THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date: December 9, 2025

Subject: FY27 Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Planning Grant Application

Staff Resources: Ashley Haire, P.E., Transportation Director
Lucy Crown, Transportation Planning Manager

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for a Fiscal Year 2027 Unified Planning Work Program grant for $312,500 from the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization for a planning study for the Hilliard Avenue corridor, and if awarded, accept the funds and sign all necessary documents to effect the grant.

Background:

- The call for projects is for funding through the FY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), a competitive grant for which all member governments are eligible to apply.
- Eligible activities include feasibility studies, small-area plans, conceptual designs, bike/ped plans, transit plans, traffic studies, local transportation asset inventories, economic impact analyses for transportation investments, and more, as defined by federal eligibility.
- The submitted project for the grant is a feasibility study for multimodal transportation improvements to Hilliard Avenue.
- This plan is intended to coordinate future changes associated with NCDOT's I-26 Connector project, specifically addressing functionality changes on Patton Avenue and surrounding streets, including improvements at the Clingman Avenue and Hilliard Avenue intersection.
- The study will also examine the existing extents of the Hilliard Avenue corridor from Clingman Avenue to Biltmore Avenue for future improvements.
- The investigation will include assessments of rights-of-way, above-ground and subsurface utilities, topography, accessibility needs, intersection improvements, and possible configurations, along with planning-level cost estimates.
- This project is intended as a scoping analysis for future capital projects in the corridor.
- Hilliard Avenue is a top-ranked corridor for ADA improvements in the GAP Plan Prioritization List.
- MPO funding can be used to pay for 80% of eligible project expenses for selected projects. A 20% local match is required.
- The total cost of the proposed planning study is $312,500. The City's required local match will be $62,500.
- The deadline for submitting the grant application is December 30, 2025.

Goal(s):

- Well-Planned and Livable Community
- Transportation and Accessibility

Committee(s):

- NA

Fiscal Impact:

- If awarded, the City of Asheville must provide matching funds equal to 20% of the project's total cost ($62,500). If needed, the City will allocate funds from the General Capital Projects Fund.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for $312,500 in grant funding, which requires a $62,500 local match, from the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization's UPWP program, and if awarded, accept the funds and sign all necessary documents to effect the grant and fund the local match in an amount up to $62,500.

Attachment:

- Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 25-_____

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPLICATION FOR AND ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDING THROUGH THE UNITED PLANNING AND WORK PROGRAM FROM THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR A HILLIARD AVENUE STREETSCAPE PLAN

WHEREAS, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) – which the City is a member of per N.C.G.S. § 160A-461 – has issued a call for projects for funding through the competitive FY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP); and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville, through its Transportation Department and per N.C.G.S. § 160A-17.1, is eligible to apply for and expend said funds to conduct eligible transportation planning activities such as feasibility studies, small-area plans, and conceptual designs; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Department intends to seek funds for studies to be conducted on Hilliard Avenue for future implementation that will improve ADA accessibility and multimodal transportation within the corridor and make improvements that will serve future traffic patterns on Patton Avenue created by the NCDOT I-26 project; and

WHEREAS, the MPO's UPWP funding can cover up to 80% of the eligible project costs and requires a local match of 20% from the City of Asheville; and

WHEREAS, the requested funds are for a total of $312,500, with $250,000 being the granted funds and $62,500 being the matching funds; and

WHEREAS, the deadline for submitting the grant application is December 30, 2025;

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

The City Manager is hereby authorized to apply for grant funds of $312,5000 from the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization’s UPWP program and, if awarded, to accept the funds and sign all necessary agreements and documents required to effect the grant and fund the local match in an amount up to $62,500.

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

_____ _____

City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

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City Attorney