

North Carolina Department of Transportation

FY 2028 Section 5303 Application Overview and Guidance

September 18, 2026



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General Information

The Integrated Mobility Division (IMD) of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is pleased to announce the FY 2028 transit planning allocations for the state's urbanized areas (reference FY2028 Section 5303 Allocation Formula Table). These funds are available from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) under the Metropolitan Planning Program (49 U.S.C. 5305(d) Reference; Table 2).

The total amount of Section 5303 funds available to North Carolina is \$4,329,791. The allocation for each MPO in the attached allocation table reflects the amount for the upcoming fiscal year. The goal is to have the Section 5303 allocations approved at the April 2027 NCDOT Board of Transportation Meeting.

IMD will continue to use SmartSheet to receive the Section 5303 application information and documents. A SmartSheet Section 5303 Application Submission form has been created, and all MPO contacts will complete the form information and attach the documents directly to the form. This form will feed the information and documents into IMD's application database, and the assigned Regional Grant Specialists will review and approve the application documents there. The draft UPWPs and initial documents must be submitted in SmartSheet no later than 11:59 p.m., Friday, January 29, 2027. The application must include the draft UPWP for review by IMD and FTA, the Funding Sources Table, the FTA Task Narrative Table (Sample in Appendix B), a DBE Anticipated Contracting Opportunities form, and the Certification of the planning process. Complete information for each item in the FTA Task Narrative Table for Section 5303 and Section 5307 funded planning tasks must be provided.

The link for the SmartSheet application submission form is:

[FY28 5303 Application Submissions](#)

Final UPWP with supporting documentation including TAC Resolution are to be submitted using the FY27 Section 5303 Application Submission form again on or before **March 26, 2027**. If there were funding revisions between the draft and final UPWP, **the Application package in EBS must be updated by March 26, 2027, to reflect these changes.**

Please note the Integrated Mobility Division will submit the UPWPs for MPOs located in areas over 200,000 in population directly to FTA for approval on Friday, April 16, 2027. This change is to consolidate and streamline the UPWP approval process by FTA.

IMD strongly encourages that your agency reviews the instructions and works with your IMD staff members to develop your Section 5303 UPWP activities. Please contact your assigned Regional Grant Specialist if you have questions or need assistance.



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The Planning Work Program and FTA Section 5303 Grant Application

The Planning Work Program (UPWP) format is designed for grant recipients to provide inputs contributing to a statewide Unified UPWP and to collect the data required for a statewide Section 5303 grant application to FTA. Information on the format and process for FHWA PL funds, Section 104(f), and others are provided separately by the NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch. The FTA checklist provides the required elements in the UPWP. Please review the attachment to ensure all elements are addressed.

FY 2028 Planning Work Program Funds

Each urbanized area receives a Section 5303 allocation from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) for MPO transit planning activities. The allocations are provided in the FY2028 Allocation Formula table. The Integrated Mobility Division (IMD) will provide one half of the required local match, or 10% of the total application amount, for FTA Section 5303 funded transit planning tasks.

If additional funding, such as Section 5307 Planning, Section 104(f) (PL) or local funds, are used to supplement the Section 5303 allocation for your urbanized area, please indicate the source of supplemental funds in the UPWP.

*Note that all the Section 5303 and 5307 funds to be used for planning tasks must be shown in the UPWP.

Contact for Assistance

For assistance in developing your UPWP and/or to answer questions about these instructions, please contact your assigned Regional Planner or Grant Specialist.

Planning		
Regional Planning Manager	Bryan Lopez	balopez@ncdot.gov
Senior Regional Planner, Eastern Piedmont	Johnna K. Burkett	jkburkett@ncdot.gov
Senior Regional Planner, Western Piedmont	Kim Nguyen	kpnguyen1@ncdot.gov
Regional Planner, Mountains	Adrienne (Nikki) Abija	anabija@ncdot.gov
Regional Planner, Coastal Plains	Cambell A. Pfister	cafisher@ncdot.gov
Grants Administration		
Grants Administrator	Casandra Hamilton	chamilton@ncdot.gov
Senior Regional Grants Specialist, Eastern Piedmont	Brandi Claybrooks	blclaybrooks@ncdot.gov
Senior Regional Grants Specialist, Western Piedmont	Lisa Avery	ext-lavery@ncdot.gov
Regional Grants Specialist, Mountains	Jordan Lynch	jjlynch1@ncdot.com
Regional Grants Specialist, Coastal Plains	Irene Johnson	iwjohnson@ncdot.com



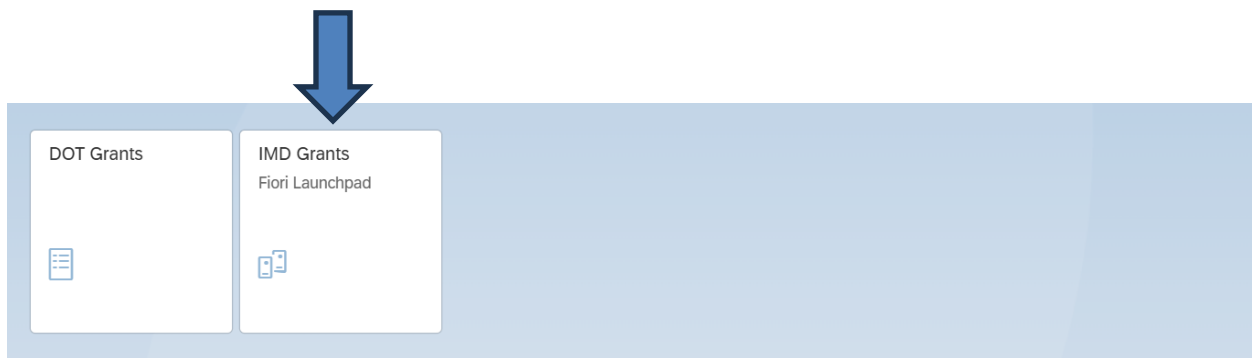
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UPWP Development Process

- Using the Section 5303 allocation announced in this posting, available Section 5307 funds, plus PL funds and SPR funds (which are identified by the NCDOT Transportation Planning Division), the MPO develops a **draft** UPWP for FY 2028.

***You must use the Funding Sources Table and the FTA Task Narrative Table formats (Sample included in Appendix B) in your UPWP.**

- This draft UPWP, which does not have to be approved by the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) or the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) at this stage, must be submitted to IMD by December 18, 2026, for review and comment. The Funding Sources Table and the FTA Task Narrative Table must be completed and included in the draft UPWP submission. All sources of funding, including Section 104(f) (PL) and SPR funds, in the Funding Sources Table in the “draft” submission are required to be identified. The FTA codes in your EBS application’s Budget must match the codes in your UPWP budget.
- The Section 5303 budget template is in EBS under the IMD Grants – Fiori Launchpad (shown below) then under Planning Application tile. The budget application is, Program ID, “P2028_5303_Planning”.



- Both IMD and FTA will review the draft UPWP to provide comments to the MPO for each urbanized area. This allows any comments to be considered by the MPO to meet the due date for submission of the final adopted UPWPs set by the Transportation Planning Division.

Please Note: If a change is made to the draft UPWP that affects the budget, the EBS application must also be updated to reflect the budget change.

- The MPO proceeds to finalize the UPWP, including accommodating the IMD comments, and seeks TAC approval.



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- The final UPWP, including a cover letter, signed by the TAC Chairperson, indicating a date of approval, and requesting the Section 5303 funds, along with the resolution with original signatures evidencing MPO approval, is due to the IMD by **March 26, 2027**. **Application documentation is to be submitted in SmartSheet using the Section 5303 Application Submission form link provided. Again, if there were revisions to the UPWP, the final UPWP must match the EBS application Budget.**

The link for the SmartSheet application submission form is:

[FY28 5303 Application Submissions](#)

UPWP Components

Draft UPWP Components:

1. FY 2028 UPWP Funding Sources Table;
2. FTA Task Narrative Table;
3. Report on Anticipated DBE Contracting Opportunities FY2028.

Final UPWP Components:

1. An original transmittal signed by the TAC chairperson (see description below);
2. FY 2028 UPWP Funding Sources Table;
3. FTA Task Narrative Table;
4. Report on Anticipated DBE Contracting Opportunities FY2028.
5. Original Resolution Approving the FY2028 UPWP.
6. Resolution Certifying the Transportation Planning Process for FY 2028

Detailed information on these specific attachments can be found below:

Transmittal Letter

Each MPO is required to send a transmittal letter to IMD notifying them of the submission of the final UPWP and requesting FTA Section 5303 (Metropolitan Planning Program) funds.

The letter must include:

1. An original signature of the person authorized by resolution to apply for the funds;
2. The dollar amounts requested in FTA Section 5303 funds and the appropriate local and state matches; and
3. Source of how the local match is going to be provided.



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FY 2028 Planning Work Program Funding Sources Table

This table serves as a project budget and task summary for the UPWP. The table will indicate all transportation planning tasks to be accomplished in the urbanized area.

* Certain information is required for each planning activity on the UPWP Funding Sources Table. This information is to be completed for each budget item.

**Please note the required local match for the different funding sources.

If State funds are available, the IMD will assist the urban areas by providing a 10% match of the total for Section 5303 funded transit planning activities. **The FTA 80% share columns under Section 5303 must be evenly divisible by eight (there should not be any cents when calculating the 80/10/10 split). Also, the Federal Section 5303 amount must not exceed exactly 80% of the total cost of each individual task. The "80% Federal Allocation" column lists your total section 5303 allocation.

FY 2028 FTA Task Narrative Table

This table (sample included in Appendix B of this document) must include the tasks to be funded with Section 5303 and 5307 funds. This table provides the input for the statewide Section 5303 grant application to FTA. To ensure correct and complete input for the grant application, the IMD staff will provide comments on your draft table.

Anticipated DBE Contracting Opportunities – FY 2028 Form

The Anticipated DBE Contracting Opportunities form should disclose any possible DBE contracting opportunities and must be included with your 5303 UPWP. You **must** provide a completed form even if you do not anticipate any DBE contracting opportunities. If no contracting opportunities are anticipated, write “No contracting opportunities” in the form.

Resolution Approving the FY 2028 Planning Work Program

A resolution from the Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Advisory Committee for the applicable urban area must be provided (**with original signatures**). A sample resolution with the suggested language is included in the application package.

Resolution Certifying the FY 2028 Planning Process

A resolution from the Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Advisory Committee for the applicable urban area must be provided (**with original signatures**) for all MPOs. This should be completed concurrently with the submittal of the entire proposed TIP to the FHWA and the FTA as part of the STIP approval. The State and the MPO shall certify the metropolitan transportation planning process is being carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements including:

(1) 23 U.S.C. 134, 49 U.S.C. 5303, and this subpart;



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- (2) In nonattainment and maintenance areas, sections 174 and 176(c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7504, 7506(c) and (d)) and 40 CFR part 93;
- (3) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d-1) and 49 CFR part 21;
- (4) 49 U.S.C. 5332, prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity;
- (5) Section 1101(b) of the FAST Act (Pub. L. 114-357) and 49 CFR part 26 regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in DOT funded projects;
- (6) 23 CFR part 230, regarding the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal and Federal-aid highway construction contracts;
- (7) The provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*) and 49 CFR parts 27, 37, and 38;
- (8) The Older Americans Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101), prohibiting discrimination based on age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
- (9) Section 324 of title 23 U.S.C. regarding the prohibition of discrimination based on gender; and
- (10) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) and 49 CFR part 27 regarding discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

Submit Application Documents

ALL the documents above must be completed and returned as part of the Section 5303 Planning application. **Documents are to be submitted in SmartSheet using the link provided on page 5.** Please review the Section 5303 Planning Checklist or download from the Section 5303 application package to ensure all the documents are attached located at: [Unified Grant Application \(ncdot.gov\)](https://ncdot.gov/unified-grant-application)

Missed Deadline and Incomplete Applications

An incomplete application will result in the application being returned for correction. Only complete applications will be reviewed and moved through the review process for approval. Applicants are strongly encouraged to refer to the FTA UPWP Checklist to assure the completeness of the application. If you have questions, please contact your assigned Regional Grant Specialist. Draft UPWPs should be submitted in SmartSheet by **Friday, January 29, 2027**. Final UPWPs must be submitted in SmartSheet on or before **Friday, March 26, 2027**. Do not mail applications to NCDOT.



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Timeline

Date	Task/Event
September 21, 2026	5303 Application Package Release
January 29, 2027	Deadline for FY 2028 Draft UPWP to be submitted to IMD via SmartSheet
March 26, 2027	Deadline for FY 2028 Final UPWP to be submitted to IMD via SmartSheet



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Appendix A - FY 2028 Planning Work Program Schedule

Refer to supporting document in application package titled

“FY 2028 UPWP Schedule”

for the listing of all 5303 planning activities and deadlines



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Appendix B - FTA Narrative Table Sample

SAMPLE FTA TASK NARRATIVE TABLE

1 - MPO	City of Dogwood
2 - FTA Code	442301
3 - Task Code	II-B-17
4 - Title	Congestion Management Analysis
5 - Task Objective	To initiate a Transportation Energy Conservation Plan to include energy conservation, ridesharing, carpooling, and enhanced transit.
6 - Tangible Product Expected	The Transportation Energy Conservation Planning Document will be updated to include new and innovative measures of energy conservation (i.e., TDM activities).
7 - Expected Completion Date of Products	June-2026
8 - Previous Work	Several earlier efforts have been made with the use of alternative fuels with city vehicles. The Stevens Study has also provided evidence that there exists a need for alternative modes of transportation.
9 - Prior FTA Funds	0
10 - Relationship	The Planning and Research Branch, Traffic Engineering Branch and the Division of Public Information will provide technical assistance to the Dogwood Department of Transportation in the development and periodic update of this plan.
11 - Agency	City of Dogwood Transportation Department
12- HPR - Highway – Local 20%	
13- HPR - Highway - FHWA 80%	
14- Section 104 (f) PI, Local 20%	
15- Section 104 (f) PI, FHWA 80%	
16- Section 5303 Local 10%	
17- Section 5303 NCDOT 10%	
18- Section 5303 FTA 80%	



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- 19- Section 5307 Transit - Local 10% (if being used for planning purposes)
- 20- Section 5307 Transit - NCDOT 10% (if being used for planning purposes)
- 21- Section 5307 Transit - FTA 80% (if being used for planning purposes)
- 22- Additional Funds - Local 100% (if being used for planning purposes)

1. The name of the grantee.
2. This is the federal code for the activity/project.
3. This is the Prospectus task code for the activity/project, used in conjunction with the FTA code.
4. The title of the planning activity.
5. The objective(s) of the task to be undertaken.
6. Identify the tangible products expected to be produced.
7. Show the expected completion date of the planning activity.
8. List any previous work on this planning task.
9. Provide the total amount of FTA funds already spent on this planning activity,
10. Identify any relationships to other activities being undertaken by your agency or other agencies.
11. Entity responsible for the work element or work activity.
- 12-22. Cost and funding breakdown of the planning activity.

