



The Foothills Regional Commission on The Comprehensive Transportation Plan for McDowell, Polk, and Rutherford County

The Foothills Regional Commission, N.C. Department of Transportation, and Local Stakeholders have been working collaboratively on the Regional Comprehensive Transportation Plan since 2019. This plan is a needs-based plan based upon the most recent data and Local and State plans. This plan identifies deficiencies within the transportation network and provides project recommendations based upon needs, safety and mobility improvements, and the local area.

This plan does make several recommendations for Polk County:

1. Modernization – Improving a roadway to current design standards primarily by increasing the lane and/or shoulder width. Could also include improving the horizontal or vertical geometry. Could also include adding turn lanes at intersections to help improve mobility on the through route. Modernization is proposed for several NC Routes and State Roads throughout Polk County.
2. Intersection Improvements – This includes but is not limited to realignment of roads to improve the angle to improve safety and mobility. This could also include potential traffic signals.
3. Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects – This plan is multi-modal and includes bicycle and pedestrian projects in Tryon and Columbus from the Tryon and Columbus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. This plan includes sidewalk improvements in Saluda. This plan includes Overmountain Victory Trail Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects as part of the Great Trails State Plan.

This plan does not include the following:

1. The addition of any lanes (2 lanes to 4 lanes) to routes within Polk County, including Number 9 and 108.
2. Bike Lanes throughout the County.
3. NC 108 from Howard Gap Roads to Columbus.

This plan does not guarantee that all projects proposed on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan will be completed. All projects must be submitted through the State Transportation Improvement Program and scored. The highest scoring projects throughout the state are typically funded. Scoring includes multiple data driven factors including, but not limited to traffic count, accidents, and more.