

6. CONCLUSION

The region defined by Buncombe, Haywood, and Henderson Counties – essentially the French Broad River MPO plus some outlying rural areas – will continue to grow and change, attracting visitors, residents, and new businesses, in addition to the regions underlying population growth. These new residents and businesses will change the demographic and economic profile of the region in ways that could significantly affect travel demand beyond merely increasing the total number of trips. A whole range of trip-making characteristics are subject to change, including destination, purpose, mode, frequency, timing, and length/duration.

Furthermore, these changes are difficult to predict, and will probably not occur uniformly across the region. The CTP – if updated consistently and employed proactively – can provide a basis for dealing with the entire range of challenges presented by the region’s growth, by guiding both land use and transportation decisions. The CTP provides a consistent yet dynamic framework for representing the regional transportation system and infrastructure, emphasizing critical projects and their interactions. At the same time, it can allow the flexibility for individual communities to maintain their unique identities, without sacrificing transportation service or safety.

Either individually or collectively, the counties and municipalities of this region are responsible for taking the initiative to promote the projects they feel best meet their needs. Given current and anticipated funding levels, and the length and complexity of completing a planned transportation project, this is a long-term commitment. Plans – including the CTP – will need to be updated as conditions change, and individual projects will almost certainly require additional public involvement and review of impacts on the human and natural environments. The Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch (PDEA) of the NCDOT is responsible for this important step in the process: advancing projects from a regional plan to a specific design. Within the context of the CTP, questions about funding, project status, transportation planning, and individual modes of transportation can and should be addressed to the appropriate NCDOT branch. Appendix A includes contact information for relevant NCDOT branches.

