



High Country Rural Planning Organization (RPO)
Municipalities and Counties of
Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey



"Serving North Carolina's High Country with Continuing, Cooperative, and Comprehensive Transportation Planning"

Brenda Lyerly, RTAC Chair

David Graham, Transportation Planner

Jose Butron, RTCC Chair

MEMORANDUM

TO: Bill Shepley, Alleghany County Manager
Adam Stumb, Ashe County Manager
Cindy Turbyfill, Avery County Manager
Allen Cook, Mitchell County Manager
Deron Geouque, Watauga County Manager
John Yates, Wilkes County Manager
Lynn Austin, Yancey County Manager
Dale Presnell, Boone Town Manager

FROM: David Graham, Transportation Planner

SUBJECT: High Country RPO – Call for Priority STIP Projects

DATE: May 29, 2026

The High Country RPO has developed a Project Solicitation and Ranking Methodology for scoring and ranking transportation projects that cover all modes of transportation (*highway, bicycle & pedestrian, transit, airport, and rail*) for consideration in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). In accordance with the High Country RPO Project Solicitation and Ranking Methodology, the High Country RPO will score and rank all eligible High Country RPO projects in the NCDOT's database.

Therefore, please submit in order of priority (1st, 2nd, 3rd ...) your county's projects for scoring and ranking. As individual municipalities (except for the Town of Boone) will not be submitting projects to the RPO for scoring and ranking, the county requests should include both rural and urban projects. I encourage all counties to discuss the priority order of projects with their respective municipalities prior to submitting projects. ***Attached is the NCDOT project scores list of all eligible projects sorted by county for local scoring and ranking. Please review the attached list and submit all of your eligible projects in order of priority.***

Note: Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

According to NCDOT, bicycle and pedestrian projects are not included in the spreadsheet at this time, as the SPOT office is continuing to review the numerous comments received during the data review period. A revised spreadsheet is expected to be sent by mid-June that includes bicycle and pedestrian projects.

As soon as I receive the revised bicycle and pedestrian projects spreadsheet from NCDOT, I will reach out requesting priority ranking of eligible bicycle and pedestrian projects.

***Note:** Division Needs category projects including the projects that cascade down from the Regional Impact category to the Division Needs category will automatically be re-ranked for point allocation. For example: If Ashe County submits 5 projects for scoring and ranking in priority order (#1 - #5) and only the top 2 projects are funded at the Regional Impact category the remaining projects (#3 - #5) will be scored and ranked at the Division Needs Category as follows: Project #3 becomes priority #1, Project #4 becomes priority #2, and Project #5 becomes priority #3.*

To have projects included for scoring and ranking, please submit your priority projects in order of priority (1st, 2nd, 3rd, ...) to me by June 30, 2026.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you would like to discuss any of the individual projects.

Thank you.

Enclosure

cc: Julie Wiggins, Executive Director, High Country Council of Governments
Chris Grubb, Planning Director, High Country Council of Governments
High Country Town Managers/Clerks

A190645	Aviation		Division Needs	GEV - Ashe County Airport: Construct new terminal building and hanger building 28640	Construct new terminal building and hanger building at 639 Airport Road, Jefferson, NC 28640	N/A	Construct a new terminal building and hanger building to address facility deficiencies and capacity issues. [DOA PRN = 3989]	1300 - General Aviation Terminal Building	\$ 8,100,000	N/A	N/A	27.27	Ashe
H150358	Highway	R-5833	Regional Impact	NC 194 (S Jefferson Avenue)	SR 1248 (Beaver Creek School Road)	N/A	Construct RC Intersection	10 - Improve Intersection	\$ 6,300,000	26.63	N/A	20.12	Ashe
H250220	Highway		Regional Impact	US 221	North Sixth Avenue	US 221 BUS/NC 88/Main Street	Convert existing roadway to a road diet with bicycle and pedestrian facilities from North Sixth Avenue to Main Street in Jefferson	24 - Implement Road Diet to Improve Safety	\$ 55,400,000	26.28	N/A	17.78	Ashe

HIGH COUNTRY RPO PRIORITIZATION 8.0 (P8.0) QUANTITATIVE SCORES

SPOT ID	Mode	TIP	Project Category	Route / Facility / Project Name	From / Cross Street / Location	To / Cross Street	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)	County(ies)
H170959	Highway		Regional Impact	NC 18 (Whitehead Street)	US 21 TRUCK/SR 1206 (Sparta Parkway)	N/A	Upgrade two way stop controlled intersection to a roundabout	10 - Improve Intersection	\$ 5,400,000	N/A	25.25	18.86	Alleghany
A190645	Aviation		Division Needs	GEV - Ashe County Airport Construct new terminal building and hanger building	Construct new terminal building and hanger building at 659 Airport Road, Jefferson, NC 28640	N/A	Construct a new terminal building and hanger building to address facility deficiencies and capacity issues. [DOA PRN = 3989]	1300 - General Aviation Terminal Building	\$ 8,100,000	N/A	N/A	27.27	Ashe
H150358	Highway	R-5833	Regional Impact	NC 194 (S Jefferson Avenue), US 221 BUS (S Jefferson Avenue)	SR 1248 (Beaver Creek School Road)	N/A	Construct RCI Intersection	10 - Improve Intersection	\$ 6,300,000	N/A	26.63	20.12	Ashe
H250220	Highway		Regional Impact	US 221	North Sixth Avenue	US 221 BUS/NC 88/Main Street	Convert existing roadway to a road diet with bicycle and pedestrian facilities from North Sixth Avenue to Main Street in Jefferson	24 - Implement Road Diet to Improve Safety	\$ 55,400,000	N/A	26.28	17.78	Ashe
H230692	Highway		Statewide Mobility	US 221 TRUCK, NC 105	NC 184 (Tynecastle Highway)	N/A	Construct improvements to provide through-cut intersection.	10 - Improve Intersection	\$ 13,100,000	40.82	29.31	22.02	Avery
H250459	Highway		Regional Impact	US 19, NC 194	SR 1106 (Mullin Hill Road)	US 221	Modernize Roadway	16 - Modernize Roadway	\$ 65,000,000	N/A	28.37	18.80	Avery
H190484	Highway		Regional Impact	US 19 (US 19E)	SR 1121 (Squirrel Creek Road)	SR 1164 (Minneapolis School Road)	Widen US 19 E to 12 foot lanes with 4-5 foot paved shoulders to accommodate bicycles.	16 - Modernize Roadway	\$ 36,000,000	N/A	23.07	20.81	Avery
H190480	Highway		Regional Impact	NC 105	NC 184	JH McClean Road	Extend climbing lane into NC 184 intersection and include additional turning lanes at the NC 184/NC 105 intersection to JH McClean Road.	1 - Widen Existing Roadway	\$ 59,000,000	N/A	29.53	22.07	Avery, Watauga
H090921-A	Highway	R-2566A	Statewide Mobility	NC 105	US 221 in Avery County	SR 1136 (Clarks Creek Road) in Watauga County	Widen to Multi-Lanes.	4 - Upgrade Arterial to Signalized RCI Corridor	\$ 434,500,000	32.36	24.62	19.78	Avery, Watauga
H090110-A	Highway	R-2520A	Statewide Mobility	US 19	SR 1143 (Beaver Creek Road) or East of Spruce Pine in Mitchell County	SR 1106 (Mullin Hill Road) in Avery County	Widen to multi-lanes	1 - Widen Existing Roadway	\$ 127,100,000	23.99	16.59	10.48	Mitchell, Avery
H090504	Highway	R-5804	Regional Impact	NC 226	Blue Ridge Parkway	SR 1274 (Summit Avenue)	Widen facility to 3-lanes. Sidewalks should be added to improve multi-modal connectivity along the corridor	1 - Widen Existing Roadway	\$ 105,900,000	N/A	34.64	28.20	Mitchell
H250469	Highway		Division Needs	SR 1185 (Poplar Grove Road)	NC 105	River Street	Modernize Roadway	16 - Modernize Roadway	\$ 38,200,000	N/A	N/A	12.04	Watauga

H111016	Highway		Statewide Mobility	SR 1107 (NC 105 BYP Road), US 321 TRUCK (NC 105 BYP Road), US 421 TRUCK (NC 105 BYP Road)	NC 105	US 421, US 321, NC 194	Widen to 3 lanes with 5 foot paved shoulders to accommodate bicycles.	1 - Widen Existing Roadway	\$ 54,500,000	71.46	50.02	31.42	Watauga
H170836-A	Highway	R-5915A	Statewide Mobility	US 421 (Daniel Boone Parkway)	US 321/421 West of Boone	NC 105	Construct freeway on new location south of the City of Boone	5 - Construct Roadway on New Location	\$ 393,700,000	64.31	45.53	26.14	Watauga
H170836-B	Highway	R-5915B	Statewide Mobility	US 421 (Daniel Boone Parkway)	NC 105	US 221/321	Construct freeway on new location south of the City of Boone	5 - Construct Roadway on New Location	\$ 485,700,000	64.31	45.53	26.14	Watauga
H170836-C	Highway	R-5915C	Statewide Mobility	US 421 (Daniel Boone Parkway)	US 221/321	US 221/421 East of Boone	Construct freeway on new location south of the City of Boone	5 - Construct Roadway on New Location	\$ 851,500,000	64.31	45.53	26.14	Watauga
H171686	Highway	R-5872	Statewide Mobility	US 421	SR 1180 (Poplar Grove Connector)	N/A	Construct Roundabout	10 - Improve Intersection	\$ 12,000,000	62.29	45.28	33.33	Watauga
H090163-B	Highway	R-2615	Statewide Mobility	US 421, US 321	US 321-US 421 Junction Near Vitas	Proposed Boone BYP (U-2703)	Widen roadway to multi-lanes	1 - Widen Existing Roadway	\$ 166,700,000	53.33	40.67	29.38	Watauga
H230662	Highway		Statewide Mobility	NC 105	SR 1107 (NC 105 BYP Road)	US 221, US 321 (Blowing Rock Boulevard)	Upgrade corridor to reduced conflict intersection corridor with bicycle and pedestrian improvements.	4 - Upgrade Arterial to Signalized RCI Corridor	\$ 168,700,000	49.85	36.14	28.74	Watauga
H191026	Highway		Statewide Mobility	NC 105	SR 1568 (Old Shulls Mill Road)	JH Mclean Road	Widen roadway to 4 lanes	1 - Widen Existing Roadway	\$ 171,600,000	43.82	32.32	23.71	Watauga
H090163-A	Highway	R-5903	Regional Impact	US 421	Tennessee State line	US 321	Widen to Multi-Lanes	1 - Widen Existing Roadway	\$ 153,800,000	N/A	28.28	21.82	Watauga
H230697	Highway		Regional Impact	NC 194	US 221, US 421	SR 1333 (Castle Ford Road)	Modernize Roadway, including construction of center turn lane and sidewalks from US 221/421 to 26 - Rainbow Trail (NS).	26 - Upgrade Roadway	\$ 70,600,000	N/A	26.00	20.80	Watauga
A130280	Aviation		Division Needs	UKF - Wilkes County Airport: North Hangar Development	640 Wood Wallace Road, North Wilkesboro, NC 28659	N/A	Phase I - paving two taxiways for a 10 bay T-hanger building and construction of a 10 bay T-hanger. Phase II - paving one taxiway for the north hangar development area and construction of a 10 bay T-hanger. Phase includes paving a connector taxiway one taxiway and construction of a 20 bay T-hanger building on the north hangar development area. (includes Project Request Numbers: 2301 & 4240 [DOA PRN = 2301])	1900 - Hangars	\$ 7,561,000	N/A	N/A	20.00	Wilkes
A170731	Aviation		Division Needs	UKF - Wilkes County Airport: New Airport Terminal	640 Wood Wallace Road, North Wilkesboro, NC 28659	N/A	Construct new airport terminal. Anticipated size of the new terminal building is 8500 square feet to replace the existing building. The age of the existing facility is approximately 35 years old. [PR#4140] [DOA PRN = 4140]	1300 - General Aviation Terminal Building	\$ 4,047,000	N/A	N/A	27.92	Wilkes

A170733	Aviation		Division Needs	UKF - Wilkes County Airport: Eastside Parallel Taxiway	640 Wood Wallace Road, North Wilkesboro, NC 28659	N/A		This project would complete a second parallel taxiway east of Runway 1/19 to connect to the eastside development area and promote future growth. PR 3803 [DOA PRN = 3803]	1100 - Taxiway Requirement	\$ 11,599,000	N/A	N/A	28.45	Wilkes
A190081	Aviation		Division Needs	UKF - Wilkes County Airport: New Fuel Farm	640 Wood Wallace Road, North Wilkesboro, NC 28659	N/A		The current above ground fuel tanks are dated and not compliant with current industry standards. Maintenance and replacement of failed components is problematic. New tanks will be compliant with current industry standards and will require less maintenance. PR 4471 [DOA PRN = 4471]	2200 - Fuel Facilities	\$ 3,666,000	N/A	N/A	17.20	Wilkes
A230535	Aviation		Division Needs	UKF - Wilkes County Airport: Eastside Hanger	The hanger will be located on the east side of the airport	N/A		The hanger project includes site preparation and construction of a new 100x100 hanger on the east side of the airport. [DOA PRN = 4943]	1900 - Hangars	\$ 3,052,000	N/A	N/A	21.39	Wilkes
H090173	Highway	R-5906	Regional Impact	NC 268	SR 1966 in Wilkes County	Elkin BYP		SR 1966 to four lanes west of SR 2026 (Austin Trap Hill Road). Modernize roadway.	16 - Modernize Roadway	\$ 166,500,000	N/A	39.87	33.10	Wilkes
H191371	Highway		Regional Impact	NC 16	US 421	SR 1315 (Pleasant Home Church Road)		Access management with widening to 3 lane facility in sections.	11 - Access Management	\$ 57,000,000	N/A	39.74	30.56	Wilkes
H191368	Highway		Regional Impact	US 421 BUS (D Street)	SR 1185 (Curtis Bridge Road)	NC 18/268 (CBD Loop)		Widen existing lanes and shoulders	26 - Upgrade Roadway	\$ 20,300,000	N/A	39.45	30.58	Wilkes
H090048	Highway	R-0616	Regional Impact	NC 268 Connector	US 421	NC 18		Construct Multi-Lane Facility, part on new location	5 - Construct Roadway on New Location	\$ 316,200,000	N/A	37.38	28.67	Wilkes
H150297	Highway		Regional Impact	NC 115 (Statesville Road)	SR 2340 (Fishing Creek Road)	US 421		Upgrade roadway.	16 - Modernize Roadway	\$ 28,400,000	N/A	31.73	24.18	Wilkes
H171412	Highway		Regional Impact	SR 2366 (Wilkesboro Avenue), NC 18 (6th Street)	NC 18 (Wilkesboro Boulevard)	NC 18 (Main Street)		Widen to 3 - Lane Facility w/ Bike and Pedestrian Accommodations	1 - Widen Existing Roadway	\$ 32,800,000	N/A	22.64	17.71	Wilkes
H250063	Highway		Statewide Mobility	US 421	NC 268	I-77		Upgrade existing freeway to interstate standards.	17 - Upgrade Freeway to Interstate Standards	\$ 313,400,000	67.20	42.98	24.87	Wilkes
H230012	Highway		Regional Impact	NC 197	US 19 East	SR 1416 (Clearmont School Road)		Modernize NC 197 to include wider lanes and paved shoulders. Climbing lanes should be considered along steep grades.	16 - Modernize Roadway	\$ 103,200,000	N/A	18.96	17.67	Yancey
H170802	Highway		Regional Impact	NC 80	US 19E	Mitchell County line		Modernize NC 80 along the project limits to current NCDOT standards regarding lane/shoulder widths and horizontal/vertical curvature for a road of it's type.	16 - Modernize Roadway	\$ 55,800,000	N/A	6.70	6.24	Yancey