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FRENCH BROAD RIVER

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

The Honorable Sean Duffy
U.S. Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

October 1, 2026

Dear Secretary Duffy:

On behalf of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO), I am pleased to express our strong support for the North Carolina Department of Transportation's application for funding through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Program to advance statewide transportation flood resilience.

Flooding is one of the most significant hazards affecting the reliability and continuity of transportation systems in Western North Carolina. Recent flooding events, including the impacts of Hurricane Helene in September 2024, demonstrated how quickly flooding and associated hazards can disrupt roads, bridges, transit services, and other critical transportation infrastructure. These disruptions can limit access to homes, businesses, healthcare, emergency services, and other essential destinations while placing additional demands on already constrained transportation networks.

FBRMPO supports NCDOT's efforts to advance and integrate a suite of flood warning, monitoring, and transportation resilience tools—including FIMAN, T-SAPP, BridgeWatch, DriveNC, and related systems. Integrating these resources can strengthen the ability of transportation agencies and regional partners to identify and communicate flood-related risks, monitor conditions, anticipate transportation disruptions, and make informed decisions before, during, and following severe weather events.

As a Metropolitan Planning Organization, FBRMPO has a direct interest in improving the resilience of the transportation system and incorporating better information about hazards and vulnerabilities into transportation planning and investment decisions. Tools that provide timely information about flooding, bridge conditions, roadway impacts, and

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potential disruptions can support more informed planning, emergency response, incident management, and coordination among transportation and emergency management agencies.

The proposed initiative also provides an important opportunity to improve coordination and interoperability among existing tools and data sources. A more integrated statewide approach can help ensure that information developed through flood monitoring and transportation systems is useful not only to NCDOT, but also to MPOs, local governments, emergency responders, and other partners responsible for maintaining mobility and community access during disruptive events.

FBRMPO recognizes that transportation resilience depends not only on investments in physical infrastructure, but also on the data, technology, coordination, and decision-support capabilities necessary to understand risks and respond effectively. Continued investment in statewide flood warning and transportation resilience tools will help strengthen the reliability of North Carolina's transportation network, improve emergency preparedness, reduce the impacts of transportation disruptions, and support economic continuity for communities throughout the state.

For these reasons, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization strongly supports NCDOT's application for PROTECT funding to advance statewide transportation flood resilience and the continued development and integration of FIMAN, T-SAPP, BridgeWatch, DriveNC, and related tools. We appreciate NCDOT's leadership in pursuing this initiative and encourage the U.S. Department of Transportation to support this important investment in the resilience and reliability of North Carolina's transportation system.



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