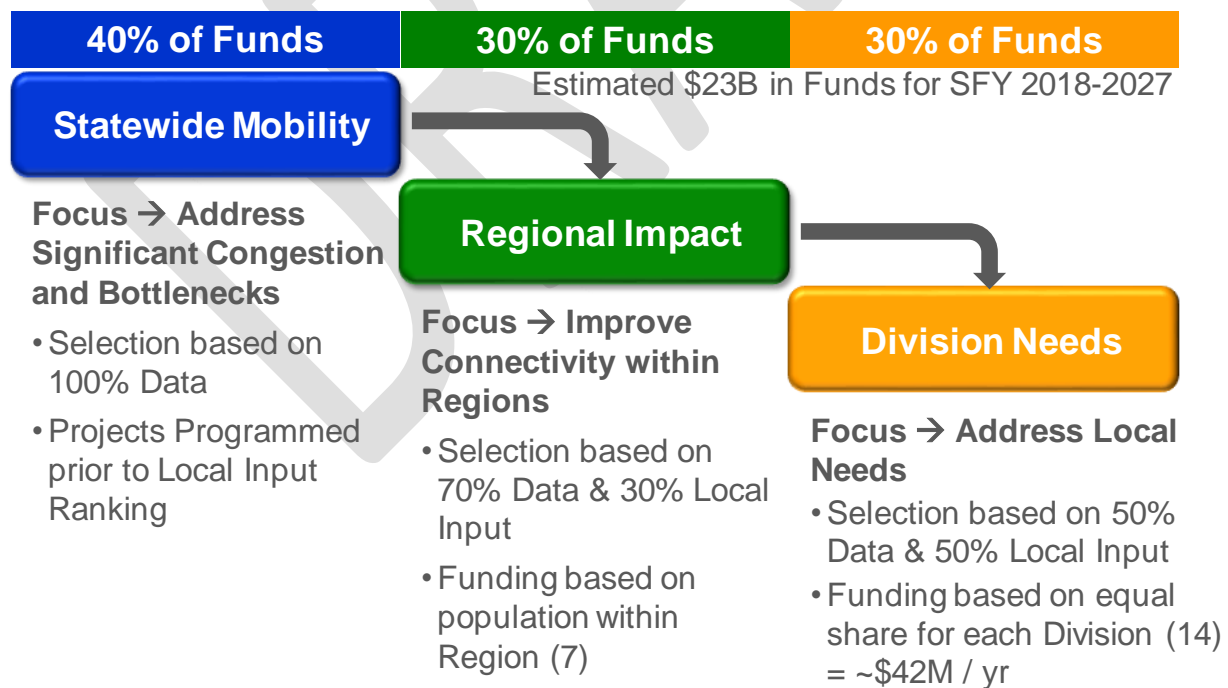


DRAFT 2016 MPO SPOT 5.0 METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) law governs the process in which the State of North Carolina prioritizes transportation projects. The law was passed in 2013 with the intent of creating a data-driven, collaborative process between NCDOT, planning organizations, local governments, and the public to efficiently utilize funding for transportation improvements across the state.

As part of the prioritization process, projects are solicited from planning organizations and NCDOT Divisions. Projects submitted into the prioritization process are placed into three different funding tiers based on facility and project types: Statewide Mobility, Regional Impact, and Division Needs. Project scoring for the Statewide Mobility tier is based solely on quantitative data developed by the Prioritization Workgroup. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs), and Division Engineers assign local input points to projects in the Regional Impact and Division Needs tiers. These points are applied in the calculation of the final project scores for Prioritization 5.0 to determine which projects are funded at the Regional Impact and Division Needs tiers.



To ensure local input points are being applied through a process that is transparent, MPOs and RPOs are required to develop a methodology that outlines how they will determine which projects will have local input points applied. This local input methodology for the French Broad River MPO has been developed to meet the requirements of Session Law 2012-84 which requires that MPOs and RPOs have a process that includes at least two criteria (with at least one being qualitative), for determining project prioritization.

FRENCH BROAD RIVER MPO PRIORITIZATION TASKS

The French Broad River MPO engages in the prioritization process in the following ways:

1. Selection of transportation projects to be considered in the prioritization process
2. Apply local input points to projects in the Regional Impact and Division Needs tiers using a process that follows the MPO's local input methodology
3. Involve the public in the MPO's tasks during the prioritization process
4. Consider/Adopt the 2020-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

As stipulated by the STI legislation, local points may be assigned to projects in the Regional Impact and Division Needs categories, but not the Statewide Mobility category. The French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) may allocate the following number of local points for projects in the eligible categories:

- 1800 points – Regional Impact projects
- 1800 points – Division Needs projects

A committee of TCC and MPO Board members was created to develop a local input point methodology. The contents of this memorandum describe the methodology developed by the committee, which the FBRMPO proposes to use to allocate its local input points. NCDOT requires that the methodology include the following:

- Two criteria (at least one must be qualitative)
- Public involvement (on the proposed methodology, and the preliminary assignment of local input points to projects based on the approved methodology)
- Dissemination of methodology, local points and public input on FBRMPO's website (www.fbrmpo.org)

POINT ASSIGNMENT PROCESS

OVERVIEW AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles will be used for the allocation of FBRMPO's local points.

Cascading Projects

During the prioritization process, projects are allowed to “cascade” from one funding tier into another. For example, if a project in the Statewide Mobility tier is unsuccessful at being funded, the project may cascade into the Regional Impact and/or Division Needs tiers to be funded. The same may be applied to Regional Impact projects which may cascade from to the Division Needs tier. Projects may not cascade in the opposite direction (i.e. Division Needs to Regional Impact or Statewide Mobility).

MPO Cascading Policy: The MPO will- by default- not assign points to any cascading project, but reserves the right to address cascading projects on a case-by-case basis, and will provide written explanation and justification for any cascading project that justifies an exception.

Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit Projects

Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit projects in the FBRMPO planning area are only eligible for funding in the Division Needs tier. These projects require a local match from local governments or transit operators in order to be successfully implemented.

MPO Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit Prioritization Policy: The MPO will reserve 500 points for Division Needs that will be prioritized for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes, but may be used towards highway projects if the Board finds insufficient warrant for the application of points towards these modes.

General Application and Deviations from Methodology Scoring

Projects with the highest MPO Scores will be given the maximum number of points allowable within their native tier until the MPO points are expended or the 120% of the estimated amount of funding available within that tier is expended.

The MPO Board can adjust projects receiving points or adjust the number of points given to a project based on their discretion, recommendations from the TCC and other MPO committees, and/or public input. Any exceptions will require written explanation to be provided to NCDOT SPOT and be part of an open, public process that complies with Chapter 143, Article 33C of the North Carolina General Statutes.

TOTAL SCORE AND PROJECT RANKING APPROACH

STATEWIDE MOBILITY

Modes Considered: Highway and Aviation

Projects considered for funding in the Statewide Mobility tier will be programmed based solely on the quantitative scoring developed by NCDOT and the SPOT workgroup. The MPO methodology for local input points does not apply to determining funding at this tier. However, please note the MPO's Cascading Policy for projects that are eligible for Statewide Mobility but may cascade to other tiers.

REGIONAL IMPACT

Modes Considered: Highway and (potentially) Aviation

Projects considered for funding in the Regional Impact tier will be subject to scoring through the MPO's methodology. The following (sometimes overlapping) steps will be taken to determine what projects are assigned local input points from the MPO:

- Unfunded Statewide Mobility projects will be considered for cascading
- Highway and (potentially) Aviation projects will be scored based on the methodology detailed below
- Draft Local Input points will be applied to the highest scoring projects until MPO local input points or 120% of estimated funding available is exhausted
- Public Input will be solicited on the Draft Point Assignment
- Discussion/Approval of Local Point Assignment from the MPO Prioritization Subcommittee, TCC, and Board

DIVISION NEEDS

Modes Considered: Highway, Bicycle/Pedestrian, Transit, and (potentially) Aviation

Projects considered for funding in the Division Needs tier will be subject to scoring through the MPO's methodology. The following (sometimes overlapping) steps will be taken to determine what projects are assigned local input points from the MPO:

- Unfunded Statewide Mobility and Regional Impact projects will be considered for cascading
- Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit projects will be scored based on the methodology detailed below and compete for 500 local input points reserved for these modes
- Highway and (potentially) Aviation projects will be scored based on the methodology detailed below
- Draft Local Input points will be applied to the highest scoring projects until MPO local input points or 120% of estimated funding available is exhausted
- Public Input will be solicited on the Draft Point Assignment
- Discussion/Approval of Local Point Assignment from the MPO Prioritization Subcommittee, TCC, and Board

DESCRIPTION OF CRITERIA AND WEIGHTS

Projects will be scored based on the transportation mode. These include: Highway, Aviation, Bicycle/Pedestrian, and Transit. There are no Rail or Ferry projects within the FBRMPO planning area.

HIGHWAY

There are overarching criteria that link back to goals in the MTP (shown in blue in the table). The sub criteria under each criterion describe the data points that the FBRMPO use to measure the merits of a particular highway project. Criteria for the other modes follow the remainder of the narrative.

Maximum Points	Minimal Need	Low Need	Moderate Need	High Need
Improve Safety on Surface Streets and Highways				
	NCDOT SPOT Safety Score			
27	Projects scoring below the 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective tier	Projects scoring within the 25 th - 49.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective tier	Projects scoring within the 50 th – 74.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective tier	Projects scoring within the top 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective tier
	0 Points	9 Points	18 Points	27 Points
Address Congestion and Bottlenecks				
	NCDOT SPOT Congestion Score			
20	Projects scoring below the 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective tier	Projects scoring within the 25 th - 49.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective tier	Projects scoring within the 50 th – 74.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective tier	Projects scoring within the top 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective tier
	0 Points	6 Points	12 Points	20 Points

Improve Non-Motorized Transportation Options				
	Bike/Ped Crash Hot Spots (2007 – 2015)			
15	No Bike/Ped Crashes or Adopted Bike/Ped Plan	One or Two Bike/Ped Crashes	Three or Four Bike/Ped Crashes	Five or More Bike/Ped Crashes or One Fatal Bike/Ped Crash
	0 Points	3 Points	7 Points	10 Points
	Is the proposed project part of an adopted bike/ped transportation plan?			
	Not in an Adopted Local/Regional Bike/Ped Plan		Identified in an Adopted Local/Regional Bike/Ped Plan	
	0 Points		5 Points	
Maintain and Improve Safe Freight Movement				
	NCDOT SPOT Freight Score			
6	Projects scoring below the 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective tier	Projects scoring within the 25 th - 49.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective tier	Projects scoring within the 50 th – 74.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective tier	Projects scoring within the top 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective tier
	0 Points	2 Points	4 Points	6 Points
Ensure Changes Respect Our Unique Places and Environments				
	Is the project located within an area of existing public utility service area?			
7	Partially or Completely Outside Existing Public Water/Sewer Service Area		Completely Inside Existing Public Water/Sewer Service Area	
	0 Points		6 Points	
	Does the project use a non-widening strategy from the MPO's Congestion Management Process (CMP) to address congestion?			
	The project does not use a non-widening strategy from the CMP to address congestion		The Project uses a non-widening strategy from the CMP to address congestion on a CMP Corridor	
	0 Points		1 Points	

LOCAL PRIORITIES

25

Local Priority points will be distributed based on county-level meetings with TCC and/or MPO Board members or Local TAC. A total of 275 Local Priority points at the Regional Impact Level and another 275 Local Priority points at the Division Needs level will be apportioned to counties with 25 points going to each county and the rest of the points apportioned by population within the MPO and rounded to the nearest number divisible by 25. By this methodology, Buncombe will receive 125 points, Henderson 75 points, Haywood 50 points, and Madison 25 points. Counties may send points to other counties for their use. These points will compete against all modes.

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NON-HIGHWAY MODES

AVIATION

- Aviation projects must be requested to cascade to Regional Impact and/or Division Needs tiers, per the MPO's cascading policy outlined in this methodology. Aviation projects will use the SPOT score and local priority points to score the project at the Regional Impact or Division Needs level. This score (out of 100) will be used to compete with other modes at that funding tier.

Preliminary SPOT Score				
75	SPOT Score Assigned Based on Rank within FBRMPO Percentile (from the corresponding tier)			
	Projects scoring below the 25th percentile of all projects in the region	Projects scoring within the 25 th - 49.9 th percentile of all projects in the region	Projects scoring within the 50 th – 74.9 th percentile of all projects in the region	Projects scoring within the top 25th percentile of all projects in the region
	0 Points	25 Points	50 Points	75 Points
LOCAL PRIORITIES				
25	See the Highway Methodology for Local Priorities. All modes will compete for the same set of points.			

BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN, AND TRANSIT

- Bicycle and Pedestrian projects will not receive local input points from the MPO without written affirmation of required local match from a sponsoring local government representative as well as the use of local priority points from the MPO's methodology.
- Bicycle and Pedestrian projects will be scored based on the SPOT score and local priority points. These projects will compete for the Division Needs points reserved for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit projects.
- Transit projects will be scored based on the SPOT score and local priority points. These projects will compete for the Division Needs points reserved for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit projects.

Preliminary SPOT Score				
	SPOT Score Assigned Based on Rank within FBRMPO Percentile (from the corresponding tier)			
75	Projects scoring below the 25th percentile of all projects in the region	Projects scoring within the 25 th - 49.9 th percentile of all projects in the region	Projects scoring within the 50 th – 74.9 th percentile of all projects in the region	Projects scoring within the top 25th percentile of all projects in the region
	0 Points	25 Points	50 Points	75 Points
LOCAL PRIORITIES				
25	See the Highway Methodology for Local Priorities. All modes will compete for the same set of points.			

SCHEDULE AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

At a minimum, the FBRMPO will follow its Public Involvement Process for the Prioritization List will include the following steps based on the FBRMPO's adopted **Public Involvement Plan**, section V.C. on page 16:

- After consideration and preliminary adoption by the MPO Board, the draft Prioritization List will be published for a minimum two-week (14-day) public comment period and the notice will be advertised using our media resources provided in Appendix C of the Plan.
- The notices for the public comment period and the public hearing will include an announcement stating that persons with disabilities will be accommodated. Special provisions will be made if notified 48 hours in advance (i.e. having available large print documents, audio material, someone proficient in sign language, a translator or other provisions as requested). The Prioritization List will be on file for review at the Land-of-Sky Regional Council Office, and available in a PDF format for downloading from the FBRMPO website. Written comments will be received during the comment period and will be directed to the FBRMPO. The FBRMPO's contact person, phone number and e-mail address will be included in the public notice. The FBRMPO will assemble all comments and forward comments to the MPO Board.
- The Board will hold a public hearing on the draft Prioritization List. The public hearing will be held at a location which is accessible to persons with disabilities. The Board will approve a final Prioritization List after considering the public comments received. The Prioritization List shall be submitted to the NCDOT at or before the NCDOT public hearings for input into the STIP. The MPO Board may elect to open a dialogue with the State on specific project priorities.

The Effect of MPO Local Input Points on Project Prioritization

The MPO's allocation of local input points on projects in the Regional Impact and Division Needs tiers plays a part in determining the project's overall score in the state's prioritization process. For each tier the MPO's allocation of local input points accounts for the following percentage of a project's SPOT score:

Regional Impact Tier – 15%

Division Needs Tier – 25%

PRIORITIZATION SCHEDULE

Date	Event
February 6 th	Prioritization Subcommittee approves methodology
February 7 th	Methodology open for public comment
February 8 th	TCC approves methodology
February 22nd	MPO Board approves methodology
March	NCDOT programs Statewide Tier projects
April/May	MPO staff holds county-level meetings with TCC or elected officials (depending on the presence of a county-level TAC) to determine Local Priorities points
May	MPO advertises for public comment on placement of local input points
June 14 th	TCC approves local input points for Regional Impact projects
June 28th	MPO Board approves local input points for Regional Impact projects
August	NCDOT programs Regional Impact Tier projects, Division Needs Tier opens 60-day window for local input points
September	MPO staff holds county-level meetings with TCC or elected officials (depending on the presence of a county-level TAC) to determine Local Priorities points
Late September	MPO advertises for public comment on placement of local input points
October 11 th	TCC approves local input points for Division Needs projects
October 25th	MPO Board approves local input points for Division Needs projects
January, 2019	NCDOT releases Draft STIP

MATERIAL SHARING

The FBRMPO plans to maintain complete transparency through the local input scoring process. All relevant materials will be posted on the FBRMPO website in accordance with the MPO's Public Involvement Policy and will remain available until after the adoption of the TIP and STIP by the MPO Board, and NC Board of Transportation, respectively.

The FBRMPO plans to maintain the following resources on its website:

- A link to NCDOT's Prioritization homepage
- The FBRMPO prioritization methodology
- A schedule of the local input process
- Draft and final local input point scores and records of deviations