THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date: January 28, 2020

Subject: Support for French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization Regional Transit Feasibility Study

Staff Resource(s): Ken Putnam, PE Transportation Department Director
Jessica Morriss, AICP, Assistant Transportation Director

Action Requested: Adopt a resolution of support for the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization's development of a Regional Transit Feasibility Study

Background:

- The French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the regional transportation planning organization for the Asheville region.
- In 2019, the MPO Board and Technical Committee voted to support the development of a regional transit feasibility study and to increase the dues of each member agency equally to support the cost of the study.
- The study will be completed over the next two fiscal years.
- The City budgeted half of the due increase in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Transportation Department budget and will include the remaining half in the base budget for FY 2021.
- The study is intended to provide a deeper understanding of the existing needs for regional transit, the existing conditions of current systems, and make recommendations as to the feasibility of creating regional transit services.

Council Goal(s):

- Transportation and Accessibility

Committee(s):

- None

Pro(s):

- The project will be managed by the MPO, including the contract and deliverables.
- The study will provide useful recommendations as to the need, costs, and implementation options for providing regional transit services.

Con(s):

- The City's MPO dues were increased by $2,107 to support the cost of the study (the increase is temporary and is only for the Regional Transit feasibility study).

Fiscal Impact:

- The City of Asheville's dues to the MPO were increased by $2,107 as a contribution toward the completion of the study. Half of this amount was budgeted in the Transportation Department FY 2020 budget and the second half will be included in the base budget request for FY 2021.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution of support for the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization's development of a Regional Transit Feasibility Study.

Attachment(s)

- Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 20-____

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION'S DEVELOPMENT OF A REGIONAL TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

WHEREAS, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) allotted funding through the Unified Planning Work Program for a Regional Transit Feasibility Study (Phase 1) and Regional Transit Implementation Study (Phase 2) that is intended to stretch over FY20 and FY21; and

WHEREAS, this two-phase study aligns with the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), which recommends a "feasibility study to explore regional transit options" and recommends that the FBRMPO "coordinate efforts between transit providers to improve regional transit service;" and

WHEREAS, NCDOT's 2040 Statewide Transportation plan recommended increased focus on regional planning to increase flexibility and responsiveness while examining logistical needs through investments; and

WHEREAS, the FBRMPO region is growing in population and experiencing more cross-county commuting; and

WHEREAS, this study will serve as the first step towards improving public transit in the region by providing a deeper understanding of existing needs, system conditions, and recommendations for improvement; and

WHEREAS, the FBRMPO Board requested a resolution of support be sent to the cities and counties to be included in this study;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE to support the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization's development of a Regional Transit Feasibility Study.

Read, approved and adopted this the 28th day of January, 2020.

_____ _____

City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

City Attorney