

**Memorandum Of Understanding For The
Northwest Piedmont Rural Planning Organization
For Davie, Stokes, Surry and Yadkin Counties.**

Whereas, Section 135 of Title 23, United States Code, declares that it is in the national interest to encourage and promote the development of transportation systems embracing various modes of transportation in a manner that will serve all areas of the state efficiently and effectively; and

Whereas, North Carolina General Statutes provide for the establishment of Rural Transportation Planning Organizations (RPOs) similar in concept and function to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), which are currently active in North Carolina's urban areas; and

Whereas, the establishment of the Northwest Piedmont Rural Planning Organization will provide the counties of Davie, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin the Opportunity to work in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to develop a sound, locally-based plan for regional transportation; and

Whereas, the establishment of the Northwest Piedmont Rural Planning Organization will assist the North Carolina Department of Transportation in complying with the provisions of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century relative to the participation of local elected officials and the public in the transportation planning process; and

Whereas, it is the desire of the local governments within the counties listed above to establish a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process to encompass all modes of transportation by forming an RPO,

The following memorandum of understanding is made.

Section I - Participation

It is hereby agreed, that the Counties of Davie, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin, along with the incorporated municipal governments within their borders which choose to approve this memorandum, in cooperation with the North Carolina Department of Transportation, establish the Northwest Piedmont Rural Transportation Organization for the general purposes and responsibilities outlined herewith:

1. Develop a plan to provide affordable, accessible, and dynamic transportation systems responsive to the current and future needs of the region. These systems shall enhance coordination, efficiency, and multi-modal connectivity for the area's citizens and businesses.
2. Develop a planning process that includes public input and local government approval for transportation projects.
3. Provide transportation-related information to local governments and other interested organizations and persons.

4. Prioritize, review, and approve projects for submission to the North Carolina Department of Transportation for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Plan.
5. Coordinate and consolidate municipal and county thoroughfare plans and provide regular updates to this plan, outlining a regional transportation network that is coordinated with neighboring regions.
6. Support local governments in maintaining a safe and reliable transportation system coordinated with area land use plans.
7. Facilitate agreement and cooperative action plans among member governments for specific projects and the adoption of common policies and plans with respect to regional transportation challenges.
8. Furnish technical assistance to member governments and serve as a liaison to state and federal agencies as appropriate and advisable.
9. Undertake transportation-related tasks to enhance the goals of the organization and region.

Section II - County Advisory Committees

A County Advisory Committee (CAC) is hereby established for each member county. Each CAC shall serve in an advisory capacity to the TCC. Membership on the CAC will consist of one county representative, appointed by the county commissioners, and one representative from each participating municipality, appointed by the city council. CAC members shall be appointed to one-year terms, and may serve multiple terms. The CACs shall oversee all county planning activities and projects. The CACs shall also prioritize all county projects for submission to the regional TCC. The managers from each member government shall serve in an advisory position to the CAC. Each county vote shall count as two votes; each municipal vote shall count as one vote.

Section III - Transportation Advisory Committee

The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC.) is hereby established to serve as the policy-making board for the Northwest Piedmont Rural Transportation Authority. Membership on the TAC shall consist of two representatives from each member county: One County Commissioner representing the county interest and one municipal elected official representing the interest of each participating municipality in the county; one NCDOT board member; and the Chairman of the Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments.

The County Commissioner representing each county shall be selected by the Board of County Commissioners in regular session. The elected Municipal members shall be selected by a majority vote of all participating municipalities in each county (one vote for each municipality). TAC members shall be appointed to two-year terms and may serve multiple terms. The TAC may invite individuals to serve as ex-officio, non-voting members at its discretion. All members of the TAC shall receive one vote. All votes of the TAC shall require approval of 50% plus one of the members present in a quorum. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the appointed members. The Transportation Advisory Committee shall be responsible for the following:

1. Develop and approve the program of work for the Northwest Piedmont Rural Planning Organization.
2. Establish the goals and objectives for the organization.
3. Review and approve prioritized projects, which support and enhance intra-county transportation in the region, for inclusion in the North Carolina Transportation Improvement Plan.
4. Approve updates and revisions to the regional thoroughfare plan.
5. Provide a forum to identify, discuss, study, and solve regional transportation issues.
6. Enter into contracts and agreements with outside agencies and contractors to complete the organization's program of work.

The TAC shall elect a chairperson and vice-chair. The chairperson shall preside over all meetings of the TAC and sign all official documents. The vice-chair shall preside over meetings in the absence of the chairperson. These officers shall serve one-year terms. The TAC shall meet as often as appropriate. A meeting schedule for the year shall be published and the officers elected at the first meeting after January 1 each year. Other meetings may be called by the chairperson with the approval of a majority of the membership and as provided by the North Carolina open meetings law.

Vacancies on the Transportation Advisory Committee shall be filled by the same process as is used for initial appointments.

Section IV – Transportation Coordinating Committee

A Transportation Technical Committee (TCC) shall be established to provide review, guidance, and coordination of the transportation planning process for the Rural Transportation Planning Organization (RPO) within the policies set by the TAC. The TCC shall make recommendations to the TAC concerning the regional planning process, thoroughfare plan, Transportation Improvement Plan, and any other work of the organization as requested or appropriate. The primary duties of the TCC are:

1. To advise and assist the TAC on regional planning and policy decisions.
2. To support and review the work of the local and state transportation staff.
3. Receive and review comment from County Advisory Committee.
4. To assist in the accomplishment of Transportation Advisory Committee goals.

Membership on the Transportation Coordinating Committee shall include technical representatives of all local and state government agencies directly related to the transportation goals of the Northwest Piedmont Rural Planning Organization. Initial membership shall include, but may not be limited to:

1. The county manager from each member county.
2. The chief administrative official from each municipal member.

3. The executive director and chief planner from the Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments.
4. The Division Engineers of the North Carolina Department of Transportation serving each county member.

Other members may be added to the TCC as approved by the TAC.

The TCC shall meet as often as necessary to complete the work requirements. The TCC will be staffed and meetings chaired by the Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments' Chief Transportation Planner.

Section V – Administration

It is hereby agreed that the Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments will serve as the administrative and staffing unit for the Northwest Piedmont Rural Planning Organization and will serve as the lead local planning agency for transportation in the member counties. The RPO staff shall work in conjunction with local government staff, the Forsyth County MPO, and State Department of Transportation officials to ensure the work plan of the TAC is completed. Staff and technical resources will be shared where possible to eliminate overlap or duplication in services or resources.

The RPO hereby authorizes the Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments to be the recipient of any funds appropriated to the RPO by the North Carolina Department of Transportation pursuant to North Carolina Statute 136-213(c).

Section VI – Termination

Parties to the Memorandum of Understanding may terminate their participation by giving 90 days written notice to the TAC.

In witness whereof, the parties to this Memorandum of Understanding have been authorized by action of their governing boards to sign said Memorandum of Understanding, this the _____ day of _____, 2002.

Chairman – _____ County Board of Commissioners

Clerk to the Board – _____ County

(Please attach minutes of meeting or resolution of approval)