

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 28, 2026

Contact: Alan Toney, CED Director

828-351-2331

Atoney@frcnc.gov

PUBLIC INPUT BEGINS ON FRPO'S LOCAL INPUT POINT ASSIGNMENTS FOR REGIONAL IMPACT PROJECTS UNDER NCDOT'S PRIORITIZATION 8.0

The Foothills Rural Planning Organization (FRPO) opens a 15-day public comment period, beginning **Friday, July 31, 2026**, requesting public input on the next stage of developing future Regional Impact transportation projects for Rutherford, Polk, and McDowell Counties. The process to develop the FRPO's 2028-2037 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is administered by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and is called "Prioritization 8.0" or "P8.0".

Transportation projects are represented on the draft list and map proposed for Regional Impact local input point assignments and can be found on the FRPO website at <https://frcnc.gov/regional-development/isothermal-rural-planning-organization-rpo/prioritization/>.

Beginning in October 2026, FRPO will open a separate public comment period for the Division Needs projects.

NCDOT has scored projects submitted by MPOs, Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs) and NCDOT Divisions according to formulas established under the Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) law. FRPO has 1,300 local input points to allocate projects for local prioritization in the Regional Impact tier and an additional 1,300 local input points to allocate in the Division Needs tier. The STI legislation specifies that MPOs, RPOs and NCDOT Division offices must adhere to their adopted local input point methodologies to the greatest extent possible when assigning local input points. FRPO's adopted Local Input Point Methodology for P8.0 can also be found on the website.

The public comment period will conclude on Friday, August 14, 2026.

The public may also provide comments during the FRPO TCC & TAC Meeting on Tuesday, **August 4, 2026, at 10:30 am.**

Written comments may be sent by mail or email to the following address:

Foothills RPO
Attn: Alan Toney, CED Director
PO Box 841
Rutherfordton, NC 28139
Atoney@frcnc.gov

All comments must be received by Friday, August 14, 2026. Additional information can be obtained by contacting FRPO staff at 828-351-2331.

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The Foothills RPO hereby gives public notice of its policy to uphold and assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related acts and statutes. Title VI and related statutes prohibiting discrimination in Federally assisted programs require that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal assistance.

Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice regarding the Foothills RPO programs has a right to file a formal complaint with the FRPO, within one hundred and eighty (180) days following the date of the alleged discrimination occurrence. For instructions on how to file a complaint, or additional information regarding FRPO's nondiscrimination obligations, please contact Alan Toney at 828-351-2331 or atoney@frcnc.gov.

Individuals requiring special accommodations when attending this public meeting and/or if this information is needed in an alternative format because of a disability, should contact Foothills Regional Commission, located at 123 East Main Street, Forest City, NC 28043, telephone (828-351-2331) or by email: atoney@frcnc.gov. The Human Resources Department requests at least 72 hours' notice prior to the meeting to make the appropriate arrangements.

