THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE
STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date: December 9, 2025

Subject: Annual application to the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) Grant Program to support existing transit operations for Routes 170, S3, and S6.

Staff Resource(s): Ashley Haire, PE, Transportation Director
Jessica Morriss, AICP, Assistant Transportation Director

Action Requested: Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply to the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization for the annual Section 5307 Job Access Reverse Commute Grant Program to fund existing transit operations for Routes 170, S3, and S6.

Background:

- The City applies to the FBRMPO each year to receive FTA Section 5307 JARC funding to support existing transit operations.
- The Call-for-Projects from the FBRMPO was released on October 21, 2025 with applications due January 15, 2026.
- Section 5307 (JARC) Background:
    - Funding received from this grant source is used to fund existing service for Route 170 (the fixed-route service operated between downtown Asheville and the Town of Black Mountain) and Routes S3 and S6 (the fixed-route service operated between downtown Asheville, Arden, and the Airport).
    - For the last three years, the City has applied for the entire amount available, which this year is $420,732, with a 50% match ($420,732), for a total project cost of $841,464.
    - For the last four years, the Town of Black Mountain has provided $25,000 toward the required matching funds, specifically for Route 170. City staff will be requesting the same amount for FY 2026-27.
    - Buncombe County has also provided funding toward the required match the previous four years for Route 170. The City requests funds from the County based on the service cost per hour and the number of hours the route operates within the County.
    - For FY 2026-27, City staff anticipates requesting approximately $125,000 from the County for this route (subject to change upon execution in 2026 of a new Operations and Maintenance Contract).
    - The City will provide the remainder of matching funds and this is already budgeted within the Transit Operations Budget.
- If awarded, City staff will return to City Council to accept the grant, authorize the City Manager to sign all of the appropriate agreements, and approve a budget amendment to include the funds in the budget (if needed).

Vendor Outreach Efforts: N/A

Council Goal(s):

- Transportation and Accessibility

Committee(s): N/A

Pro(s):

- Enables the City to use federal funds to help offset the annual operating cost of Routes 170, S3, and S6 fixed-route services.
- Buncombe County and Black Mountain contribute funds toward the required match.

Con(s):

- The City is responsible for the 50% local match for the Section 5307 JARC Funding programs, however Buncombe County and Black Mountain contribute funds toward the required match.
- No administrative funding is awarded to the City for administering the 5307/JARC grant program.

Fiscal Impact:

- If awarded the Section 5307 (JARC) funding ($841,464 total), including the 50% local matching funds ($420,732), and associated expenses will be included in the FY 2026-27 Proposed Budget for the Transit Fund.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply to the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) for the annual FY 2025 Section 5307 (JARC) grant funding in the amount of $420,732 to fund existing transit operations for Routes 170, S3, and S6.

Attachment(s)

- Resolution

RESOLUTION 25 - _____

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY TO THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR THE ANNUAL SECTION 5307 JOB ACCESS REVERSE COMMUTE GRANT PROGRAM TO FUND EXISTING TRANSIT OPERATIONS FOR ROUTES 170, S3, AND S6 (FIXED-ROUTE)

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.C.G.S.§ 160A-17.1, the City is authorized to make contracts for and accept grants and loans from the federal and state governments and their agencies; and

WHEREAS, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) has announced a Call for Projects for the Federal Transit Administration FY 2025 Section 5307 JARC Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, the City has identified projects that would be eligible for the Section 5307 JARC funding program and would help fund the operating cost of Routes 170, S3, and S6 fixed-route services; and

WHEREAS, the FTA will reimburse grant applicants for up to 50 percent of operating cost of projects implemented with this funding program; and

WHEREAS, the local match will be budgeted in the FY 2027 Transit Operations Funds as well as match contributions from Buncombe County and Black Mountain; and

WHEREAS, if awarded, City staff return to the City Council to accept the grant, authorizing the City Manager to sign all the appropriate agreements and approve a budget amendment to include the funds in the budget;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The City Manager is authorized to submit a grant application to French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO), to apply to the Federal Transit Administration for FY 2025 Section 5307 JARC Funds in the amount of $420,732.

Read, approved, and adopted this 9th day of December, 2025.

_____ _____

City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

_____

City Attorney