$750,000 (L)<br>FY 2022 - <u>\$3,000,000</u> (5339)<br>\$3,750,000                                                            |
| TC-0006<br>STATEWIDE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>PUBLIC TRANS | - STATEWIDE PROJECT | STATEWIDE; VARIOUS LOCATIONS, FUNDING FOR 5339(B) DISCRETIONARY GRANT FOR FACILITY CONSTRUCTION.<br><b><u>REMOVE PROJECT AT THE REQUEST OF THE INTEGRATED MOBILITY DIVISION.</u></b> | CONSTRUCTION | FY 2021 - \$84,000 (L)<br>FY 2021 - \$335,000 (5339)<br>FY 2022 - \$300,000 (L)<br>FY 2022 - <u>\$1,100,000</u> (5339)<br>\$1,819,000    |
| TC-0007<br>STATEWIDE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>PUBLIC TRANS | - STATEWIDE PROJECT | STATEWIDE; VARIOUS LOCATIONS, FUNDING FOR 5339(B) DISCRETIONARY GRANT FOR FACILITY CONSTRUCTION.<br><b><u>REMOVE PROJECT AT THE REQUEST OF THE INTEGRATED MOBILITY DIVISION.</u></b> | CAPITAL      | FY 2021 - \$297,000 (L)<br>FY 2021 - \$1,189,000 (5339)<br>FY 2023 - \$490,000 (L)<br>FY 2023 - <u>\$2,000,000</u> (5339)<br>\$3,976,000 |

\* INDICATES FEDERAL AMENDMENT

Thursday, June 4, 2026

**REVISIONS TO THE 2026-2035 STIP  
HIGHWAY PROGRAM**

STATEWIDE PROJECT

**STIP DELETIONS**

|                                                              |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TC-0008<br>STATEWIDE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>PUBLIC TRANS | - STATEWIDE PROJECT | STATEWIDE; VARIOUS LOCATIONS, FUNDING FOR 5339(B) DISCRETIONARY GRANT FOR FACILITY CONSTRUCTION.<br><b><u>REMOVE PROJECT AT THE REQUEST OF THE INTEGRATED MOBILITY DIVISION.</u></b>                        | CONSTRUCTION<br><br>CAPITAL | FY 2025 - \$100,000 (L)<br>FY 2025 - \$400,000 (5339)<br>FY 2023 - \$1,500,000 (L)<br>FY 2023 - \$5,600,000 (5339)<br>FY 2024 - \$875,000 (L)<br>FY 2024 - \$350,000 (5339)<br>\$8,825,000        |
| TC-0010<br>STATEWIDE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>PUBLIC TRANS | - STATEWIDE PROJECT | STATEWIDE; VARIOUS LOCATIONS, FUNDING FOR 5339(B) DISCRETIONARY GRANT FOR FACILITY CONSTRUCTION.<br><b><u>REMOVE PROJECT AT THE REQUEST OF THE INTEGRATED MOBILITY DIVISION.</u></b>                        | CONSTRUCTION                | FY 2023 - \$1,000,000 (L)<br>FY 2023 - \$4,000,000 (5339)<br>FY 2024 - \$900,000 (L)<br>FY 2024 - \$3,600,000 (5339)<br>FY 2025 - \$1,400,000 (L)<br>FY 2025 - \$4,200,000 (5339)<br>\$15,100,000 |
| TC-0011<br>STATEWIDE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>PUBLIC TRANS | - STATEWIDE PROJECT | NCDOT; VARIOUS LOCATIONS, FUNDING FOR 5339(B) DISCRETIONARY GRANT FOR FACILITY CONSTRUCTION.<br><b><u>REMOVE PROJECT AT THE REQUEST OF THE INTEGRATED MOBILITY DIVISION.</u></b>                            | CONSTRUCTION<br>CAPITAL     | FY 2023 - \$719,000 (5339)<br>FY 2021 - \$598,000 (L)<br>FY 2021 - \$2,391,000 (5339)<br>FY 2022 - \$1,700,000 (L)<br>FY 2022 - \$4,000,000 (5339)<br>\$9,408,000                                 |
| TC-0012<br>STATEWIDE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>PUBLIC TRANS | - STATEWIDE PROJECT | STATEWIDE; VARIOUS LOCATIONS, FUNDING FOR 5339(B) DISCRETIONARY GRANT TO PURCHASE ELECTRIC BUSES AND CHARGING STATIONS.<br><b><u>REMOVE PROJECT AT THE REQUEST OF THE INTEGRATED MOBILITY DIVISION.</u></b> | CAPITAL                     | FY 2024 - \$625,000 (L)<br>FY 2024 - \$2,500,000 (5339)<br>\$3,125,000                                                                                                                            |

\* INDICATES FEDERAL AMENDMENT

Thursday, June 4, 2026

**REVISIONS TO THE 2026-2035 STIP  
HIGHWAY PROGRAM**

STATEWIDE PROJECT

**STIP DELETIONS**

|                                                              |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TC-0013<br>STATEWIDE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>PUBLIC TRANS | - STATEWIDE PROJECT | STATEWIDE; VARIOUS LOCATIONS, FUNDING FOR 5310 CAPITAL<br>DISCRETIONARY GRANT AWARDED BY FTA.<br><b><u>REMOVE PROJECT AT THE REQUEST OF THE<br/>INTEGRATED MOBILITY DIVISION.</u></b>                                                                                               | FY 2021 - \$70,000 (S)<br>FY 2021 - \$280,000 (5310)<br>\$350,000                                                        |
| TM-0033<br>STATEWIDE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>PUBLIC TRANS | - STATEWIDE PROJECT | NCDOT; VARIOUS LOCATIONS, 5311(F) INTERCITY ADMINISTRATIVE<br>BUS - STATE ADMIN.<br><b><u>REMOVE PROJECT AT THE REQUEST OF THE<br/>INTEGRATED MOBILITY DIVISION.</u></b>                                                                                                            | FY 2022 - \$494,000 (5311)<br>\$494,000                                                                                  |
| TU-0003<br>STATEWIDE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>PUBLIC TRANS | - STATEWIDE PROJECT | NCDOT; VARIOUS LOCATIONS, H.O.P.E GRANT PLANNING<br>OPPORTUNITY FROM THE FTA. DISCRETIONARY<br>GRANT AWARDED BY FTA. PLANNING AND DESIGN IN<br>PREPARATION FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE DEPLOYMENT.<br><b><u>REMOVE PROJECT AT THE REQUEST OF THE<br/>INTEGRATED MOBILITY DIVISION.</u></b> | FY 2021 - \$12,000 (S)<br>FY 2021 - \$110,000 (5312)<br>FY 2023 - \$20,000 (S)<br>FY 2023 - \$80,000 (5303)<br>\$222,000 |

\* INDICATES FEDERAL AMENDMENT

Thursday, June 4, 2026

# **REVISIONS TO THE 2026-2035 STIP HIGHWAY PROGRAM**

GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

## **STIP ADDITIONS**

|                                                         |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |           |           |        |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| * HS-2613C<br>BURKE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>DIVISION | - GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN<br>PLANNING ORGANIZATION | SR 1501 (HUFFMAN BRIDGE ROAD/ANTIOCH ROAD); SR 1512 (AMHERST ROAD) TO SR 1584 (MORGANTON LENOIR AIRPORT AVENUE). INSTALL RUMBLE STRIPS/STRIPE.                                                          | CONSTRUCTION | FY 2027 - | \$126,000 | (HSIP) |
|                                                         |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2027 - | \$14,000  | (T(M)) |
|                                                         |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |           | \$140,000 |        |
|                                                         |                                                         | <b><u>ADD PROJECT BREAK AT THE REQUEST OF THE<br/>TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY AND SAFETY DIVISION</u></b>                                                                                                   |              |           |           |        |
| * HS-2613F<br>BURKE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>DIVISION | - GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN<br>PLANNING ORGANIZATION | SR 1653 (AIRPORT RHODISS ROAD); SR 1611 (RHODISS ROAD) TO SR 1625 (9TH AVE DRIVE NW); SR 1653 (HICKORY AIRPORT ROAD) FROM SR 1625 TO CATAWBA COUNTY. INSTALL RUMBLE STRIPS/STRIPE.                      | CONSTRUCTION | FY 2027 - | \$108,000 | (HSIP) |
|                                                         |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2027 - | \$12,000  | (T(M)) |
|                                                         |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |           | \$120,000 |        |
|                                                         |                                                         | <b><u>ADD PROJECT BREAK AT THE REQUEST OF THE<br/>TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY AND SAFETY DIVISION</u></b>                                                                                                   |              |           |           |        |
| * HS-2613G<br>BURKE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>REGIONAL | - GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN<br>PLANNING ORGANIZATION | NC 18 (S. STERLING STREET); SR 1704 (BETHEL STREET)/BROUGHTON HOSPITAL ENTRANCE, AND AT BROUGHTON ROAD/POTEA STREET INTERSECTIONS IN MORGANTON. INSTALL PEDESTRIAN SIGNALS, CURB RAMPS, AND CROSSWALKS. | CONSTRUCTION | FY 2027 - | \$418,000 | (HSIP) |
|                                                         |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2027 - | \$47,000  | (T(M)) |
|                                                         |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |           | \$465,000 |        |
|                                                         |                                                         | <b><u>ADD PROJECT BREAK AT THE REQUEST OF THE<br/>TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY AND SAFETY DIVISION</u></b>                                                                                                   |              |           |           |        |

## **STIP MODIFICATIONS**

|                                                      |                                                         |                                                                                                             |                              |           |              |        |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------|
| BR-0151<br>BURKE<br><b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b><br>DIVISION | - GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN<br>PLANNING ORGANIZATION | SR 1002 (HENRY RIVER ROAD); SR1002 (HENRY RIVER ROAD) OVER I-40. REPLACE BRIDGE.                            | RIGHT-OF-WAY<br>CONSTRUCTION | FY 2027 - | \$500,000    | (HFB)  |
|                                                      |                                                         |                                                                                                             |                              | FY 2028 - | \$416,000    | (BGDA) |
|                                                      |                                                         |                                                                                                             |                              | FY 2028 - | \$104,000    | (L(M)) |
|                                                      |                                                         |                                                                                                             |                              | FY 2028 - | \$312,000    | (L)    |
|                                                      |                                                         |                                                                                                             |                              | FY 2028 - | \$11,568,000 | (HFB)  |
|                                                      |                                                         |                                                                                                             |                              |           | \$12,900,000 |        |
|                                                      |                                                         | <b><u>TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL TIME FOR PLANNING AND<br/>DESIGN, DELAY CONSTRUCTION FROM FY 27 TO FY 28.</u></b> |                              |           |              |        |

\* INDICATES FEDERAL AMENDMENT

Thursday, June 4, 2026

REVISIONS TO THE 2026-2035 STIP  
HIGHWAY PROGRAM

GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

STIP MODIFICATIONS

|                                                  |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| HB-0057<br>CALDWELL<br>PROJ.CATEGORY<br>DIVISION | - GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN<br>PLANNING ORGANIZATION | SR 1356 (OLD JOHNS RIVER ROAD); BRIDGE 130185<br>OVER JOHNS RIVER. REPLACE BRIDGE.<br><u>TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL TIME FOR RIGHT-OF-WAY<br/>ACQUISITION, DELAY CONSTRUCTION FROM FY 26 TO<br/>FY 27. DP REPRESENTS RAISE GRANT FUNDS.</u> | CONSTRUCTION | FY 2027 - \$162,000 (DP)<br>FY 2027 - \$10,000 (BGOFF)<br>FY 2027 - \$6,000 (HFB)<br>FY 2028 - \$822,000 (BGOFF)<br>FY 2028 - \$537,000 (HFB)<br>FY 2029 - \$159,000 (BGOFF)<br>FY 2029 - \$104,000 (HFB)<br>\$1,800,000 |
| HB-0058<br>CALDWELL<br>PROJ.CATEGORY<br>DIVISION | - GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN<br>PLANNING ORGANIZATION | SR 1356 (OLD JOHNS RIVER ROAD); BRIDGE 130186<br>OVER JOHNS RIVER. REPLACE BRIDGE.<br><u>TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL TIME FOR RIGHT-OF-WAY<br/>ACQUISITION, DELAY CONSTRUCTION FROM FY 26 TO<br/>FY 27. DP REPRESENTS RAISE GRANT FUNDS.</u> | CONSTRUCTION | FY 2027 - \$162,000 (DP)<br>FY 2027 - \$8,000 (BGOFF)<br>FY 2027 - \$6,000 (HFB)<br>FY 2028 - \$720,000 (BGOFF)<br>FY 2028 - \$589,000 (HFB)<br>FY 2029 - \$63,000 (BGOFF)<br>FY 2029 - \$52,000 (HFB)<br>\$1,600,000    |
| HB-0059<br>CALDWELL<br>PROJ.CATEGORY<br>DIVISION | - GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN<br>PLANNING ORGANIZATION | SR 1356 (OLD JOHNS RIVER ROAD); BRIDGE 130275<br>OVER JOHNS RIVER. REPLACE BRIDGE.<br><u>TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL TIME FOR RIGHT-OF-WAY<br/>ACQUISITION, DELAY CONSTRUCTION FROM FY 26 TO<br/>FY 27. DP REPRESENTS RAISE GRANT FUNDS.</u> | CONSTRUCTION | FY 2027 - \$162,000 (DP)<br>FY 2027 - \$9,000 (BGOFF)<br>FY 2027 - \$6,000 (HFB)<br>FY 2028 - \$811,000 (BGOFF)<br>FY 2028 - \$590,000 (HFB)<br>FY 2029 - \$71,000 (BGOFF)<br>FY 2029 - \$52,000 (HFB)<br>\$1,701,000    |
| HB-0060<br>CALDWELL<br>PROJ.CATEGORY<br>DIVISION | - GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN<br>PLANNING ORGANIZATION | SR 1356 (OLD JOHNS RIVER ROAD); BRIDGE 130317<br>OVER JOHNS RIVER. REPLACE BRIDGE.<br><u>TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL TIME FOR RIGHT-OF-WAY<br/>ACQUISITION, DELAY CONSTRUCTION FROM FY 26 TO<br/>FY 27. DP REPRESENTS RAISE GRANT FUNDS.</u> | CONSTRUCTION | FY 2027 - \$210,000 (DP)<br>FY 2027 - \$9,000 (BGOFF)<br>FY 2027 - \$8,000 (HFB)<br>FY 2028 - \$863,000 (BGOFF)<br>FY 2028 - \$765,000 (HFB)<br>FY 2029 - \$76,000 (BGOFF)<br>FY 2029 - \$68,000 (HFB)<br>\$1,999,000    |

\* INDICATES FEDERAL AMENDMENT

**REVISIONS TO THE 2026-2035 STIP  
HIGHWAY PROGRAM**

GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

**STIP MODIFICATIONS**

|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |           |              |        |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|--------|
| I-5990<br>BURKE<br>PROJ.CATEGORY<br>DIVISION | - GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN<br>PLANNING ORGANIZATION | I-40; SR 1761 (OLD NC 10) EXIT 118 INTERCHANGE.<br>CONSTRUCT INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS.<br><u>TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL TIME FOR RIGHT-OF-WAY<br/>ACQUISITION, DELAY CONSTRUCTION FROM FY 27 TO<br/>FY 29.</u> | RIGHT-OF-WAY | FY 2027 - | \$3,186,000  | (NHP)  |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2027 - | \$797,000    | (T(M)) |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2028 - | \$910,000    | (NHP)  |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2028 - | \$227,000    | (T(M)) |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2029 - | \$512,000    | (NHP)  |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2029 - | \$128,000    | (T(M)) |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         | UTILITIES    | FY 2030 - | \$512,000    | (NHP)  |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2030 - | \$128,000    | (T(M)) |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2027 - | \$360,000    | (NHP)  |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2027 - | \$90,000     | (T(M)) |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2028 - | \$360,000    | (NHP)  |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2028 - | \$90,000     | (T(M)) |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         | CONSTRUCTION | FY 2029 - | \$5,386,000  | (NHP)  |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2029 - | \$1,346,000  | (T(M)) |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2030 - | \$6,494,000  | (NHP)  |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2030 - | \$1,624,000  | (T(M)) |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2031 - | \$3,960,000  | (NHP)  |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              | FY 2031 - | \$990,000    | (T(M)) |
|                                              |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |           | \$27,100,000 |        |

\* INDICATES FEDERAL AMENDMENT

Thursday, June 4, 2026

**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION  
GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
TCC/TAC**

**MEETING DATE:** June 24, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Transportation Improvement Program Revisions for Approval

**PRESENTER:** Averil Ritchie, Transportation Planning Director

**ATTACHMENTS:** Transportation Improvement Program Revisions for Approval

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) revisions include modifications and amendments to regional and statewide transportation projects. STIP revisions are released for public comment and approved following a 30 day public comment period by TAC. All approved revisions are submitted for Board of Transportation approval. Modifications and revisions often include funding and fiscal year changes. Revisions are released monthly by NCDOT.

**BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:** Recommend for approval.

**Suggested Motion:** *Motion to approve*

REVISIONS TO THE 2026-2035 STIP  
HIGHWAY PROGRAM

GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

STIP MODIFICATIONS

|                      |                                |                                               |          |           |           |        |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| TP-5106              | - GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN | WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS,      | PLANNING | FY 2026 - | \$8,000   | (L(M)) |
| ALEXANDER            | PLANNING ORGANIZATION          | SYSTEMWIDE FUNDING FOR PLANNING ASSISTANCE.   |          | FY 2026 - | \$8,000   | (S(M)) |
| BURKE                |                                | <u>ADD FUNDING AT THE REQUEST OF THE MPO.</u> |          | FY 2026 - | \$57,000  | (5303) |
| CALDWELL             |                                |                                               |          | FY 2027 - | \$9,000   | (L(M)) |
| CATAWBA              |                                |                                               |          | FY 2027 - | \$9,000   | (S(M)) |
| <b>PROJ.CATEGORY</b> |                                |                                               |          | FY 2027 - | \$68,000  | (5303) |
| PUBLIC TRANS         |                                |                                               |          | FY 2028 - | \$8,000   | (L(M)) |
|                      |                                |                                               |          | FY 2028 - | \$8,000   | (S(M)) |
|                      |                                |                                               |          | FY 2028 - | \$57,000  | (5303) |
|                      |                                |                                               |          |           | \$232,000 |        |

\* INDICATES FEDERAL AMENDMENT



**GREATER HICKORY  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)**  
1880 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NW, PO Box 9026  
Hickory, NC 28603



**RESOLUTION ADOPTING MODIFICATIONS TO THE  
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FY 2026-2035**

A motion was made by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ for the adoption of the following resolution, and upon being put to a vote was duly adopted.

**WHEREAS**, the following modifications have been proposed for FY 2026-2035  
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):  
See page 1 of this Attachment

**WHEREAS**, the MPO certifies that these TIP modifications are consistent with the intent of the adopted 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP);

**NOW THEREFORE be it resolved**, by the Greater Hickory MPO Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) that the TIP FY 2026-2035 be modified as listed above on this, the 24th day of June, 2026.

---

Hank Guess  
Greater Hickory MPO TAC Chair

---

Averi Ritchie  
Greater Hickory MPO TAC Secretary

**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION  
GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
TCC/TAC**

**MEETING DATE:** June 24, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Locally Administered Project Program – Spring 2026 Call for New Projects

**PRESENTER:** Daniel Odom, Planning Manager

**ATTACHMENTS:** LAPP 2026 – Spring Call for New Projects

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

The Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG) and Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) receive roughly \$3.5 million annually in federal transportation grant funding for multimodal projects (pedestrian, transit, small intersection). These funds are managed through the Locally Administered Projects Program (LAPP). The Spring Call for Projects was opened in March and closed May 8<sup>th</sup>. Tentative funding scenarios were presented at the May 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The following applications were received and are described in detail within the attachment:

- City of Hickory
  - 5<sup>th</sup> Street NE and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue Drive NE Intersection Improvements
  - 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue Drive SE Connector
- City of Lenoir
  - Harper Avenue Streetscape

Following coordination with NCDOT, the GHMPO's proposed funding scenario recommends a total funding award of \$3.874MM in federal funding across the three projects.

**BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:** Approve LAP Funding Authorization Resolution & Associated STIP Amendment.

**Suggested Motion:**

1. **Motion to award the proposed Locally Administered Project funding.**
2. **Motion to approve an amendment to the State Transportation Improvement Program to reflect LAP funds awarded.**



**Western Piedmont**  
Council of Governments

*Creative Regional Solutions Since 1968*

# Locally Administered Project Program: Spring 2026 Project Applications

GHMPO TCC and TAC

June 24, 2026

# New Project Applications

- **City of Hickory**
  - 5th Street NE and 10th Ave Drive NE Intersection Improvements
  - 13th Ave Drive SE Connector
- **City of Lenoir**
  - Harper Avenue Streetscape Project

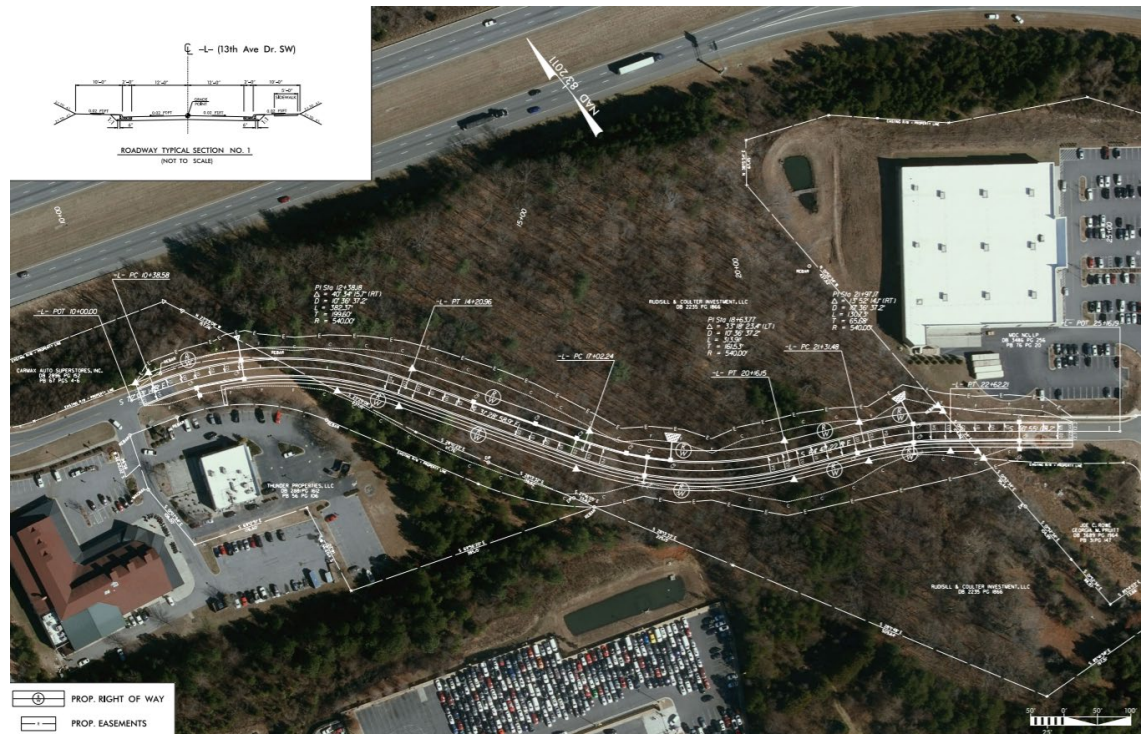
# 5th Street NE and 10th Avenue Drive NE Intersection Improvements

- **Description:** This project will improve pedestrian safety and accessibility at the intersection of 5th Street NE and 10th Avenue Drive NE through the installation of pedestrian signal infrastructure, enhanced crosswalk visibility, and new sidewalk construction.
  - **Total Federal Funding:** \$1.84 Million
  - **Total Cost:** \$2.3 Million
  - **Project Score:** 79
- 
- An aerial photograph showing a street intersection and surrounding parking lots. A purple line runs along the edge of a building and parking lot, indicating the proposed sidewalk route. The text "10TH AVE. DR. NE SIDEWALK FEASIBILITY STUDY" is overlaid on the image. In the bottom right corner, there is a small logo for INCO and some text about document release.



# 13th Ave Drive SE Connector

- **Description:** This project will construct a new roadway segment connecting two existing sections of 13th Avenue Drive SE, creating a continuous corridor between Lenoir Rhyne Boulevard (Exit 125) and McDonald Parkway (Exit 126). The connector is approximately 0.28 miles (1,450 feet).
- **Total Federal Funding:** \$4 Million
- **Total Cost:** \$5 Million
- **Project Score:** 73.6



# Harper Avenue Sidewalk

- **Description:** The project proposes sidewalk on both sides of the Harper Avenue Corridor from Ridge Street to Morganton Blvd for approximately .6 miles, as well as a revamped stormwater drainage system to minimize local flooding. The sidewalk will be 6 feet wide with a variable 5 to 6 foot wide brick paver separation from the street. The brick area will contain metal benches, pedestrian lighting, street trees, trash bins, and bike racks.
- **Total Federal Funding:** \$7.95 Million
- **Total Cost:** \$9.937 Million
- **Project Score:** 78.9

Harper Avenue Sidewalk & Greenway Connections



# Total Funding Requested

| Project Title                                              | Score | Total Federal Funding | Total Local Match | Total Project Funding |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 5th Street NE and 10th Ave Drive Intersection Improvements | 79    | \$1.84MM              | \$460,000         | \$2.3MM               |
| Harper Ave Streetscape                                     | 78.9  | \$8.56MM              | \$2.02M           | \$10.1MM              |
| 13th Ave Drive SE Connector                                | 73.6  | \$4MM                 | \$1MM             | \$5MM                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                               |       | <b>\$14.4MM</b>       |                   | <b>\$17.4MM</b>       |

Target Investment for Spring  
2026 Call: \$6.5M

# Proposed Funding Scenario

| Project Title                                              | Score | Total Federal Funding | Total Local Match | Total Project Funding |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 5th Street NE and 10th Ave Drive Intersection Improvements | 79    | \$1.84M               | \$460,000         | \$2.3MM               |
| Harper Ave Streetscape (Preconstruction Only)              | 78.9  | \$1.634MM             | \$408,500         | \$2.042MM             |
| 13th Ave Drive SE Connector (Preconstruction Only)         | 73.6  | \$400K                | \$100K            | \$500K                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                               |       | <b>\$3.874M</b>       | <b>\$968,500</b>  | <b>\$4.843M</b>       |

Funds remaining through FY  
2031: \$9.08M



**Western Piedmont**  
Council of Governments

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Questions?



**GREATER HICKORY  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)**

1880 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NW, PO Box 9026  
Hickory, NC 28603



**RESOLUTION DIRECTING STBG-DA AND TAP-DA FUNDS TO LOCAL  
PRIORITY PROJECTS**

A motion was made by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by TAC Member \_\_\_\_\_  
To adopt the following resolution, and upon being put to a vote was duly adopted.

**WHEREAS**, the Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a Transportation Management Area and has the authority to direct available Federal Highway program Surface Transportation Block Grant – Direct Attributable (STBG-DA), Transportation Alternatives Program – Direct Attributable (TAP-DA), Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) obligation authority to MPO area local projects; AND

**WHEREAS**, the above funding sources are included in the Locally Administered Projects Program (LAPP); AND

**WHEREAS**, allocation of the above funding sources enable work on three area priority projects, to proceed totaling \$3.874 million in federal dollars (to be distributed among the funding sources by the Department of Transportation) as shown in the Locally Administered Projects Program Presentation at the June 24, 2026, TAC Meeting; AND

**WHEREAS**, the proposed project recommendations and recommended actions have been developed in coordination with the North Carolina Department of Transportation; AND

**NOW THEREFORE be it resolved**, by the Greater Hickory MPO Transportation Advisory Committee, to approve the direction of \$3.874 million in LAPP funds on this, the 24th day of June, 2026.

---

Hank Guess  
Greater Hickory MPO TAC Chair

---

Averi Ritchie  
Greater Hickory MPO TAC Secretary



**GREATER HICKORY  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)**  
1880 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NW, PO Box 9026  
Hickory, NC 28603



**RESOLUTION ADOPTING MODIFICATIONS TO THE  
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FY 2026-2035**

A motion was made by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ to adopt the following resolution, and upon being put to a vote was duly adopted

**WHEREAS**, the Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a Transportation Management Area and has the authority to direct available Federal Highway program Surface Transportation Block Grant – Direct Attributable (STBG-DA), Transportation Alternatives Program – Direct Attributable (TAP-DA), Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) obligation authority to MPO area local projects; AND

**WHEREAS**, the above funding sources are included in the Locally Administered Projects Program (LAPP); AND

**WHEREAS**, allocation of the above funding sources enable work on three area priority projects to proceed totaling \$3.874 million in federal dollars (to be distributed among the funding sources by the Department of Transportation) as shown in the Locally Administered Projects Program Presentation at the June 24, 2026, TAC Meeting; AND

**WHEREAS**, the following projects have been proposed for inclusion in the FY 2026-2035 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); AND

**WHEREAS**, the MPO certifies that these TIP modifications are consistent with the intent of the adopted 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP); AND

**NOW THEREFORE be it resolved**, by the Greater Hickory MPO Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) that the TIP FYs 2026-2035 be modified as listed above on this, the 24th day of June, 2026.

---

Hank Guess  
Greater Hickory MPO TAC Chair

---

Averi Ritchie  
Greater Hickory MPO TAC Secretary

**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION  
GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
TCC/TAC**

**MEETING DATE:** June 24, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Results of the GHMPO Federal Recertification Review

**PRESENTER:** Averi Ritchie, Transportation Planning Director

**ATTACHMENTS:** Results of the GHMPO Federal Recertification Review

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) completed the 2026 Certification Review of the Greater Hickory MPO and fully certified the MPO's transportation planning process for the next four years. The review found that GHMPO is in compliance with all federal planning requirements and continues to demonstrate a strong, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process.

All prior recommendations from the 2022 certification review were successfully addressed, demonstrating continued improvement and responsiveness to federal guidance. Additionally, the 2026 review included fewer recommendations than the previous cycle, reflecting the MPO's progress and maturity in its planning processes.

The review included no corrective actions, indicating full compliance across all evaluated areas. The MPO also received several commendations, particularly for its use of interactive planning tools and dashboards, integration of freight and land use data into the MTP, and outreach to regional freight stakeholders.

A small number of recommendations for improvement were identified, focused on process refinements such as documentation, public involvement procedures, and TIP consistency language.

Overall, the review highlights that GHMPO is performing at a high level with strong regional coordination, effective planning practices, and continued opportunities for incremental improvement.

**BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:** None. Informational item only.



Federal Highway Administration  
North Carolina Division  
310 New Bern Avenue, Suite 410  
Raleigh, NC 27601  
(919) 856-4346

Federal Transit Administration  
Region 4 Office  
230 Peachtree NW, Suite 1400  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
404-865-5600

May 29, 2026

Mayor Hank Guess, Chair  
Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization  
City of Hickory

Subject: Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) Federal Planning  
Certification Review

Dear Mayor Guess:

This letter notifies you that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) jointly certify the planning process for the GHMPO Transportation Management Area (TMA). The Certification is valid for four years from the date of the Report. This certification is based on the findings from the Federal Certification Review conducted on Monday, April 27, 2026.

The overall conclusion of the Certification Review is that the planning process for the GHMPO complies with the Federal metropolitan transportation planning laws and regulations under 23 USC 134 and 49 USC 5303. The planning process at the GHMPO is a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive process and reflects a significant professional commitment to deliver quality in transportation planning.

We would like to thank Averi Ritchie and the rest of the MPO staff for their time and assistance in planning and conducting the review. Enclosed is a report that documents the results of this review and offers five recommendations for continuing quality improvements and enhancements to the planning process, as well as three commendations for use of best practices. This report has been transmitted concurrently to the MPO, NCDOT, and Greenway Public Transportation.

If you have any questions regarding the Certification Review process, the Certification action, and/or the enclosed report, please direct them to either George Hoops, FHWA NC Division, at [george.hoops@dot.gov](mailto:george.hoops@dot.gov) or Jason Morgan, FTA Region 4, at [jason.morgan@dot.gov](mailto:jason.morgan@dot.gov).

Sincerely,



Regional Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration

Sincerely,



for Yolonda K. Jordan  
Division Administrator

Enclosure: Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization Certification Review Report

cc: Jason Morgan, FTA Region 4

Averi Ritchie, WPCOG – GHMPO Staff

Casey Fullbright, WPCOG – GHMPO Staff

Daniel Odom, WPCOG – GHMPO Staff

Kelly Christensen, WPCOG

Taylor Dellinger, WPCOG

Andrew Webb, WPCOG

Michael Bowman, Greenway Public Transportation

James Upchurch, NCDOT - Transportation Planning Division

Reuben Crummy, NCDOT – Transportation Planning Division

# Transportation Management Area Planning Certification Review

Federal Highway  
Administration

Federal Transit  
Administration

## Greater Hickory MPO Transportation Management Area



May 29, 2026





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## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On April 27, 2026, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducted the certification review of the transportation planning process for the Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) urbanized area. FHWA and FTA are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process for each urbanized area over 200,000 in population at least every four years to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements.

### 1.1 Previous Findings and Disposition

The last certification review for the Greater Hickory urbanized area was conducted on March 7, 2022. The 2022 Certification Review findings are summarized as follows.

| Finding                                                                                                                                   | Recommendations                                                                                                                                        | Disposition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The GHMPO needs to conduct an evaluation of the PIP effectiveness prior to updating the PIP document.                                     | It is recommended that the GHMPO conduct an evaluation of PIP effectiveness prior to updating the PIP document.                                        | On November 15, 2023, the GHMPO adopted an updated Public Involvement Policy (PIP). During this update, the MPO evaluated the adequacy of public notice procedures and revised notice timeframes as appropriate; additionally, the MPO refined the methodology and distribution channels for press releases.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| The GHMPO needs to capture more thoroughly environmental and resiliency data in the 2050 MTP.                                             | It is recommended that the MPO more thoroughly capture environmental and resiliency data in the 2050 MTP.                                              | At the time of the 2050 MTP adoption, the MPO used a Community Health and Disaster Mitigation Explorer (CHADME) explorer tool. This metrics-based tool allowed the MPO to examine potential mitigation practices through a hierarchy of variables, including socioeconomic, high-risk health populations, location of populations with limited or no access to transportation, proximity to natural features, and other social determinants of health. In addition, the 2050 MTP considered flooding on roadways, flood plains, etc. associated with system resiliency. The 2050 MTP also has separate Natural Environment and System Resilience chapters. |
| The GHMPO needs to work with the NCDOT Division Office to determine where Emergency Relief (ER) funding has been spent in their MPO area. | It is recommended that the GHMPO reach out to the NCDOT Division Office to determine where Emergency Relief (ER) funding has been spent in their area. | GHMPO has worked with all 3 NCDOT divisions post Helene to identify emergency relief funding spent within our region.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| The GHMPO needs to better document its voting structure when they update their MOU.                                                       | It is recommended that the GHMPO better document its voting structure when they update their MOU.                                                      | The voting structure has been clearly identified in the MOA.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| The GHMPO needs to document its performance-based planning process and accomplishments with the 2050 MTP.                                 | It is recommended that the MPO document its performance-based planning process and accomplishments with the 2050 MTP.                                  | All performance measures were covered within Chapter 10 of the 2050 MTP.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |



| Finding                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Recommendations                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Disposition                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The GHMPO needs to consider using a smaller geography unit such as traffic analysis zones rather than census tracts for identifying EJ populations. Census tracts can be quite large and may miss significant EJ populations. | It is recommended that the MPO consider using a smaller geography unit such as traffic analysis zones rather than census tracts for identifying EJ populations. Census tracts can be quite large and may miss significant EJ populations. | Executive Order 14173, issued by President Trump on January 21, 2025, rescinds several previous executive orders related to environmental justice, including EO 12898 and EO 14096. |
| The GHMPO needs to create one map for EJ analyses that depicts the entire MPO rather than multiple maps segmented by county.                                                                                                  | It is recommended that the MPO create one map for EJ analyses that depicts the entire MPO rather than multiple maps segmented by county.                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| The GHMPO needs to ensure that cumulative effects of projects are considered by including past projects as part of the EJ analysis.                                                                                           | It is recommended that the MPO ensure that cumulative effects of projects are considered by including past projects as part of the EJ analysis.                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| The GHMPO needs to conduct both <i>qualitative</i> and <i>quantitative</i> analyses on a system-wide level to identify potential transportation impacts to EJ populations.                                                    | It is recommended that the MPO conduct both <i>qualitative</i> and <i>quantitative</i> analyses on a system-wide level to identify potential transportation impacts to EJ populations.                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## 1.2 Summary of Current Findings

The current review found that the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted in the Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization area meets Federal planning requirements.

As a result of this review, FHWA and FTA are certifying the transportation planning process conducted by North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization and Western Piedmont Transit Authority/Greenway Public Transportation subject to addressing corrective actions. There are also recommendations in this report that warrant close attention and follow-up, as well as areas that the MPO is performing very well in that are to be commended.

| Review Area                                                                  | Finding<br>(Corrective Actions/Recommendations/ Commendations)                                                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>MPO Organizational Structure and Policy Board</b><br><br>23 U.S.C. 134(d) | <b>Recommendation:</b> The GHMPO website should explicitly list the current TAC membership and clearly identify the member(s) responsible for representing transit-related interests in addition to voting structure. |



| Review Area                                                                                                                            | Finding<br>(Corrective Actions/Recommendations/ Commendations)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Metropolitan Planning Agreements</b><br><br>23 CFR 450.314(a)                                                                       | <b><u>Recommendation:</u></b> The MOU currently serves as a cooperative framework among NCDOT, the MPO, regional public transportation providers, and participating local governments; consequently, it should be formally executed only by those parties with direct responsibility for the agreement's implementation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Participation by Interested Parties</b><br><br>23 USC 134(i)(5)<br>23 USC 134(j)(1)(B)<br>49 USC 5303(i)(5)<br>49 USC 5303(j)(1)(B) | <b><u>Commendation:</u></b> The MPO is commended for their use of interactive digital tools and dashboards that facilitate regional coordination and transparency and inform the public of community impacts related to regional transportation projects.<br><br><b><u>Recommendation:</u></b> The PIP should describe explicit procedures for employing visualization techniques in the MTP and TIP (23CFR450.316(a)(1)(iii)).<br><br><b><u>Recommendation:</u></b> The PIP should describe explicit procedures for demonstrating consideration and responding to public input received during the development of the MTP and TIP (23CFR450.316(a)(1)(vi)). |
| <b>Metropolitan Transportation Plan</b><br><br>23 U.S.C. 134(c),(h)&(i)<br>23 CFR 450.324                                              | <b><u>Commendation:</u></b> The MPO is commended for their integration of freight-oriented development and land-use data directly into the 2050 MTP.<br><br><b><u>Commendation:</u></b> The MPO is commended for their survey of 100 regional freight operators to help in identifying critical bottlenecks and address federal freight planning factors to ensure the regional strategy remains grounded in real-world logistics and economic needs.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Transportation Improvement Program</b><br><br>23 U.S.C. 134(c)(h)& (j)<br>23 CFR 450.326                                            | <b><u>Recommendations:</u></b> The TIP adoption resolution should include a clause associated with TIP/MTP consistency.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |



## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Background

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(k) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(k), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) at least every four years. A TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, with a population of over 200,000. The reviews consist of a site visit, a review of planning products (in advance of and during the site visit), and preparation of a Certification Review Report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The reviews focus on compliance with Federal regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship between the MPO(s), the State DOT(s), and public transportation operator(s) in the conduct of the metropolitan transportation planning process. Joint FTA/FHWA Certification Review guidelines provide agency field reviewers with latitude and flexibility to tailor the review to reflect regional issues and needs. Consequently, the scope and depth of the Certification Review reports will vary significantly.

The Certification Review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of a regional metropolitan transportation planning process, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and the level and type of technical assistance needed to enhance the effectiveness of the planning process. Other activities provide opportunities for this type of review and comment, including Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) approval, the MTP, metropolitan and statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) findings, air-quality (AQ) conformity determinations (in nonattainment and maintenance areas), as well as a range of other formal and less formal contact provide both FHWA/FTA an opportunity to comment on the planning process. The results of these other processes are considered in the Certification Review process.

While the Certification Review report itself may not fully document those many intermediate and ongoing checkpoints, the “findings” of Certification Review are, in fact, based upon the cumulative findings of the entire review effort.

The review process is individually tailored to focus on topics of significance in each metropolitan planning area. Federal reviewers prepare Certification Reports to document the results of the review process. The reports and final actions are the joint responsibility of the appropriate FHWA and FTA field offices, and their content will vary to reflect the planning process reviewed, whether they relate explicitly to formal “findings” of the review.

To encourage public understanding and input, FHWA/FTA will continue to improve the clarity of the Certification Review reports.



## **2.2 Purpose and Objective**

Since the enactment of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, the FHWA and FTA, are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process in all urbanized areas over 200,000 population to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements in 23 U.S.C. 134, 40 U.S.C. 5303, and 23 CFR 450. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), extended the minimum allowable frequency of certification reviews to at least every four years.

The GHMPO is the designated MPO for the Hickory urbanized area, and the Western Piedmont Council of Governments is the Lead Planning Agency. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is the responsible State agency and Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority (WPRTA)/Greenway Public Transportation is the responsible public transportation operator. The MPO includes 28 voting member jurisdictions from Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, and Catawba Counties.

Certification of the planning process is a prerequisite to the approval of Federal funding for transportation projects in such areas. The certification review is also an opportunity to help on new programs and to enhance the ability of the metropolitan transportation planning process to provide decision makers with the knowledge they need to make well-informed capital and operating investment decisions.

## **3.0 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Review Process**

The last certification review was conducted in March 2022. A summary of the status of findings from the last review is provided in Section 1.1. This report details the latest certification review, which consisted of a formal site visit and a public involvement opportunity, conducted in April of 2026.

Participants in the review included representatives of FHWA, FTA, NCDOT, WPRTA, and GHMPO staff. A full list of participants is included in Appendix A.

A desk audit of current documents and correspondence was completed prior to the site visit. In addition to the formal review, routine oversight mechanisms provide a major source of information upon which to base the certification findings.

The certification review covers the transportation planning process conducted cooperatively by the MPO, State, and public transportation operators.



The following topics are required elements of the metropolitan planning process authorized in 23 USC 134 and 49 USC 5303 and therefore must be addressed or confirmed as part of the TMA certification. The statutory and regulatory requirements of these topics are listed below:

1. MPO Organizational Structure and Policy Board
2. Metropolitan Planning Area Boundaries
3. Metropolitan Planning Agreements
4. Planning Process and Process Coordination
5. Participation by Interested Parties
6. Congestion Management Process
7. Unified Planning Work Program
8. Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)
9. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
10. List of Obligated Projects
11. Transit Planning

Background information, status, key findings, and recommendations are summarized in the body of the report for these subject areas.

## **3.2 Documents Reviewed**

The following MPO documents were evaluated as part of this planning process review:

1. Certification Review Report (2022)
2. Charter (updated on 3/23/2010)
3. Congestion Management Process
4. Congestion Management Report (July 2024)
5. FFY25 – List of Obligated Projects (Funds posted in SAP: 10/01/2024 thru 9/30/2025)
6. Local Coordination Public Transportation Plan (2021)
7. 2050 MTP (2023)
8. Memorandum of Understanding (Amended 2015)
9. Public Participation Policy (10/28/2020) – Available on the MPO website
10. Public Involvement Policy (11/15/2023)
11. TAC Bylaws (Adopted 5/2007)
12. TAC Bylaws, 2003
13. Title VI Plan Update (Adopted 6/26/2019)
14. 2026-2035 Transportation Improvement Program
15. SFY 2026 and 2027 Unified Planning Work Program and Self Certification (Dated: 2/26/2025)
16. GHMPO (Dated February 2003, Amended March 2009, and again in 9/2013)
17. Resolution Supporting Targets for Performance Measures Established By NCDOT (Signed: 5/24/23)



## 4.0 PROGRAM REVIEW

### 4.1 MPO Organization Structure and Policy Board

#### 4.1.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(d) and 23 CFR 450.314(a) state the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. These responsibilities shall be clearly identified in written agreements among the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator serving the MPA.

#### 4.1.2 Current Status

The Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) is housed within the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG), which serves as the MPO's Lead Planning Agency (LPA). This partnership fosters balanced regional coordination across 28 member jurisdictions spanning Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, and Catawba Counties—an area that also defines the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Designated as a Transportation Management Area (TMA) following the 2010 Census, the MPO's planning boundary includes State Parks and Federal U.S. Forest Service lands, though no Indian Tribal lands have been identified within the region.

The MPO is governed by two primary bodies, both of which are actively engaged in the regional planning process:

- **Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC):** Serving as the Policy Board, the TAC makes final decisions on public investments in transportation infrastructure and services. The TAC is composed of local elected officials, officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation in the metropolitan area, and appropriate state officials.
- **Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC):** Composed of city managers, planning directors, and technical staff, the TCC provides the essential technical review and guidance that informs the TAC's decisions.

The regional governance is established through a voting structure that allocates one vote per jurisdiction, with the exception of the City of Hickory, which is granted two votes, and one vote to the regional public transportation authority. This arrangement is maintained by member jurisdictions as an equitable and proportional representation of the metropolitan population. The MPO indicates that the current practice of scheduling Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) meetings on the same day as, and immediately preceding, Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings is effective. This concurrent schedule facilitates direct interaction between the TCC and TAC, and the MPO has identified no operational issues resulting from this coordination.



The MPO reports sustained and excellent engagement within both the TAC and TCC. While the TCC has experienced limited membership turnover, the TAC has seen more frequent changes in representation. To address this, the MPO has implemented a comprehensive new member orientation program designed to provide necessary background and facilitate the effective participation of incoming officials in the regional planning process.

#### **4.1.3 Findings**

The GHMPO is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations, and practices of organizational structure and policy board.

**Recommendation:** The GHMPO website should explicitly list the current TAC membership and clearly identify the member(s) responsible for representing transit-related interests in addition to voting structure.

## **4.2 Metropolitan Planning Area Boundaries**

### **4.2.1 Regulatory Basis**

23 U.S.C. 134(e) and 23 CFR 450.312(a) state the boundaries of a Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) shall be determined by agreement between the MPO and the Governor. At a minimum, the MPA boundaries shall encompass the entire existing urbanized area (as defined by the Bureau of the Census) plus the contiguous area expected to become urbanized within a 20-year forecast period for the MTP.

### **4.2.2 Current Status**

Despite concerns during the previous certification review regarding population shifts within the urbanized area, the Greater Hickory MPO (GHMPO) has maintained its Transportation Management Area (TMA) status. Following the release of 2020 Census data, the GHMPO and NCDOT coordinated specific adjustments to the 2020 Census Urban Area Boundaries. These adjusted urban boundaries remain entirely within the existing Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), which encompasses all of Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, and Catawba Counties; no further changes to the 20-year MPA boundary were required.

Following a formal review conducted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) North Carolina Division to ensure compliance with 23 CFR 450.312, official approvals for the adjusted urban area boundaries were issued on January 16, 2025, with supplemental adjustments following on March 17, 2025. Notably, the GHMPO did not utilize this opportunity to smooth the 2020 Census Urban Area (UA). This omission may lead to federal-aid funding complications for projects within the Metropolitan Area Boundary (MAB) but outside the UA that are currently functionally classified as minor collectors; specifically, such projects would be designated as either urban minor collectors, which maintain federal-aid eligibility, or rural minor collectors, which do not. Considering this, the MPO may coordinate with NCDOT to pursue further adjustments to their UA.



### 4.2.3 Findings

The GHMPO is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations, and practices of transit planning.

## 4.3 Metropolitan Planning Agreement

### 4.3.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(d) and 23 CFR 450.314(a) state the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. These responsibilities shall be clearly identified in written agreements among the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator serving the MPA.

### 4.3.2 Current Status

The Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG) serves as the Lead Planning Agency (LPA) for the MPO, operating under a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). Originally adopted in February 2003, this foundational agreement was amended by all member jurisdictions in March 2009 and September 2013 to ensure it remains current with regional needs. The MPO is currently considering the update to the MOU.

The MOU clearly outlines the Board's membership and the specific responsibilities necessary to execute the metropolitan transportation planning process. These duties include cooperating with the State and publicly owned operators of public transportation services to conduct the Federal and State transportation planning process. Furthermore, the Board is responsible for developing the planning work programs, the Metropolitan and Comprehensive Transportation Plans, and the Transportation Improvement Program.

Complementing the MOU, the MPO's bylaws provide further clarity by detailing the core purpose, strategic goals, and individual roles and responsibilities of the Policy Board.

### 4.3.3 Findings

The GHMPO is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations, and practices of their Metropolitan Planning Agreement.

**Recommendation:** The MOU currently serves as a cooperative framework among NCDOT, the MPO, regional public transportation providers, and participating local governments; consequently, it should be formally executed only by those parties with direct responsibility for the agreement's implementation.



## **4.4 Transportation Planning Process and Process Coordination**

### **4.4.1 Regulatory Basis**

23 CFR 450.306 and 450.318 define the scope of the metropolitan transportation planning process and the relationship of corridor and other subarea planning studies to the metropolitan planning process and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. In addition, 23 CFR 450.316 (c), (d), and (e) address the need for participation by Federal lands management agencies and Tribal governments in the development of key products in the planning process. Key provisions of 23 CFR 450.306 are related to required planning factors, coordination, and consistency with related planning processes, asset management, and possible differences in requirements for TMAs.

23 U.S.C. 134(g) & (i)(5)-(6) and 23 CFR 450.316(b-e) set forth requirements for consultation in developing the MTP and TIP. Consultation is also addressed specifically in connection with the MTP in 23 CFR 450.324(g)(1-2) and in 23 CFR 450.324(f)(10) related to environmental mitigation.

In developing the MTP and TIP, the MPO shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies including Agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities (State, local, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight), Other providers of transportation services, Indian Tribal Government(s), and Federal land management agencies.

### **4.4.2 Current Status**

The GHMPO MTP outlines the utilization of various regional maps, inventories, and planning documents provided by agency contacts, though the specific application of these resources is not fully detailed. To ensure a collaborative process, the MPO provides relevant resource agencies with comprehensive development schedules for both the MTP and TIP.

Beyond basic scheduling, the MPO maintains ongoing communication regarding public review periods and upcoming meetings. This proactive outreach is designed to solicit agency feedback at critical decision points, ensuring that technical input is integrated when it can most significantly influence the final planning outcomes.

Performance-based requirements specific to transit are covered in the transit planning section.

### **4.4.3 Findings**

The GHMPO is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations, and practices of transportation planning process and process coordination.



## 4.5 Participation by Interested Parties

### 4.5.1 Regulatory Basis

Sections 134(i)(5), 134(j)(1)(B) of Title 23 and Section 5303(i)(5) and 5303(j)(1)(B) of Title 49, require a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to provide adequate opportunity for the public to participate in and comment on the products and planning processes of the MPO. The requirements for public involvement are detailed in 23 CFR 450.316(a) and (b), which require the MPO to develop and use a documented participation plan that includes explicit procedures and strategies to include the public and other interested parties in the transportation planning process.

Specific requirements include giving adequate and timely notice of opportunities to participate in or comment on transportation issues and processes, employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, making public information readily available in electronically accessible formats and means such as the world wide web, holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times, demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input, and a periodically reviewing of the effectiveness of the participation plan.

### 4.5.2 Current Status

The GHMPO adopted an updated Public Involvement Policy (PIP) on November 15, 2023, which is currently hosted on the MPO website alongside the previous iteration. This 2023 policy incorporates a mandatory 45-calendar-day public comment period for revised participation plans and provides comprehensive details regarding public notice requirements and mandatory comment timeframes specific to the MPO's planning deliverables and activities.

To enhance regional coordination and transparency, the GHMPO maintains several interactive digital tools on their website, including:

- An interactive State Transportation Investment Program (STIP) mapping tool that displays current programmed projects within the GHMPO region.
- The Transportation Integrity Explorer, an interactive dashboard developed to complement the Transportation Integrity chapter of the 2050 MTP, which facilitates the examination of transportation projects and their associated community impacts.
- The 2025 WPCOG Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, a digital resource featuring interactive dashboards that allow the public to evaluate regionally adopted projects, stakeholder and community input, and proposed priority projects.
- The Community Health and Disaster Management Explorer (CHADME), an interactive, metrics-based tool designed for mitigation, preparedness, and resiliency planning purposes for the Western Piedmont region. Variables include socioeconomics, high-risk health populations, location of populations with limited or no access to transportation, proximity to natural features, and other social determinants of health.



- The Western Piedmont Transportation Safety Plan identifies a High Injury Network (HIN), a High Injury Intersection (HII) network, a Bike-Ped HIN, and a High-Risk Network (HRN) by pinpointing areas where the most injuries occur and evaluating the region's biggest transportation risks. This is shown using an interactive mapping dashboard. This process emphasizes the role of crash history while taking a proactive approach to transportation safety. The TSP also recommends safety enhancements and countermeasures for implementation.

### 4.5.3 Findings

The GHMPO is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations, and practices of participation by interested parties.

**Commendation:** The MPO is commended for their use of interactive digital tools and dashboards that facilitate regional coordination and transparency and inform the public of community impacts related to regional transportation projects.

**Recommendation:** The PIP should describe explicit procedures for employing visualization techniques in the MTP and TIP (23CFR450.316(a)(1)(iii)).

**Recommendation:** The PIP should describe explicit procedures for demonstrating consideration and responding to public input received during the development of the MTP and TIP (23CFR450.316(a)(1)(vi)).

**Observations:** It was noted and the MPO had confirmed that the 2025 WPCOG Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan digital tool does have municipal boundaries in the current layers, but the layers do not currently include the FTA urbanized area boundaries. In light of this, the MPO may consider adding the FTA boundaries into the tool.

## 4.6 Congestion Management Process

### 4.6.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(k)(3) and 23 CFR 450.322 set forth requirements for the congestion management process (CMP) in TMAs. The CMP is a systematic approach for managing congestion through a process that provides for a safe and effective integrated management and operation of the multimodal transportation system.



#### 4.6.2 Current Status

The GHMPO updated its Congestion Management Process (CMP) in 2023 alongside the development of the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). This update resulted in a more effective, federally prescribed, eight-step process for identifying, classifying, and mitigating regional congestion. The 2023 CMP incorporates all required federal elements: Objectives, Performance Measures, Data Collection, Problem Identification, Evaluation, Implement, and the final step, a biennial evaluation of implemented strategies.

The MPO completed its most recent biennial evaluation in 2024. The resulting Congestion Management Report (CMR) serves as the initial baseline report for the biennial evaluation cycle, fulfilling the requirements of the 2023 CMP.

Because the 2024 CMR is the first report issued since the release of the most recent CMP, its main goal is to "set the standard against which future Congestion Management Reports will be assessed." It successfully establishes the data and scoring baseline, with the official measurement of strategy effectiveness "actual measurements of improvement" set to begin with the next biennial report.

#### 4.6.3 Findings

The GHMPO is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations, and practices of their congestion management process.

**Observations:** It was noted and the MPO had confirmed that the next biennial Congestion Management Report evaluation is due this year and that they are on track with the report update.

### 4.7 Unified Planning Work Program

#### 4.7.1 Regulatory Basis

23 CFR 450.308 sets the requirement that planning activities be performed under Titles 23 and 49 U.S.C. be documented in a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The MPO, in cooperation with the State and public transportation operator, shall develop a UPWP that includes a discussion of the planning priorities facing the MPA and the work proposed for the next one- or two-year period by major activity and task in sufficient detail to indicate the agency that will perform the work, the schedule for completing the work, the resulting products, the proposed funding, and sources of funds.

#### 4.7.2 Current Status

The UPWP is developed cooperatively between the MPO, the regional transit operator (WPRTA) and NCDOT. The UPWP activities are developed, selected, and prioritized with the input of the MPO member jurisdictions. Staff identifies, selects, and prioritizes the work tasks in the UPWP that need to be and can be accomplished during the 1-year fiscal period (e.g., July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026).



The UPWP development process typically begins in late fall or early winter each year. The NCDOT, transit operators, and member jurisdictions are consulted to identify projects, studies, and work tasks that need to be included in the UPWP for the upcoming fiscal year. Their involvement in the development of emphasis areas supports and adheres to Federal requirements, explicitly addressing the ten federal planning factors established by federal law—and meets the MPO's MTP and other planning objectives. The NCDOT Transportation Planning Division (TPD) and Integrated Mobility Division (IMD) calculate and inform the MPO of Section 104(f) Planning (PL) funds and Section 5303 planning funds available for programming. Additionally, Section 5307 transit planning funds are apportioned to urbanized areas and managed by the designated recipient – (WPRTA within the GHMPO area). The budget is then utilized to identify what types and how much work can be accomplished in the fiscal year. The draft UPWP is typically released in January and adopted in the February to April timeframe (for example, the FY 2026 UPWP was officially adopted on February 26, 2025) and approved by FHWA/FTA in June. Quarterly and final reporting and invoicing narratives are submitted to NCDOT by task code for reimbursement and potential amendments. The end of the year annual report is a good means by which the MPO can more accurately manage its work tasks and project funding for the next fiscal year.

The MPO typically receives sufficient planning funds to adequately implement its program. All 5303 and 5307 funds are used to support transit planning activities. The MPO uses some PL funds to develop corridors and access management studies. To ensure a comprehensive planning approach, the MPO also supplements its program with State Planning and Research (SPR) funds, Surface Transportation Block Grant Program - Direct Attributable (STBGP-DA) funds, and specific Safe and Accessible Transportation Options funds.

The UPWP is consistent with the MTP and its long-term strategies, goals, and priorities, mapping out data collection and specific milestones required for the upcoming 2055 MTP update.

Even though Federal law only requires the MPO to certify the planning process every four years, the MPO annually certifies its planning process during UPWP development. MPO staff provide the TCC and Board the necessary documentation—including a detailed federal compliance checklist—to certify that they are meeting the Federal planning requirements. The frequency with which the self-certification occurs enables the two Boards to become familiar with why it is required and what they are certifying, culminating in an annual, formally adopted Resolution of Certification.

#### **4.7.3 Findings**

The GHMPO is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations, and practices of the development of their UPWP.

**Observation:** Currently, there is no formal documented process for amending the UPWP or for what changes even require an amendment. As of present day, if an amendment is needed, GHMPO first confirms with NCDOT TPD before bringing the changes to the TAC and TCC, after which, the changes are presented at the TAC/TCC meetings and are opened for an established



public comment period. If there are no issues with potential changes after the comment period is over, GHMPO will adopt the amendment. Further, amendments are not necessary for all project scope or financial changes, rather, the threshold for changes is only if extra money is needed or the overall dollar amount changes. Considering this, the MPO, in collaboration with the regional transit operator (WPRTA) and NCDOT, may consider formally documenting the amendment process for the UPWP detailing when an amendment is needed and how an amendment is processed.

## **4.8 Metropolitan Transportation Plan**

### **4.8.1 Regulatory Basis**

23 U.S.C. 134(c), (h) & (i) and 23 CFR 450.324 set forth requirements for the development and content of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Among the requirements are that the MTP address at least a 20-year planning horizon and that it includes both long- and short-range strategies that lead to the development of an integrated and multi-modal system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand.

The MTP is required to provide a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process. The plan needs to consider all applicable issues related to the transportation systems development, land use, employment, economic development, natural environment, and housing and community development.

23 CFR 450.324(c) requires the MPO to review and update the MTP at least every 5 years in attainment areas to reflect current and forecasted transportation, population, land use, employment, congestion, and economic conditions and trends.

Under 23 CFR 450.324(f), the MTP is required, at a minimum, to consider the following:

- Projected transportation demand
- Existing and proposed transportation facilities
- Operational and management strategies
- Congestion management process
- Capital investment and strategies to preserve transportation infrastructure and provide for multimodal capacity
- Design concept and design scope descriptions of proposed transportation facilities
- Potential environmental mitigation activities
- Pedestrian walkway and bicycle transportation facilities
- Transportation and transit enhancements
- A financial plan

### **4.8.2 Current Status**

The Greater Hickory MPO (GHMPO) maintains a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) with a 20-year planning horizon, updated every five years. The most recent 2050 MTP, adopted on July



25, 2023. It provides a long-range vision that divides project implementation into distinct horizon years, such as 2030, 2040, and 2050. It actively identifies both existing and proposed transportation networks to foster an integrated, multimodal transportation system that addresses highways, public transit, bicycles, and pedestrians. To ensure fiscal responsibility, the MPO projected 30-year revenues against modal project costs, dividing them into three funding bands: 2024-2030, 2031-2040, and 2041-2050. These estimates account for a 3% annual inflation rate for the latter two periods and incorporate a diverse mix of standard and innovative funding sources.

In accordance with federal performance-based planning mandates, the MTP features a dedicated Performance Measures framework to assess the condition and performance of the regional transportation network. The plan outlines specific performance targets and metrics for areas such as highway safety, state of good repair for public transit (see section 4.11.2), and bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. Furthermore, the MTP integrates a federally prescribed Congestion Management Process (CMP) to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize mobility. This data-driven CMP utilizes specific performance measures—including travel time indices, planning time indices, and bottleneck rankings—to continuously evaluate intersections and monitor regional system performance over time. GHMPO posts the most up-to-date performance measures and targets on its MTP website.

To manage the region's high volume of freight traffic, the GHMPO integrates freight-oriented development and land-use data directly into the 2050 MTP. The MPO maintains a comprehensive database of local providers—categorized by product, commodity, and county—to drive targeted outreach. A primary example of this was a 2022 survey of 100 regional freight operators, which helped the MPO identify critical bottlenecks and address federal freight planning factors. This industry feedback ensures the regional strategy remains grounded in real-world logistics and economic needs.

During the MTP development, the GHMPO actively engages resource agencies through digital outreach, virtual meetings, and public notices. While the MPO provides clear schedules and opportunities for input, agency responses are often general; the MPO continues to encourage more specific feedback regarding environmentally sensitive features to better inform the planning process. To address these concerns, the MTP includes a detailed framework for environmental mitigation, identifying potential impact types and restoration activities designed to maintain the region's ecological functions.

#### **4.8.3 Findings**

The GHMPO is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations, and practices of the development of their metropolitan transportation plan.

**Commendation:** The MPO is commended for their integration of freight-oriented development and land-use data directly into the 2050 MTP.



**Commendation:** The MPO is commended for their survey of 100 regional freight operators to help in identifying critical bottlenecks and address federal freight planning factors to ensure the regional strategy remains grounded in real-world logistics and economic needs.

## 4.9 Transportation Improvement Program

### 4.9.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(c),(h) & (j) set forth requirements for the MPO to cooperatively develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Under 23 CFR 450.326, the TIP must meet the following requirements:

- Must cover at least a four-year horizon and be updated at least every four years.
- Surface transportation projects funded under Title 23 U.S.C. or Title 49 U.S.C., except as noted in the regulations, are required to be included in the TIP.
- List project description, cost, funding source, and identification of the agency responsible for carrying out each project.
- Projects need to be consistent with the adopted MTP.
- Must be fiscally constrained.
- The MPO must provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP.

### 4.9.2 Current Status

The MPO TIP is typically developed every two years on a schedule that is compatible with STIP development. It is a consensus-based process including the MPO, NCDOT, and transit operator. The MPO provides their prioritized list of projects to the NCDOT Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT) for inclusion as part of the prioritization process.

The MPO's project selection process begins with a call for projects from member jurisdictions and public input. An initial list of projects is evaluated for need, readiness, and funding feasibility. They are then ranked using the MPO's prioritization process. The MPO ranks and prioritizes TIP projects using an established local methodology. Projects are then submitted to NCDOT and ranked based on the SPOT ranking process for possible inclusion in the STIP/TIP. Projects funded with STP-DA and TA-DA funds are based on a schedule determined by the MPO. Typically, these funds are used to plan and construct greenway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, intersection, small roadway, and transit projects. The MPO's Public Involvement Policy is used to seek public participation in the development of, and amendment to the TIP. The MPO approved the FY 2026-2035 TIP on August 27, 2025. The TIP includes capital and non-capital surface transportation projects in sufficient detail, estimated total cost per phase, and a discussion of the effect the TIP has toward achieving the performance targets identified. The TIP also includes a financial constrained analysis.



The process used to amend the TIP normally begins with NCDOT submitting their proposed amendments within the MPO area to the MPO for review and approval prior to NCDOT taking official action. If the MPO wishes to amend the TIP, it contacts NCDOT to discuss the proposal. In all instances, the MPO provides background information on amendments to the TCC and Board for approval. The definition the GHMPO uses for identification of TIP amendments is included in their Public Involvement Process.

### 4.9.3 Findings

The GHMPO metropolitan transportation plan is found to comply with the applicable laws, regulations, and practices of the development of their transportation improvement program.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the TIP adoption resolution includes a clause associated with TIP/MTP consistency.

**Observation:** Currently, the GHMPO ensures compliance with fiscal constraint requirements for the TIP by leveraging NCDOT's demonstration of fiscal constraint within the STIP. This practice is predicated on the understanding that the TIP, as a subset of the STIP, inherently maintains financial alignment with verified revenue projections.

The FHWA and FTA will work with NCDOT on updating this statement for future STIP/TIP update cycles with the goal of moving away from the "assumption" that the TIP is a subset of the STIP and instead describe the process used to ensure both statewide and localized fiscal constraint is being met.

A potential refinement for future reporting could state: *"While the TIP is functionally a subset of the STIP, GHMPO meets federal fiscal constraint requirements through active participation in NCDOT's **Strategic Transportation Investments (STI)** process. Utilizing the **Strategic Prioritization (SPOT)** scoring system, projects are programmed exclusively within specific, capped funding tiers—Statewide, Regional, and Division. This methodology ensures that GHMPO's programmed projects constitute a financially constrained schedule of improvements supported by verified state and federal revenue projections, rather than an unconstrained list of regional desires."*

## 4.10 List of Obligated Projects

### 4.10.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(j)(7) and 23 CFR 450.334 requires that the State, the MPO, and public transportation operators cooperatively develop a listing of projects for which Federal funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S. C. Chapter 53 was obligated in the previous year. The listing must include all federally funded projects authorized or revised to increase obligations in the preceding program year and, at a minimum, the following for each project:

- The amount of funds requested in the TIP



- Federal funding obligated during the preceding year
- Federal funding remaining and available for subsequent years
- Sufficient description to identify the project
- Identification of the agencies responsible for carrying out the project

#### 4.10.2 Current Status

The NCDOT provides the MPO with the required annual list of projects for which Federal funds have been obligated, and the MPO posts that information on its website. The GHMPOs website includes multiple years of annual listing of projects for which federal funds have been obligated by Federal Fiscal Year. The files include for both highways as “GHMPO FFY 202\_ Authorizations” spreadsheets and transit as “GHMPO FFY 202\_ Transit Authorizations” spreadsheets which includes columns for WBS element, WBS TIP Sub Num, Mode, Route/City, Description, County, Division, Phase of Work, Funding Type, MPO/RPO, Amount.

#### 4.10.3 Findings

The GHMPO is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations, and practices of the development of their list of obligated projects. However, we have the following recommendations:

**Observation:** FHWA and FTA intend to coordinate with NCDOT to refine the reporting format and data provided to MPOs for the annual *List of Obligated Projects*. This effort aims to ensure that the annual listing fully adheres to the requirements of 23 CFR 450.314(a).

### 4.11 Transit Planning

#### 4.11.1 Regulatory Basis

49 U.S.C. 5303 and 23 U.S.C. 134 require the transportation planning process in metropolitan areas to consider all modes of travel in the development of their plans and programs. Federal regulations cited in 23 CFR 450.314 state that the MPO in cooperation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit services shall be responsible for carrying out the transportation planning process.

23 U.S.C. 134(h)(2)(A) states the metropolitan transportation planning process shall provide for the establishment and use of a performance-based approach to transportation decision making to support the national goals described in section 150(b) of this title and in section 5301(c) of 49 U.S.C.

#### 4.11.2 Current Status

The Greater Hickory MPO has one transit operator in its large urbanized area. It is the Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority (WPRTA)/Greenway Public Transportation. The WPRTA is governed by a seven-member Board composed of a representative from each jurisdiction. The



Board members are appointed by their respective governing bodies. WPRTA is the Designated Recipient of FTA 5307 Urbanized Area and 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & People with Disabilities program. WPRTA provides Fixed Route transportation service in the cities of Conover, Hickory, and Newton, and Flex Route service in the Town of Taylorsville and Burke County (Morganton, Drexel, Valdese, Rutherford College), and Dial-A-Ride service in the counties of Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, and Catawba. There is a satellite facility in Alexander, Burke, and Caldwell counties for the paratransit operations, and a Transit Center for the fixed route service in Hickory. Buses are parked at Penske in Conover, and the main facility for the paratransit and fixed route services is in Conover.

Beginning in 2014, per the MPO membership requirements established by Section 1201(a) of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), WPRTA is represented in the regional governance by a voting representative on the MPO Policy Board, which is the TAC. The Executive Director of WPRTA is the appointed MPO board member for transit. The voting structure is further detailed in Section 4.1 MPO Organization Structure and Policy Board. The MPO incorporates the planning factors in all proposed projects, including WPRTA transit projects. Transit performance targets and goals are included in the MPO MTP. The transit operator and the MPO maintain a positive relationship. Transit appears to be involved in all planning phases, including TIP, STIP, UPWP, and MTP.

The 2050 MTP lists safety actuals for calendar year 2021 and safety targets established by NCDOT for 2022, which have been adopted by GHMPO. GHMPO adopts the safety measures annually. Under FTA's Transit Safety rule, public transportation agencies are classified into two tiers, Large and Small. Small providers are given the option to A) write their own safety plan or B) allow the NCDOT to carry out these requirements on their behalf. WPRTA, the sole public transportation provider in the GHMPO area, adopted their own Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Compliant Safety Plan and Targets.

The State of Good Repair / Transit Asset Management (TAM) targets included in the 2050 MTP were adopted in 2018 in coordination with WPRTA. The 2023 measures were adopted when GHMPO was updating the MTP in 2023, so these were not used. However, the GHMPO has since adopted the 2026 measures established by NCDOT. Under FTA's TAM rule regulation, there are two categories of public transportation providers – Tier I and Tier II. The GHMPO's public transit system, WPRTA, is a tier II agency. Tier II agencies are defined as those operating a fleet of fewer than 100 vehicles and not operating fixed rail. Tier II agencies are permitted to participate in the NCDOT's group TAM plan, which includes one set of performance targets. The GHMPO is not required to maintain a TAM plan but is responsible for coordinating with transit providers to establish performance targets.

WPRTA is preparing for a network redesign and reorientation of existing transit routes. The intention of the redesign is to improve the efficiency of the routes and reduce the wait times. WPRTA will utilize automatic passenger counter (APC) and data from the COG to determine route adjustments. The agency plans to utilize microtransit service to feed riders from the outer areas of the system into the fixed routes.



WPRTA is also currently working to incorporate technology into their transit system, including a mobile fare system and an application for microtransit.

#### **4.11.3 Findings**

The GHMPO is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations, and practices of transit planning.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The FHWA and FTA review found that the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted in the Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization meets Federal planning requirements as follows.

### **5.1 Commendations**

The following are noteworthy practices that the Greater Hickory MPO is doing well in the transportation planning process:

1. The MPO is commended for their use of interactive digital tools and dashboards that facilitate regional coordination and transparency and inform the public of community impacts related to regional transportation projects.
2. The MPO is commended for their integration of freight-oriented development and land-use data directly into the 2050 MTP.
3. The MPO is commended for their survey of 100 regional freight operators to help in identifying critical bottlenecks and address federal freight planning factors to ensure the regional strategy remains grounded in real-world logistics and economic needs.

### **5.2 Corrective Actions**

The following are corrective actions that the Greater Hickory MPO must take to comply with Federal Regulations:

None Observed.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The following are recommendations that would improve the transportation planning process:

1. The GHMPO website should explicitly list the current TAC membership and clearly identify the member(s) responsible for representing transit-related interests in addition to voting structure.
2. The MOU currently serves as a cooperative framework among NCDOT, the MPO, regional public transportation providers, and participating local governments; consequently, it should be formally executed only by those parties with direct responsibility for the agreement's implementation.



3. The PIP should describe explicit procedures for employing visualization techniques in the MTP and TIP (23CFR450.316(a)(1)(iii)).
4. The PIP should describe explicit procedures for demonstrating consideration and responding to public input received during the development of the MTP and TIP (23CFR450.316(a)(1)(vi)).
5. The TIP adoption resolution should include a clause associated with TIP/MTP consistency.

### **5.3 Training/Technical Assistance**

The following training and technical assistance are recommended to assist the MPO with improvements to the transportation planning process:

None Identified.



## APPENDIX A – PARTICIPANTS

The following individuals were involved in the Greater Hickory MPO urbanized area on-site review:

- Averi Ritchie, WPCOG – GHMPO Staff
- Casey Fullbright, WPCOG – GHMPO Staff
- Daniel Odom, WPCOG – GHMPO Staff
- Kelly Christensen, WPCOG
- Taylor Dellinger, WPCOG
- Andrew Webb, WPCOG
- Michael Bowman, WPRTA/Greenway Public Transportation
- James Upchurch, NCDOT - Transportation Planning Division
- Reuben Crummy, NCDOT – Transportation Planning Division
- George Hoops, PE, FHWA NC Division
- Jason Morgan, FTA Region 4
- Emily Maciejak, U.S. DOT Volpe Center
- Kaitlin Justice, U.S. DOT Volpe Center



## APPENDIX B – AGENDA

### Greater Hickory MPO On-Site/Virtual Hybrid Certification Review Agenda

|               |                                                  |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 9:00 – 9:15   | Introductions and Purpose                        |
| 9:15 – 9:30   | Status of Previous Certification Review Findings |
| 9:30 – 9:50   | MPO Organizational Structure and Policy Board    |
| 9:50 – 10:00  | Metropolitan Planning Area Boundaries            |
| 10:00 – 10:30 | Metropolitan Planning Agreements                 |
| 10:30 – 10:45 | Break                                            |
| 10:45 – 11:00 | Planning Process and Process Coordination        |
| 11:00 – 11:30 | Participation by Interested Parties              |
| 11:30 – 12:30 | Lunch                                            |
| 12:30 – 12:45 | Congestion Management Process                    |
| 12:45 – 1:15  | Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)           |
| 1:15 – 1:30   | Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)         |
| 1:30 – 1:45   | List of Obligated Projects                       |
| 1:45 – 2:00   | Break                                            |
| 2:00 – 2:30   | Transit Planning                                 |
| 2:30 – 2:45   | MPO Highlights/Concerns/Questions                |
| 2:45 – 3:15   | Federal Review Team Meeting/Team Report Out      |
| 3:15 – 3:30   | Provide a Report Out to MPO                      |

## APPENDIX C – PUBLIC COMMENTS

The survey results from the Greater Hickory MPO Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) are summarized below:

### Committee Representation

- **TCC (Technical Committee):** 61.54% (8 respondents).
- **TAC (Policy Board):** 38.46% (5 respondents).

### MPO Support and Communication

- **Information Quality:** 76.92% of respondents find materials provided by staff to be "Very Helpful and Timely," while the remaining respondents find them "Generally Helpful" (15.38%) or "Adequate" (7.69%).
- **Meeting Format:** 92.31% agree that current schedules and formats provide sufficient opportunity for review and discussion. Only 7.69% believe they "Could be Improved".
- **Agency Coordination:** Coordination with partner agencies (NCDOT, Greenway Transit, local governments) is viewed as "Very Strong" (69.23%) or "Strong" (23.08%).

### Planning and Investment

- **Project Prioritization (MTP/TIP):** Responses were split, with 38.46% describing the process as "Clear and Collaborative" and another 38.46% finding it "Generally Clear". However, 15.38% found it "somewhat unclear".
- **Investment Alignment:** 61.54% feel transportation investments reflect regional and local needs "To a Great Extent," while 30.77% feel they do so "To a Moderate Extent".
- **Public Involvement:** This was the most varied area, with 46.15% rating efforts as "Effective," 23.08% as "Adequate," 15.38% as "Very Effective," and 15.38% stating they "Could be Expanded".

### Key Opportunities for Improvement

Respondents identified several areas to enhance regional planning and coordination:

**Public Accessibility:** Increase social media presence and develop a less technical, more public-friendly website landing page.

**Simplified Communication:** Use simple fact sheets and fewer acronyms to better engage the community.

**Process Efficiency:** Optimize meeting schedules and streamline project requirements with partner agencies to ensure projects remain affordable and feasible for all jurisdictions.



The key takeaways from the results of a public survey conducted by the Greater Hickory MPO regarding regional transportation are summarized below:

**Public familiarity and participation in regional transportation efforts:**

- **Plan Familiarity:** A significant majority of respondents (65.22%) reported they were not familiar with any of the listed transportation plans.
- **Most Recognized Plan:** Among the specific options, the Western Piedmont Bike/Ped plan had the highest familiarity at 30.43%.
- **Other Plans:** Familiarity with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) was low, each at 8.7%. The Planning Work Program (PWP) was recognized by only 4.35% of respondents, while no respondents were familiar with the Congestion Management Process (CMP) or Public Involvement Plan (PIP).

**Public participation in regional transportation efforts:**

- **No Participation:** The vast majority of respondents (78.26%) have not participated in any MPO-related planning activities.
- **Direct Engagement:** Only 4.35% (one respondent) indicated they had participated in these planning efforts.
- **Uncertainty:** Approximately 17.39% of respondents were unsure if they had participated in any activities.

**Public Opportunity to participate in transportation planning effort:**

- **Mixed Opinions on Opportunities:** The largest group of respondents (34.78%) felt that there are "Somewhat" enough opportunities to participate.
- **Significant Uncertainty:** A large portion of respondents (30.43%) indicated they were "Not Sure" if opportunities were available.
- **Low "Yes" and "No" Responses:** An equal number of respondents (17.39% each) explicitly felt there either were ("Yes") or were not ("No") sufficient opportunities to participate in the planning efforts.

**Respondents assessment of the Transportation plans availability:**

- **Information Sources:**
  - **Social Media:** This is the most common source of information, cited by 52.17% of respondents.
  - **Not Sure:** A large portion of respondents (34.78%) were unsure how they received information.
  - **Word of Mouth:** Used by 17.39% of respondents.
  - **Public Meetings:** Cited by 8.7%.
  - **Email/Newsletters:** Only 4.35% used this method.
  - **MPO Website/Other:** No respondents (0%) selected these as sources.



- **Availability Rating:**
  - A majority of respondents (52.17%) rated the availability of information as "Limited".
  - 17.39% were "Not Sure" about the availability.
  - 13.04% felt information was "Accessible" and another 13.04% were "Neutral".
  - Only 4.35% rated information as "Very Accessible".

#### **Respondents respondent with what would make it easier for the public to stay informed about transportation projects:**

- **More frequent updates:** This was the most requested method, cited by 60.87% of respondents.
- **More visuals/maps:** Over half of respondents (56.52%) suggested that more visual information would be helpful.
- **Short summaries:** Approximately 52.17% of respondents indicated a preference for brief summaries of information.
- **Community meetings:** This method was also favored by 52.17% of those surveyed.
- **Interactive tools:** Roughly 34.78% of respondents felt that interactive tools would aid in staying informed.
- **Other:** A small portion of respondents (13.04%) suggested other unspecified methods.

#### **Respondents identified transportation challenges experienced:**

- **Primary Challenge:** The most significant issue reported is a lack of sidewalks and bike facilities, cited by 69.57% of respondents.
- **Safety and Traffic:** Over half of respondents (52.17%) identified safety concerns as a challenge, while 43.48% cited traffic congestion.
- **Infrastructure and Connectivity:** Three different areas were each identified as challenges by 39.13% of respondents: Limited transit options, Connectivity between different areas, and General road conditions.
- **Other Barriers:** ADA barriers were noted by 13.04% of those surveyed.
- **Minimal Concerns:** Very few respondents (4.35%) reported experiencing no major challenges.

#### **Respondents feedback on if the transportation system supports their daily needs:**

- **Needs Improvement:** The majority of respondents (52.17%) feel the system needs improvement.
- **Well:** Approximately 30.43% of respondents believe the system currently supports their needs well.
- **Neutral:** A smaller group (13.04%) expressed a neutral opinion.
- **Very Well:** Only 4.35% (one respondent) feel the system supports their needs very well.
- **Not Sure:** No respondents indicated they were unsure.



### What respondents identified as transportation improvements they would most like to see in their communities:

- **Sidewalks & Bikes:** This was the most requested improvement, selected by 73.91% of respondents.
- **Roadway Improvements:** Over half of the respondents (52.17%) cited general roadway improvements as a priority.
- **Safety and Regional Connectivity:** Both Safety Improvements and Regional Connectivity were identified as priorities by 47.83% of respondents.
- **Transit and Economic Access:**
  - Transit Access & Connectivity: 21.74%.
  - Economic Development Access: 17.39%.
- **ADA Improvements:** 13.04% of respondents would like to see improvements related to ADA accessibility.

### Respondents feedback on what transportation improvements would have the greatest positive impact in your community?

Respondents highlighted the importance of active transportation, emphasizing the need for expanded sidewalks, bike trails, and greenways, as well as improved ADA accessibility. Addressing specific roadway improvements—such as upgrading interchanges along I-40, enhancing heavily congested intersections, and optimizing traffic signal timing—was noted as key for better vehicular flow. Additionally, there is a strong interest in improving regional public transit connectivity and establishing passenger rail options, accompanied by a need for better public communication regarding the transportation services already available.

### Respondents feedback on other issues they would like to share regarding transportation?

Community members emphasized the necessity of expanding and actively promoting accessible public transportation options to ensure all residents can reliably reach jobs and essential services. Participants also expressed a strong desire for regional passenger rail connectivity to major hubs and airports. Furthermore, improving the overall safety of local roads—such as widening lanes and adding supportive shoulders —alongside enhancing access to recreational areas, were identified as important priorities for the region's transportation future.



## APPENDIX D - LIST OF ACRONYMS

**ADA:** Americans with Disabilities Act  
**AMPO:** Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations  
**CAA:** Clean Air Act  
**CFR:** Code of Federal Regulations  
**CMP:** Congestion Management Process  
**CO:** Carbon Monoxide  
**DOT:** Department of Transportation  
**FAST:** Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act  
**FHWA:** Federal Highway Administration  
**FTA:** Federal Transit Administration  
**FY:** Fiscal Year  
**HSIP:** Highway Safety Improvement Program  
**ITS:** Intelligent Transportation Systems  
**LEP:** Limited-English-Proficiency  
**M&O:** Management and Operations  
**MAP-21:** Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century  
**MPA:** Metropolitan Planning Area  
**MPO:** Metropolitan Planning Organization  
**MTP:** Metropolitan Transportation Plan  
**NAAQS:** National Ambient Air Quality Standards  
**NO<sub>2</sub>:** Nitrogen Dioxide  
**O<sub>3</sub>:** Ozone  
**PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>:** Particulate Matter  
**SHSP:** Strategic Highway Safety Plan  
**STIP:** State Transportation Improvement Program  
**TDM:** Travel Demand Management  
**TIP:** Transportation Improvement Program  
**TMA:** Transportation Management Area  
**U.S.C.:** United States Code  
**UPWP:** Unified Planning Work Program  
**USDOT:** United States Department of Transportation





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**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION  
GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
TCC/TAC**

**MEETING DATE:** June 24, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Goals, Vision, and Policies Chapter of Metropolitan Transportation Plan

**PRESENTER:** Averi Ritchie, Transportation Planning Director

**ATTACHMENTS:** Goals, Vision, and Policies Overview

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

The proposed "Goals, Vision, and Policies" chapter of the 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) establishes the foundational direction for the Greater Hickory MPO's long-range transportation investments. The updated vision focuses on developing a safe, secure, connected, reliable, and resilient transportation system that expands access to opportunities, supports economic prosperity, and enhances the region's quality of life. Crucially, this chapter directly aligns our regional objectives with the ten federal planning factors mandated by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), ensuring full compliance and consistency with statewide planning practices.

To better serve the region, the update strategically reorganizes the priorities established in the 2050 MTP into eight broader, outcome-based goal areas. This restructured framework reduces overlap and establishes a stronger connection between objectives and performance measures. The eight proposed 2055 goals focus on: Safety & Security, Mobility & Connectivity, Accessibility & Transportation Choice, Economic Vitality & Freight Mobility (which now formally integrates aviation), Infrastructure Condition & Reliability, Resilience, Environment & Quality of Life, and Regional Coordination & Public Engagement.

Finally, the chapter outlines the active planning tools and programs GHMPO staff are utilizing to translate these goals into actionable projects. These include the upcoming Economic Expansion and Accessibility interactive mapping tool, transit ridership trend analysis for WPRTA, updates to the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, the Western Piedmont Transportation Safety Plan (WPTSP), and the continued administration of the Locally Administered Project Program (LAPP). Approval of this chapter will set the official policy framework for the remainder of the 2055 MTP development process.

**BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:** None. Informational item only.



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# 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Update: Goals, Vision, and Policies  
Greater Hickory MPO | June 2026

# OUR VISION

- "A safe, connected, reliable, and resilient transportation system that expands access to opportunities, supports economic prosperity, and enhances quality of life."

# FEDERAL PLANNING FACTORS

- Economic Vitality
- Safety
- Security
- Accessibility
- Environment
- Connectivity
- Efficiency
- Preservation
- Resiliency
- Tourism

# GOAL TRANSITION: 2050 TO 2055

| 2050 MTP Goal Area          | Key Themes                                     | Proposed 2055 Goal                        |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Multimodal Transportation   | Connectivity, access, modal integration        | Mobility & Connectivity                   |
| Streets & Highways          | Mobility, reliability, congestion relief       | Mobility & Connectivity                   |
| Congestion Management       | Reliability, system efficiency                 | Mobility & Connectivity                   |
| Bicycle & Pedestrian        | Active transportation, accessibility, safety   | Accessibility & Transportation Choice     |
| Public Transportation       | Transit access, mobility options               | Accessibility & Transportation Choice     |
| Freight Transportation      | Freight movement, economic activity            | Economic Vitality & Freight Mobility      |
| Aviation                    | Economic development, regional competitiveness | Economic Vitality & Freight Mobility      |
| Land Use Coordination       | Community development, coordination            | Environment & Quality of Life             |
| Human & Natural Environment | Environmental stewardship                      | Environment & Quality of Life             |
| Safety & Security           | Fatalities, crashes, security                  | Safety                                    |
| Transportation Funding      | Asset management, project implementation       | Infrastructure Condition & Reliability    |
| Planning Process            | Coordination, public engagement                | Regional Coordination & Public Engagement |
| System Resilience           | Hazard mitigation, recovery, reliability       | Resilience                                |

# SAFETY & CONNECTIVITY

- **Goal 1: Safety & Security**
  - Reduce fatalities and serious injuries for all users. Includes improved emergency response and cross-modal safety outcomes.
- **Goal 2: Mobility & Connectivity**
  - Efficient transportation network across modes. Merges highways and multimodal into a single focus on regional movement.

# ACCESSIBILITY & ECONOMY

- **Goal 3: Accessibility & Choice**
  - Expand safe and affordable access to opportunities for all ages. Consolidates Bike/Ped and Transit goals.
- **Goal 4: Economic Vitality**
  - Support prosperity through reliable movement of goods and people. Integrates Freight and Aviation focus areas.

# CONDITION & RESILIENCE

- **Goal 5: Infrastructure**

- Emphasize preservation and maintenance of existing assets. Maximizes the value of current regional investments.

- **Goal 6: Resilience**

- Adapt to and recover from disruptions. Includes hazard mitigation and mitigating stormwater impacts.

# ENVIRONMENT & COORDINATION

- **Goal 7: Environment & QOL**
  - Protect natural and human environments while promoting planned growth and energy conservation.
- **Goal 8: Regional Coordination**
  - Promote coordinated decision-making and meaningful public involvement throughout the planning process.

# ECONOMIC ACCESSIBILITY TOOL

- Interactive mapping tool (FY 26-27 adoption) evaluates networks using traffic signal data, AADT, and zoning.
  - Identifies regional bottlenecks
  - Supports signal delay review
  - Promotes strategic growth

# TITLE VI EXPLORER TOOL

- Interactive mapping tool which is used to make project impact assessments about highly concentrated Title VI communities.
  - Identifies highly concentrated Title VI communities
  - Supports project impact assessments
  - Promotes inclusive regional planning

# TRANSIT & BIKE/PED TOOLS

- **Transit Ridership Analysis**
  - Initiating trend analysis for WPRTA to assist in system-wide reroutes. Includes mapping updates for automated passenger counter software.
- **Regional Bike/Ped Plan**
  - Ongoing oversight and implementation of the adopted Western Piedmont Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, including scoring and mapping.

# SAFETY & FUNDING

- **WP Safety Plan (WPTSP)**
  - Identifies high-risk areas using crash data across all modes. Informs CTP "Purpose and Need" sheets for FY 26-27.
- **ADA Transition Planning Services**
  - We partner with communities to create clear, forward-thinking plans that remove barriers and improve access to civic life for individuals with disabilities.
- **\$ LAPP Program**
  - Annual call for projects and supplemental funding. GHMPO currently administers one project on behalf of local staff.



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# Questions?

**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION  
GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
TCC/TAC**

**MEETING DATE:** June 24, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Express Design Project Submittals & Statewide Tier Results

**PRESENTER:** Averi Ritchie & Casey Fullbright

**ATTACHMENTS:** Express Design Project Submittals & Statewide Tier Results

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

The NCDOT Express Design program is a critical planning tool utilized to develop conceptual engineering layouts and refined cost estimates for proposed transportation projects prior to formal scoring. By identifying potential right-of-way impacts, environmental constraints, and realistic budget requirements early in the development phase, Express Designs help mitigate unforeseen issues and significantly increase a project's competitiveness for funding. For the current planning cycle, GHMPO staff is actively finalizing three local project submittals for this program, which must be submitted to NCDOT by the end of June.

In addition to the upcoming Express Design submittals, the NCDOT Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT) has officially released the scoring results for the Statewide Mobility Tier. The Statewide Tier focuses on major highway and freight corridors that move large volumes of traffic across the state. We are pleased to report that the results are in, and the approved major projects have been fully programmed into the Prioritization 8.0 (P8.0) framework.

The programming of these Statewide Tier projects establishes a clear baseline as the region transitions into the subsequent Regional Impact and Division Needs scoring tiers of P8.0. During the meeting, staff will provide a brief presentation reviewing the specifics of the three June Express Design submittals, alongside a summary of our region's programmed Statewide Tier projects for the committees' review and discussion.

**BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:** None. Informational item only.

# REVISED P8 Schedule

April 2026

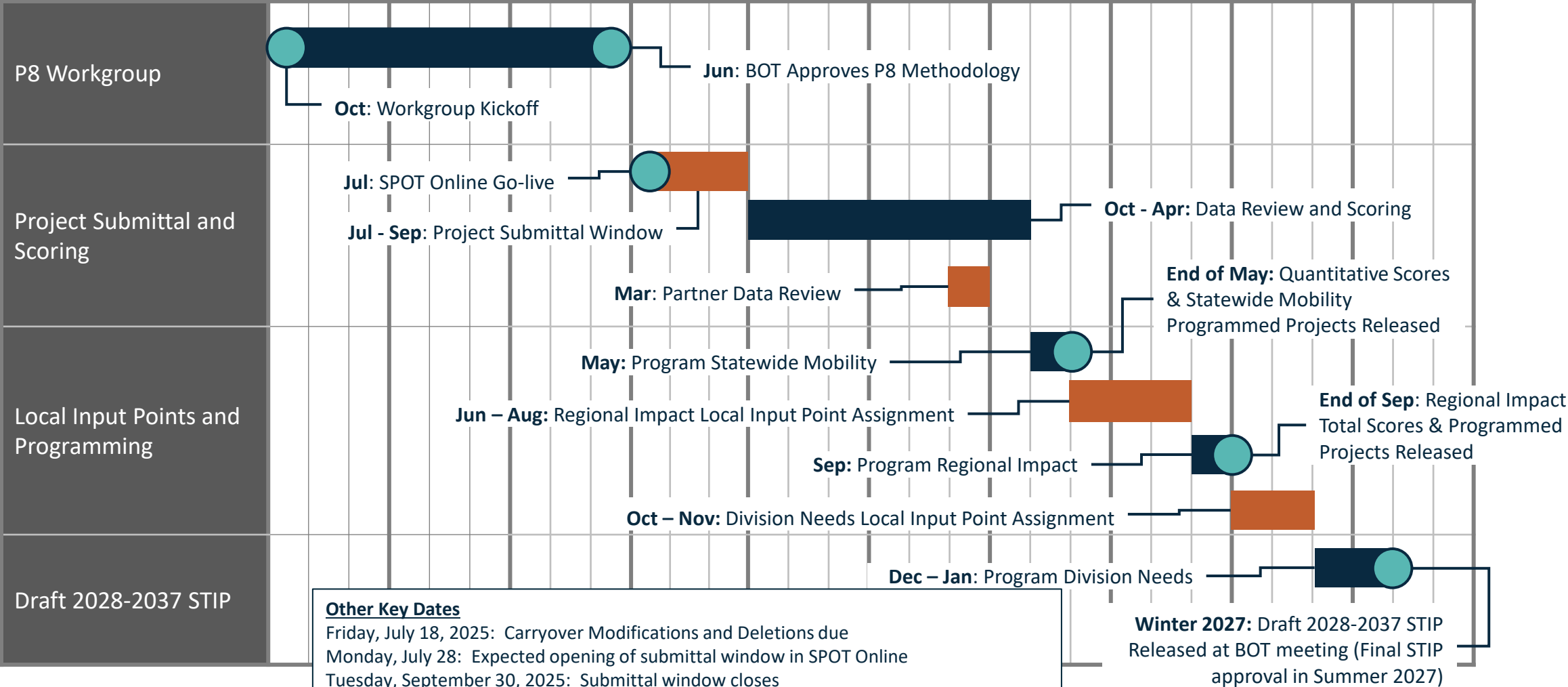


Fixed Dates



Partner Input

| 2024 |   |   | 2025 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 2026 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 2027 |   |   |
|------|---|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|
| O    | N | D | J    | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D | J    | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D | J    | F | M |



**Other Key Dates**

- Friday, July 18, 2025: Carryover Modifications and Deletions due
- Monday, July 28: Expected opening of submittal window in SPOT Online
- Tuesday, September 30, 2025: Submittal window closes
- Tuesday, September 30, 2025: Area-specific Weights due to SPOT Office
- Friday, May 1, 2026: Deadline for SPOT Office approval of LIP Assignment Methodologies

## Potential Express Design Submittals for Prioritization 9

| SPOT ID   | Mode    | TIP     | Project Category   | Route                      | From / Cross Street                        | To                                 | Description                                                                                                                              | Specific Improvement Type                          | Cost to NCDOT  | Statewide Mobility Quantitative Score (Out of 100) | Regional Impact Quantitative Score (Out of 70) | Division Needs Quantitative Score (Out of 50) |
|-----------|---------|---------|--------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| H250621   | Highway |         | Statewide Mobility | US 321 (Hickory Boulevard) | US 321 ALT (Riverbend Drive)               | Glenn Ridge Drive                  | Construct reduced conflict intersection corridor                                                                                         | 25 - Improve Multiple Intersections along Corridor | \$ 15,000,000  | 73.09                                              | 51.42                                          | 37.00                                         |
| H170910   | Highway | I-5991B | Statewide Mobility | I-40                       | SR 1476 (Fairgrove Church Road) - Exit 128 | NC 16 (Thornburg Drive) - Exit 132 | Widen roadway to 6 lanes.                                                                                                                | 1 - Widen Existing Roadway                         | \$ 98,400,000  | 68.32                                              | 40.03                                          | 24.47                                         |
| H172232   | Highway |         | Statewide Mobility | I-40                       | SR 1761 - Exit 116                         | US 321 - Exit 123                  | Widen Existing Roadway                                                                                                                   | 1 - Widen Existing Roadway                         | \$ 300,300,000 | 63.16                                              | 37.49                                          | 22.77                                         |
| H250089   | Highway |         | Regional Impact    | NC 16                      | US 64 Eastbound ramps                      | US 64 Westbound ramps              | Construct roundabouts                                                                                                                    | 25 - Improve Multiple Intersections along Corridor | \$ 11,600,000  | N/A                                                | 48.04                                          | 36.39                                         |
| H090090   | Highway | U-6151  | Regional Impact    | NC 16                      | Catawba River                              | US 64                              | Catawba River to US 64 in Taylorsville. Upgrade and modernize two-lane roadway.                                                          | 16 - Modernize Roadway                             | \$ 147,600,000 | N/A                                                | 47.30                                          | 36.11                                         |
| H090084-A | Highway | R-2307A | Regional Impact    | NC 150                     | Relocated NC 16                            | SR 1902 (Harvel Road)              | Relocated NC 16 (STIP project R-2206) to east of SR 1840 (Greenwood Road). Widen to 4-lanes with a BYP of the Terrell Historic District. | 1 - Widen Existing Roadway                         | \$ 419,500,000 | N/A                                                | 44.43                                          | 25.89                                         |
| H090474-C | Highway | U-4700C | Statewide Mobility | US 321                     | SR 1108 (Mission Road)                     | SR 1933 (Southwest Boulevard)      | Add additional lanes                                                                                                                     | 1 - Widen Existing Roadway                         | \$ 159,200,000 | 60.81                                              | 41.31                                          | 29.96                                         |
| H090474-B | Highway | U-4700B | Statewide Mobility | US 321                     | US 321 ALT (South Main Street)             | SR 1108 (Mission Road)             | Add additional lanes                                                                                                                     | 1 - Widen Existing Roadway                         | \$ 285,100,000 | 58.59                                              | 38.66                                          | 26.93                                         |

**Draft 2028-2037 STIP Estimated Funding Availability  
for Selecting Projects from Prioritization 8.0**  
*As of May 28, 2026*

| <b>STI Funding Category</b>  | <b>Funding Availability</b> |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Region A (Divisions 1 & 4)   | <b>\$100M</b>               |
| Region B (Divisions 2 & 3)   | <b>\$150M</b>               |
| Region C (Divisions 5 & 6)   | <b>\$551M</b>               |
| Region D (Divisions 7 & 9)   | <b>\$236M</b>               |
| Region E (Divisions 8 & 10)  | <b>\$246M</b>               |
| Region F (Divisions 11 & 12) | <b>\$432M</b>               |
| Region G (Divisions 13 & 14) | <b>\$122M</b>               |
|                              |                             |
| Division 1                   | <b>\$228M</b>               |
| Division 2                   | <b>\$159M</b>               |
| Division 3                   | <b>\$31M</b>                |
| Division 4                   | <b>\$29M</b>                |
| Division 5                   | <b>\$125M</b>               |
| Division 6                   | <b>\$186M</b>               |
| Division 7                   | <b>\$106M</b>               |
| Division 8                   | <b>-\$21M</b>               |
| Division 9                   | <b>\$80M</b>                |
| Division 10                  | <b>\$97M</b>                |
| Division 11                  | <b>\$15M</b>                |
| Division 12                  | <b>\$47M</b>                |
| Division 13                  | <b>\$190M</b>               |
| Division 14                  | <b>\$257M</b>               |

**Values are as of May 28, 2026, and will change due to, but not limited to:**

- Variance adjustments (also known as the lookback law)
- Additional funding for ongoing activities
- Bid adjustments
- Cost changes for future projects
- Schedule changes
- Changes in anticipated revenues (including federal transportation re-authorization)

Greater Hickory MPO  
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| Division 11 Projects Under Development – Caldwell Co. |                                     |                                                                                                                              |                     |                       |                                   |                              |                                       |                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <u>TIP</u>                                            | <u>ROUTE</u>                        | <u>DESCRIPTION</u>                                                                                                           | <u>ROW<br/>YEAR</u> | <u>CONST<br/>YEAR</u> | <u>TOTAL<br/>PROJECT<br/>COST</u> | <u>Status</u>                | <u>Final<br/>Assigned<br/>Manager</u> | <u>Funding:<br/>S/F</u> |
| BL-0002                                               | US 321A (MAIN STREET)               | US 321A (MAIN STREET), CONSTRUCT PEDESTRIAN CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS FROM SR 1952 (CEDAR VALLEY ROAD) TO SR 1156 (LEGION ROAD). | 2026                | 2026                  | \$464,000                         | Planning                     | Division                              | F                       |
| BL-0065                                               | NS                                  | Lenoir Greenway, Harper Avenue to Morganton Boulevard. Extend multi-use path.                                                | 2028                | 2029                  | \$2,449,000                       | Planning                     | LAP                                   | F                       |
| BP11-R008                                             | SR 1545 (COTTRELL HILL ROAD)        | Replace Bridge 130011 on SR 1545 over Zachs Fork Creek in Caldwell County                                                    | 2025                | 2028                  | \$1,575,000                       | Utilities                    | Division                              | S                       |
| BP11-R025                                             | SR 1927 (OLD MORGANTON ROAD)        | Replace Bridge 130332 on SR 1927 over Abington Creek in Caldwell County                                                      | 2026                | 2029                  | \$1,475,000                       | R/W                          | Division                              | S                       |
| BP11-R040                                             | SR 1719 (CEDAR VALLEY CHURCH ROAD)  | Replace Bridge 130048 on SR 1719 over Upper Little River in Caldwell County                                                  | 2025                | 2028                  | \$1,175,000                       | Utilities by others complete | Division                              | S                       |
| BP11-R042                                             | SR 1328 (BROWN MOUNTAIN BEACH ROAD) | Replace Bridge 130322 on SR 1328 over Este Mill Creek in Caldwell County                                                     | 2028                | 2029                  | \$950,000                         | Planning                     | Division                              | S                       |
| BP11-R048                                             | SR 1571                             | Replace Bridge 130342 on SR 1571 over Kings Creek in Caldwell County                                                         | 2026                | 2027                  | \$1,735,000                       | Planning                     | Division                              | S                       |
| HB-0056                                               | SR 1514                             | SR 1514, REPLACE BRIDGE 130 OVER YADKIN RIVER.                                                                               | 2025                | 2026                  | \$2,150,000                       | September 2026 LET           | Division                              | F                       |
| HB-0057                                               | SR 1356                             | SR 1356, REPLACE BRIDGE 185 OVER JOHNS RIVER.                                                                                | 2025                | 2027                  | \$2,100,000                       | October 2026 LET             | Division                              | F                       |
| HB-0058                                               | SR 1356                             | SR 1356, REPLACE BRIDGE 186 OVER JOHNS RIVER.                                                                                | 2025                | 2027                  | \$1,820,000                       | October 2026 LET             | Division                              | F                       |
| HB-0059                                               | SR 1356                             | SR 1356, REPLACE BRIDGE 275 OVER JOHNS RIVER.                                                                                | 2025                | 2027                  | \$1,860,000                       | October 2026 LET             | Division                              | F                       |
| HB-0060                                               | SR 1356                             | SR 1356, REPLACE BRIDGE 317 OVER JOHNS RIVER.                                                                                | 2025                | 2027                  | \$2,330,000                       | October 2026 LET             | Division                              | F                       |

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|          |                                 |                                                                                                                                                           |      |      |              |                    |          |   |
|----------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|--------------|--------------------|----------|---|
| HB-0061  | SR 1574                         | SR 1574, REPLACE BRIDGE 349 OVER JONES CREEK.                                                                                                             | 2025 | 2026 | \$1,680,000  | September 2026 LET | Division | F |
| R-3430CA | SR 1001 (CONNELLY SPRINGS ROAD) | SR 1001 (CONNELLY SPRINGS ROAD) FROM CATAWBA RIVER TO SR 1933 (SOUTH-WEST BOULEVARD). MODERNIZE ROADWAY TO INCLUDE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCOMMODATIONS. | 2029 | 2033 | \$73,507,000 | Planning           | Central  | F |
| R-3430CB | SR 1001 (CONNELLY SPRINGS ROAD) | SR 1001 (CONNELLY SPRINGS ROAD) FROM CATAWBA RIVER TO SR 1933 (SOUTH-WEST BOULEVARD). MODERNIZE ROADWAY TO INCLUDE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCOMMODATIONS. | 2030 | 2034 | \$69,292,000 | Planning           | Central  | F |
| U-4700CA | US 321                          | SR 1160 (MOUNT HERMAN ROAD). UPGRADE INTERSECTION TO SUPERSTREET DESIGN. - WITHIN THE LIMITS OF U-4700 C.                                                 | 2019 | 2026 | \$8,620,000  | September 2026 Let | Division | F |
| U-4700CB | US 321                          | AT SR 1809/1952 (PINE MOUNTAIN ROAD). UPGRADE INTERSECTION TO SUPERSTREET DESIGN.                                                                         | 2019 | 2026 | \$17,000,000 | September 2026 Let | Division | F |
|          |                                 |                                                                                                                                                           |      |      |              |                    |          |   |
| U-6034   | US 321 ALT                      | DUKE STREET TO PINWOODS ROAD                                                                                                                              | 2025 | 2029 | \$46,300,000 | R/W                | Division | F |
| U-6157   | SR 1130 (CAJAH MOUNTAIN ROAD)   | SR 1130 (CAJAH MOUNTAIN ROAD) FROM SR 1001 (CONNELLY SPRINGS ROAD) TO US 321A                                                                             | 2025 | 2029 | \$68,300,000 | R/W                | Division | F |
| U-6161   | US 321                          | US 321 FROM SR 1002 (DUDLEY SHOALS ROAD) GRADE SEPARATION. CONSTRUCT RAMP ONTO US 321 SOUTHBOUND.                                                         | 2026 | 2028 | \$8,570,000  | Planning           | Division | F |
|          |                                 |                                                                                                                                                           |      |      |              |                    |          |   |
|          |                                 |                                                                                                                                                           |      |      |              |                    |          |   |

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| Division 11 Projects Under Construction |               |                        |                                         |                                                  |                        |                                                      |                                |                        |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| <u>Contract Number</u>                  | <u>County</u> | <u>TIP#</u>            | <u>Route</u>                            | <u>Location Description</u>                      | <u>Contract Amount</u> | <u>Contractor</u>                                    | <u>Construction Progress %</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> |
| C204844                                 | CALDWELL      | U-6036                 | SR 1109<br>(PINWOOD ROAD)               | FROM US 321 TO SR-1252 (BERT HUFFMAN ROAD)       | \$11,480,140.98        | JAMES R VANNOY &<br>SONS CONSTRUCTION<br>COMPANY INC | 52 %                           | 7/27                   |
| C204840                                 | CALDWELL      | U-4700CC               | US 321 and<br>SR 1108<br>(Mission Road) | INTERSECTION AT US-321 AND SR-1108 (MISSION RD). | \$13,348,559.10        | HEI CIVIL CAROLINAS LLC                              | 11 %                           | 4/28                   |
| DK00436                                 | CALDWELL      | DF18311.<br>2014030.PR | SR 1358<br>(Edgemont Church Place)      | REPLACE BRIDGE NO. 161 OVER WILSON CREEK         | \$1,641,926.67         | JAMES R VANNOY &<br>SONS CONSTRUCTION<br>COMPANY INC | 17 %                           | 4/27                   |

Division 13, GHMPO Construction Progress Update, June 2026

| Contract Number | County                               | TIP#      | Description Of Work                                | Route                                                                           | Location Description                                                   | Letting Date | Completion Date | Revised Completion Date | Completion Percent |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| C204716         | Burke                                | B-5869    | Bridge Replacement                                 | US-64                                                                           | BRIDGE #99 OVER NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILROAD ON US-64/US-70 IN MORGANTON. | 5/16/2023    | 2/8/2027        | 3/29/2027               | 81.43%             |
| C204956         | Burke, Caldwell                      | R-3430B   | Bridge Replacement                                 | SR-1001                                                                         | BRIDGE #110010 OVER CATAWBA RIVER ON SR-1001 (CONNELLY SPRING RD).     | 8/19/2025    | 3/30/2029       |                         | 7.14%              |
| C205096         | Burke, McDowell                      |           | Milling, Resurfacing, and Shoulder Reconstructuion | SR-MULTI                                                                        | 20 SECTIONS OF SECONDARY ROADS.                                        | 5/20/2025    | 11/1/2026       | 11/2/2026               | 61.76%             |
| DM00387         | Burke                                | HA-0001   | Grading, Drainage, Paving, Curb and Gutter         | -                                                                               | NEW ACCESS ROAD INTO BURKE INDUSTRIAL PARK                             | 5/28/2025    | 6/30/2026       | 7/30/2026               | 88.54%             |
| DM00429         | Burke                                | BP13-R033 | Bridge Replacement                                 | SR-1116                                                                         | SR-1116 (JEETER CARSWELL RD) OVER DOUBLE BRANCH                        | 11/19/2025   | 4/30/2027       |                         | 91.88%             |
| DM00442         | Burke, Rutherford                    |           | Patching and Pavement Preservation                 | SR-MULTI                                                                        | VARIOUS SECONDARY ROUTES                                               | 3/6/2024     | 11/21/2025      | 12/12/2025              | 33.27%             |
| DM00449         | Burke                                | R-5967    | Patching and Pavement Preservation                 | SR-1625                                                                         | SR-1625 (9TH AVE DR NW)                                                | 1/3/2024     | 10/30/2026      | 11/25/2026              | 73.31%             |
| DM00455         | Burke, Madison, McDowell, Rutherford |           | Long-life Pavement Markings                        | NC-108, NC-114, NC-126, NC-181, NC-208, NC-209, NC-226ALT, NC-9, SR-VAR, US-221 | VARIOUS PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ROUTES                                   | 8/7/2024     | 9/26/2025       |                         | 47.54%             |
| DM00466         | Burke, McDowell, Rutherford          |           | Milling, Resurfacing, and Shoulder Reconstructuion | SR-MULTI                                                                        | VARIOUS SECONDARY ROUTES                                               | 4/15/2026    | 9/3/2027        |                         | 0.00%              |

## Division 13, GHMPO Project Development Update, June 2026

| Project ID | Project Manager Name  | Description                                                                                                                                | R/W Acq. Begins | Let Date   | Funding Program Description                      | PE Status |
|------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| RX-2013C   | NANCY HORNE           | HIGHWAY-RAILWAY GRADE CROSSING SIGNALS AND GATES ON HOGAN STREET AT NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY CROSSING 729506G IN MORGANTON,BURKE COUNTY,NC |                 | 6/2/2026   | RAIL - RAIL - HIGHWAY GRADE CROSSING IMPROVEMENT | ACTIVE    |
| HS-2413H   | GABRIEL L. JOHNSON    | VARIOUS PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ROUTES. INSTALL HORIZONTAL ALIGNMENT WARNING SIGNS.                                                          |                 | 6/3/2026   | HIGHWAY - SAFETY                                 | ACTIVE    |
| HS-2413E   | GABRIEL L. JOHNSON    | US 70, VARIOUS LOCATIONS. INSTALL RUMBLE STRIPES AND 6" LONG LIFE PAVEMENT MARKINGS.                                                       |                 | 6/19/2026  | HIGHWAY - SAFETY                                 | ACTIVE    |
| HS-2413Q   | GABRIEL L. JOHNSON    | SR 1786 (MILLER BRIDGE ROAD). NC 18 AND SR 1761 (OLD NC HIGHWAY 10). INSTALL RUMBLE STRIPES WITH 6 INCH LONG LIFE PAVEMENT MARKINGS.       |                 | 10/30/2026 | HIGHWAY - SAFETY                                 | ACTIVE    |
| HS-2413V   | GABRIEL L. JOHNSON    | NC 181, SR 1414 (ST MARYS CHURCH ROAD) AND NC 183. INSTALL RUMBLE STRIPES WITH LONG LIFE PAVEMENT MARKINGS.                                |                 | 10/30/2026 | HIGHWAY - SAFETY                                 | ACTIVE    |
| BL-0141    | GABRIEL L. JOHNSON    | NC 126, BENFIELD'S LANDING BURKE ROAD TO EASTSIDE BURKE AVENUE IN NEBO. CONSTRUCT SIDEWALK.                                                | 5/29/2026       | 6/2/2027   | BIKE & PED - LOCALLY SELECTED                    | ACTIVE    |
| EB-5978    | GABRIEL L. JOHNSON    | COLLEGE STREET MULTIMODAL CONNECTOR TRAIL FROM NORTH GREEN STREET TO US 70 IN MORGANTON                                                    | 9/18/2026       | 9/30/2027  | BIKE & PED - STI (PRIORITIZATION)                | ACTIVE    |
| BL-0166    | GABRIEL L. JOHNSON    | MASSEL AVENUE, RODORET STREET TO CAROLINA STREET SE. CONSTRUCT SIDEWALK.                                                                   | 10/1/2027       | 10/1/2028  | BIKE & PED - LOCALLY SELECTED                    | INACTIVE  |
| I-5891B    | GABRIEL L. JOHNSON    | I-40 FROM MILE MARKER 105 TO MILE MARKER 112 PAVEMENT REHABILITATION AND BRIDGE REHABILITATION                                             |                 | 3/20/2029  | HIGHWAY - INTERSTATE MAINTENANCE                 | ACTIVE    |
| BR-0151    | HANNAH K. SMITH       | SR 1002 (HENERY RIVER ROAD),SR 1002 (HENRY RIVER ROAD) OVERI-40. REPLACE BRIDGE.                                                           | 10/25/2027      | 6/19/2029  | HIGHWAY FUND BRIDGE / BRIDGE PROGRAM             | ACTIVE    |
| I-5990     | HANNAH K. SMITH       | I-40 AT EXIT 118 - SR 1761 (OLD NC 10). (COMB W/BR-0151). CONSTRUCT INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS.                                              | 9/15/2027       | 6/19/2029  | HIGHWAY - STI (PRIORITIZATION)                   | ACTIVE    |
| U-5836     | BRENDAN MERITHEW      | NC 181 FROM SR 1414 (ST. MARY'S CHURCH ROAD) TO MORGANTON ETJ WIDEN EXISTING ROADWAY                                                       | 10/12/2026      | 6/18/2030  | HIGHWAY - STI (PRIORITIZATION)                   | ACTIVE    |
| BR-0130    | GRAYSON P. FLOYD      | Replace Bridges 110114 and 110120 on I40 over Silver Creek.                                                                                | 10/19/2026      | 1/21/2031  | HIGHWAY FUND BRIDGE / BRIDGE PROGRAM             | ACTIVE    |
| R-3430A    | WESLEY BROOKS CARTNER | SR 1001 (MALCOLM BOULEVARD) FROM US 70 TO CATAWBA RIVER. MODERNIZE ROADWAY TO INCLUDE BICYCLE AND                                          |                 | 1/1/2040   | HIGHWAY - STI (PRIORITIZATION)                   | INACTIVE  |