



WILMINGTON URBAN AREA Metropolitan Planning Organization

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MEMORANDUM

TO: TAC Members
FROM: Mike Kozlosky, Executive Director
DATE: October 2, 2015
SUBJECT: **P 4.0 Wilmington MPO Local Input Methodology Process**

Members:

City of
WILMINGTON
Lead Planning Agency

Town of
CAROLINA BEACH

Town of
KURE BEACH

Town of
WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH

NEW HANOVER
County

Town of
BELVILLE

Town of
LELAND

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NAVASSA

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County

PENDER
County

CAPE FEAR
Public Transportation
Authority

North Carolina
BOARD OF
TRANSPORTATION

The Strategic Transportation Investments is the formula to determine how the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), in partnership with local governments, will fund and prioritize transportation projects in the state of North Carolina. Under this formula, all modes will compete for the same funding. This means that roadway projects will compete with ferry projects which will compete with public transportation projects, etc. The Strategic Transportation Investments places projects into three categories: Statewide, Regional and Division levels. The Statewide level is based solely on data. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs) and Division Engineers will assign local input points to projects in the Regional and Division levels. MPOs and RPOs are required to develop methodology for the assignment of local input points and NCDOT must approve this methodology.

The following methodology has been developed by the Wilmington MPO for the purposes of determining transportation funding priorities for Prioritization 4.0. This methodology is intended to ensure a process that is both data-driven and responsive to local needs. The methodology has been developed to meet the requirements of Session Law 2012-84 (Senate Bill 890), which requires that MPOs and RPOs have a process including both quantitative and qualitative elements for determining project prioritization.

The MPO's participation in the Strategic Transportation Investments consists of the following steps: (1) selection of projects for consideration in the Statewide, Regional and Division levels; (2) quantitative scoring of submitted projects by SPOT; (3) develop draft qualitative scoring of projects and ranking; (4) public involvement process and (5) finalize project scoring and ranking.

Each of the three categories identified under the new Strategic Transportation Investments have their own criteria:

Statewide Level

- Projects of statewide significance will receive 40% of the available revenue
- The project selection process will be 100% data-driven/quantitative scoring

Regional Level

- Projects of regional significance will receive 30% of the available revenue based on regional population. Projects on this level compete within specific regions made up of two NCDOT Divisions. The Wilmington MPO is located in Region B.
- Data/ quantitative scoring will comprise 70% of the decision-making process and local rankings will comprise of the remaining 30%. This 30% local input will be shared 15% by the Division Engineers and 15% MPO/RPO input.

Division Level

- Projects that address local concerns such as safety, congestion and connectivity will receive 30% of the available revenue shared equally over NCDOT's 14 Transportation Divisions. The Wilmington MPO is located in NCDOT Division 3.
 - The department will choose projects based 50% on data and 50% on local rankings. This 50% local input will be shared 25% by the Division Engineers and 25% MPO/RPO input.

The Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation "SPOT" will be developing quantitative scores for all projects based on the adopted methodology. Default criteria were recommended by the Prioritization 4.0 work group and agreed to by NCDOT to quantitatively score projects across all modes.

Regional Projects Evaluation Criteria:

Benefit-Cost 20%

Congestion 20%

Accessibility/Connectivity 10%

Safety 10%

Freight 10%

Multi-modal 0%

Local Input 30%

Division Projects Evaluation Criteria

Benefit-Cost 15%

Congestion 15%

Accessibility/Connectivity 5%

Safety 10%

Freight 5%

Multi-modal 0%

Local Input 50%

However, the MPOs, RPOs and the NCDOT's Division Engineers were given flexibility to develop their own highway criteria and formulas for the quantitative evaluation and project scoring in the Regional Projects and Division Projects. SPOT required that any deviation from the adopted criteria had to be unanimously approved by each MPO and RPO in the Region and/or Division by October 1, 2015. A revised set of criteria is recommended by the members of Region B and Division 3. Below please find these revised criteria:

Regional Projects Evaluation Criteria:

Benefit-Cost 10%

Congestion 10%

Accessibility/Connectivity 10%

Safety 25%

Freight 10%

Multi-modal 5%
Local Input 30%

Division Projects Evaluation Criteria

Benefit-Cost 0%
Congestion 10%
Accessibility/Connectivity 5%
Safety 15%
Freight 10%
Multi-modal 10%
Local Input 50%

The aforementioned percentages and weights are used for the roadway mode only and all non-roadway projects will utilize the same criteria statewide.

Wilmington MPO Local Input Methodology Process

While developing the Cape Fear Transportation 2040 Transportation Plan, the Wilmington MPO's TAC utilized a prioritization process for evaluating projects identified in the plan. Projects included in Cape Fear Transportation 2040 have been prioritized for a limited amount of funding from the fiscally-constrained funding sources. The MPO used both quantitative (objective) and qualitative (subjective) information to determine which projects represented the greatest need to match available funding sources within its boundaries. Members of the general public, elected officials, subject matter experts and planning technicians within the Greater Wilmington Area submitted project proposals for 6 modes of transportation – Aviation, Bicycle and Pedestrian, Ferry and Water Transportation, Freight and Rail, Mass Transportation, and Roadways.

All projects were evaluated using goals and objects identified for each mode. A ranked list of project needs was then used as the basis for the fiscal constraint analysis determining which projects could receive a portion of the anticipated funding in this region between 2015 and 2040.

The MPO has developed an objective, matrix-based prioritization process for the review of projects submitted to SPOT for consideration in Prioritization 4.0. The MPO proposes to utilize the following as evaluating criteria in assigning the local input points: the SPOT Score, Includes Multi-modal Accommodations, Wilmington MPO's Prioritization 3.0, Consistency with Plans and Status of Project. The WMPO will use the quantitative scores from the SPOT office as part of the prioritization process as well as to guide the TAC in the assignment of local input points.

Local Input- The Local Input is the priority of the project as ranked by the TCC and TAC. The TAC will review and approve a final prioritized list of projects for submission to SPOT. A matrix will be used to develop the draft Local Input points. Below please find an example of this matrix:

		SPOT Score	Includes Multi-modal Accommodations	Wilmington MPO's Prioritization 3.0	Consistency with Plans	Status of Project in Development	Total
		Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points
Project X							

SPOT 4.0 Score- The SPOT 4.0 score is the score provided by SPOT for each project. This will be translated into points.

Includes Multi-modal Accommodations- the project serves as or includes a multi-modal transportation component. This information will be derived from the TAC's adopted Problem Statement for the project and/or adopted Long Range Transportation Plan.

- Project includes multi-modal component- 100 points
- Project does not include multi-modal component- 0 points

Prioritization 3.0 Points- the amount of local input points the project received during the Prioritization 3.0. This could range from 100 to 0.

Consistency with Plans- This criterion is used to determine if the proposed project is in an adopted plan. Each project will be evaluated with the points assigned as follows:

- Projects included in the adopted Long Range Transportation Plan- 100 points
- Projects included in Plans adopted by the MPO- 50 points
- Projects that are adopted in plans by the member jurisdictions but not adopted by the MPO- 25 points

Status of the Project in Development- This criterion will identify which phase the project is in development. Each project will be evaluated with the criteria as outlined below:

- Projects that are in the right-of way acquisition or property already acquired by the State of North Carolina- 100 points

- Projects that are in the Design phase- 50 points
- Projects that are in the Planning phase- 25 points

Under this formula, all modes will compete against each other for funding. Each MPO, RPO and NCDOT Division Engineer is allowed to assign local input points that will be used by NCDOT in ranking and scoring each project. The Wilmington MPO will be able to assign up to 1,500 local input points for each (**1500 for Regional Impact and 1500 for Division Needs categories**). The maximum number of points that can be assigned to a project is 100 points. The assignment of local input points will be based on a mathematical sum of the points assigned during the Local Input Methodology Process.

Example:

Project: Project X

SPOT Score- Translated to Points	56.8 points
Includes Multi-modal Accommodations- Does include	100 points
Prioritization 3.0 Points (Prioritization 3.0 points were 50)	50 points
Project Consistency with Plans- Project is in LRTP=	100 points
Status of Project in Development- Project is in the Design phase	= <u>50 points</u>
	Total 356.8 points

The top scoring projects will receive the highest number of points from the Wilmington MPO. The Local Input Methodology shall serve as a guide for the TAC to assign points to projects located within the Wilmington MPO's planning jurisdiction and the TAC will have the flexibility to assign points as the Committee desires. However deviation from the Local Input Methodology shall require the justification/rationale to be made during a public meeting of the TAC as advertised by the open meetings laws and included with the sharing of the points with the public through the public outreach effort.

The Wilmington MPO's TCC and TAC will develop a "draft" project ranking and scoring to assign points based on the aforementioned criteria. The Wilmington MPO will then conduct a public outreach effort. Following the public outreach effort, the MPO will review with the TCC and TAC any comments received during the public participation process. No additional projects will be submitted based on the public participation effort. The TAC will then adopt a Final Project Ranking and Scoring for the Wilmington MPO. This information will then be submitted to the SPOT office.

Public Involvement Process

The Wilmington MPO adopted the most recent Public Involvement Policy on September 9, 2009. The Public Involvement Policy is an umbrella policy encompassing the plans and programs of the Wilmington MPO's transportation planning process. This policy serves as an integral part of the MPO's planning efforts. The Wilmington MPO will utilize this adopted policy to solicit comments on the "draft" Project Ranking and Scoring. These outreach efforts will include regular public input opportunities at TAC meetings, the draft project ranking and scoring will also be posted on the MPO's website and the MPO will solicit public comments. Following the closing of the public participation process, staff will review any comments received with the TCC and TAC. All public comments received and all final point assignments and any justification/rationale for point assignment which deviates from this Local Methodology will be placed on the Wilmington MPO's website at www.wmpo.org.

Prioritization Process Schedule 2015-2016

- TAC Reviews Existing Projects, Project Modifications and Intersection/Interchange Projects September 2015
- New Project Submittals to NCDOT November 2015
- TAC Adopts FINAL Local Input Methodology February 2016
- TAC Approves “DRAFT” Project Ranking and Scoring April 2016
- Conduct MPO Public Input Process April 2016
- TAC Approves Final Project Ranking and Scoring May 2016
- Submit Scored Projects to NCDOT May 2016