METHODOLOGY FOR IDENTIFYING AND RANKING NEW TRANSPORATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM PROJECT REQUESTS

INTRODUCTION

According to U.S. Code 23 Section 134, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are required to develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in cooperation with the State and public transportation providers through a performance-driven, outcome-based approach to planning. The TIP should contain projects consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and should reflect the investment priorities established in the current MTP. There should be the opportunity for public participation in developing the TIP including consultation, as appropriate, with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation.

Furthermore, as a Transportation Management Area (TMA), according to U.S. Code 23 Section 134, all federally funded projects within the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro (DCHC) MPO (excluding projects carried out on the National Highway System) shall be selected for implementation from the approved TIP by the MPO in consultation with the State and any public transportation provider or operator. Projects on the National Highway System shall be selected for implementation from the TIP by the State in cooperation with the MPO.

North Carolina's Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) legislation, passed in 2013, establishes a formula and process by which transportation funding is distributed across the state and across transportation modes. The outcome of the STI process is the draft State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The STI legislation applies uniformly across the state regardless of the boundaries of MPOs and MPOs that are TMAs. The STI legislation requires the identification and submittal of potential transportation projects by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the MPO, the evaluation of projects according to a NCDOT-developed quantitative scoring methodology, and the allocation of ranking points among certain projects by NCDOT and the MPO.

The DCHC MPO's *Methodology for Identifying and Ranking TIP Project Requests* describes the processes that the MPO will follow to identify projects that will be submitted for evaluation to North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) during the NCDOT Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation's (SPOT) Prioritization process. When the results of the SPOT Prioritization process are made available, the MPO will follow this Methodology to rank projects and assign Local Input Points to high priority projects. This Methodology is designed to address the federal requirement that the TIP be consistent with the projects and investment priorities of the MPO's MTP while being compatible with the state's STI process.

The DCHC MPO retains the authority to develop the TIP for the MPO area as required by federal regulations. Participation in the STI process through submitting projects for evaluation and/or allocating Local Input Points to projects does not require the MPO to include these projects in the TIP.

OBJECTIVE

The Methodology described herein is designed to address multi-modal transportation needs, ensure regional balance, and prioritize projects that are needed based on technical criteria. The goal is to produce a project priority ranking which satisfies MPO goals, is simple enough for project-level analysis without requiring unnecessary data collection, and is understandable by the general public.

The DCHC MPO's Technical Committee (TC) will use the Methodology to generate a list of priority projects to submit to the NCDOT SPOT for quantitative scoring. While the Methodology is designed to comprehensively address the MPO's transportation needs, there will always be factors that are not easily measured but should still be considered in the development of the MPO's priorities. The DCHC MPO TC will make its technical recommendation for the prioritization of projects based on the methodology described in this document, and the DCHC MPO Board will then be afforded the opportunity to make changes with appropriate documentation. All public involvement for this process will be conducted in accordance with the DCHC MPO's adopted Public Involvement Policy.

Steps and schedule for submission of DCHC MPO projects to NCDOT for evaluation:

Summer 2015	DCHC MPO reviews existing projects and makes a recommendation to the DCHC MPO Board
Summer 2015	DCHC MPO Board votes on any proposed changes to existing projects
September 2015	Deadline to modify or delete an existing project.
October 2015	DCHC MPO Board votes on new highway, public transportation, rail, and bicycle/pedestrian projects to submit for Prioritization 4.0.
November 2015	Highway, rail, bicycle/pedestrian, public transportation project submission deadline for Prioritization 4.0.

Steps and schedule for updating the DCHC MPO's Methodology for Identifying and Ranking TIP Project Requests:

Summer 2015	MPO TC approves a local project prioritization methodology for projects being submitted to NCDOT SPOT Online
Summer 2015	TC forwards local project prioritization methodology to DCHC MPO Board for review and approval
Summer 2015	DCHC MPO Board approves local project prioritization methodology
Winter 2015	DCHC MPO develops *Methodology for Identifying and Ranking TIP Project Requests* document
Winter 2015	DCHC MPO TC reviews the *Methodology for Identifying and Ranking TIP Project Requests* and forwards Methodology to the DCHC MPO Board for approval
Winter 2015	DCHC MPO Board releases the *Methodology for Identifying and Ranking TIP Project Requests* for public review and comment period
Winter 2015	DCHC MPO forwards the *Methodology for Identifying and Ranking TIP Project Requests* to NCDOT for NCDOT Review Committee review
Spring 2016	DCHC MPO Board receives public comment on the *Methodology for Identifying and Ranking TIP Project Requests*
Spring 2016	DCHC MPO Board approves the *Methodology for Identifying and Ranking TIP Project Requests* with any public comments incorporated

Steps and tentative schedule for the allocation of Local Input Points:

Winter 2015/2016	DCHC MPO receives results of the NCDOT SPOT scoring process for Statewide projects
March 2016	DCHC MPO receives results of the NCDOT SPOT scoring process for Regional projects
March 2016	DCHC MPO ranks Regional projects for the assignment of Local Input Points
April 2016	DCHC MPO Board holds public hearing for the ranking of Regional projects and the assignment of Local Input Points
April 2016	DCHC MPO Board approves assignment of Local Input Points to Regional projects
April 2016	DCHC MPO submits Regional projects, with Local Input Points assigned, to NCDOT
May 2016	DCHC MPO receives results of the NCDOT SPOT scoring process for Division projects
May 2016	DCHC MPO ranks Division projects for the assignment of Local Input Points
June 2016	DCHC MPO Board holds public hearing for the ranking of Division projects and the assignment of Local Input Points
June 2016	DCHC MPO Board approves assignment of Local Input Points to Division projects
June 2016	DCHC MPO submits Division projects, with Local Input Points assigned, to NCDOT

DCHC MPO GOALS FOR THE *METHOLDOGY FOR IDENTIFYING AND RANKING TIP PROJECTS*

The *Methodology for Identifying and Ranking TIP Projects* should result in a list of projects that are a subset of the DCHC MPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). For this reason, the goals for the Methodology are the same as the goals of the DCHC MPO, as presented in the adopted 2040 MTP. The goals of the 2040 MTP are as follows:

- A safe, sustainable, efficient, attractive, multi-modal transportation system that: supports local land use; accommodates trip-making choices; maintains mobility and access; protects the environment and neighborhoods; and improves the quality of life for urban area residents.
- An attractive multi-modal street and highway system that allows people and goods to be moved safely, conveniently, and efficiently.
- A convenient, accessible, and affordable public transportation system, provided by public and private operators, that enhances mobility and economic development.
- A pedestrian and bicycle system that: provides a safe alternative means of transportation; allows greater access to public transit; supports recreational opportunities; and includes off-road trails
- A Transportation Plan that is integrated with local land use plans and development policies.
- A multi-modal transportation system which provides access and mobility to all residents, while protecting the public health, natural environment, cultural resources, and social systems.
- An ongoing program to inform and involve citizens throughout all stages of the development, update, and implementation of the Transportation Plan.
- Continue to improve transportation safety and ensure the security of the transportation system.

- Improve mobility and accessibility of freight and urban goods movement.

PROCEDURE FOR IDENTIFYING PROJECTS FOR SUBMISSION TO NCDOT SPOT

1) <u>Submission of Local Priority Lists to the MPO</u>

All MPO member jurisdictions and agencies will submit a local priority list to the MPO. The DCHC MPO requests that the MPO members apply initial screening criteria during the development of their respective lists. The initial screening criteria are listed below in this section. In addition to the initial screening criteria, MPO members may also want to consider reviewing Section 2 of this Methodology for guidance on the NCDOT's SPOT scoring criteria. The DCHC MPO will apply the NCDOT's scoring criteria when considering new project requests from DCHC MPO member jurisdictions and agencies.

Initial Screening Criteria

a) Regional Goals - How well does the project meet the adopted regional goals? Is the project an element of the current MTP? Does it implement community objectives? For the intrastate system, does it meet NCDOT mobility objectives? Does the project have a broad base of local support?

b) Cost Effectiveness - How much benefit does the project offer compared to the estimated cost?

c) Timing – Is the project needed within the TIP funding cycle? Is timing a critical element for the project (one-time opportunity)? Will the opportunity to do the project be lost if it is not in the current priority cycle?

MPO member jurisdictions and agencies may also elect to use a ranking methodology to create their local priority lists but only public transportation operators are required to do so. The subcommittee and TC will review local priority lists for adherence to these initial screening criteria and apply the NCDOT scoring criteria listed in Section 2 of this Methodology, before recommending the submission of these projects to the NCDOT SPOT On!ine tool.

MPO member jurisdictions and agencies shall provide the DCHC MPO a list of projects. The MPO member jurisdictions and agencies shall provide a short description of the project, including the project limits, name, mileage, and cost. The description should note any essential elements of the project such as bike lanes, sidewalks, transit accommodations, vehicle types, and other important project information. If a project exists in more than one jurisdiction, all jurisdictions must be in agreement on the proposed scope and details of the project.

2) <u>Submission of Projects to the STI Process</u>

For the 2018-2027 TIP, the DCHC MPO will submit projects to NCDOT's SPOT office by November 2015, for the application of the NCDOT's quantitative ranking methodology. The MPO is limited in the number of new projects that may be submitted for each mode (highway, bicycle and pedestrian, public transportation, aviation, ferry and rail), but can submit an additional project for each existing project removed from the system. NCDOT Division Engineers can also submit projects for each of their Divisions but are also limited in the number of new projects per mode that may be submitted.

DCHC MPO will combine the local priority lists into a list that the MPO will use to prioritize projects for submission into the NCDOT's SPOT On!ine tool. In the event that more highway, bicycle and pedestrian, public transportation, or rail projects are submitted to the MPO than the MPO is allowed submit to NCDOT, the MPO TC will select projects based the NCDOT scoring criteria for each mode listed in Section 2. There are no ferry or aviation projects located in the DCHC MPO area so the DCHC MPO's prioritization efforts are focused on projects in the remaining transportation modes. The MPO will request that the Division Engineers submit any additional projects that the DCHC MPO may not be able to submit because the MPO is limited in the number of projects that may be submitted.

DCHC MPO TC Preliminary Project Ranking

Highway Projects

Highway projects may be scored and funded by any of the three funding categories (Statewide, Regional, or Division). The NCDOT has developed a different highway project scoring process for each of the three funding categories. A project that is eligible for the Statewide funding category but is not funded under that category can cascade down to the Regional category for evaluation and possible funding. If the project is not funded under the Regional category, the project may cascade down to the Division category for evaluation and possible funding.

The NCDOT SPOT process limits the number of high priority projects that MPOs may submit. In the event that more new project requests are received than the MPO can submit, the MPO TC will apply a **preliminary ranking** for each funding category based on the NCDOT scoring criteria for each funding category listed below. Recent data for the ranking criteria must be available for the project to be evaluated. The scoring criteria were developed by the NCDOT to reflect the SPOT 4.0 Workgroup recommendations that were approved by the NCDOT Board of Transportation in July 2015.

Funding Category	Quantitative Data	Local Input	
		Division Input	MPO/RPO Input
Statewide Mobility	**Benefit/Cost = 25%** • Measurement of travel time savings and safety benefits the project is expected to provide over 10 years compared to the cost of the project to NCDOT. **Congestion = 30%** • Measurement of the Peak ADT traffic volume on the roadway compared to the existing capacity of the roadway, weighted by the total traffic volume along the roadway. **Economic Competitiveness = 10%** • Measurement of the estimated number of long-term jobs and the % change in economic activity within the county that the project is expected to provide over 10 years. **Safety = 15%** • Measurement of the number, severity, and frequency of crashes along the roadway. **Multimodal [+ Military] = 5%** • Measurement of congestion along routes that provide connections to multimodal passenger terminals. **Freight [+ Military] = 15%** • Measurement of congestion along routes that provide connections to freight intermodal terminals and routes that have high truck volumes. **Total = 100%**	--	--
Regional Impact	**Benefit/Cost = 20%** • Measurement of travel time savings and safety benefits the project is expected to provide over 10 years compared to the cost of the project to NCDOT. **Congestion = 20%** • Measurement of the Peak ADT traffic volume on the roadway compared to the existing capacity of the roadway, weighted by the total traffic volume along the roadway. **Safety = 10%** • Measurement of the number, severity, and frequency of crashes along the roadway. **Accessibility/Connectivity = 10%** • Measurement of county economic distress indicators and whether the project upgrades how the roadway functions. Goal of improving access to opportunity in rural and less-affluent areas and improving interconnectivity of the transportation network. **Freight [+ Military] = 10%** • Measurement of congestion along routes that provide connections to freight intermodal terminals and routes that have high truck volumes. **Total = 70%** (Division Engineer and Local Input Points account for remaining 30%)	**15%**	**15%**

Division Needs	**Benefit/Cost = 15%** • Measurement of travel time savings and safety benefits the project is expected to provide over 10 years compared to the cost of the project to NCDOT. **Congestion = 15%** • Measurement of the Peak ADT traffic volume on the roadway compared to the existing capacity of the roadway. **Safety = 10%** • Measurement of the number, severity, and frequency of crashes along the roadway. **Freight [+ Military] = 5%** • Measurement of congestion along routes that provide connections to freight intermodal terminals and routes that have high truck volumes. **Accessibility/Connectivity = 5 %** • Measurement of county economic distress indicators and whether the project upgrades how the roadway functions. Goal of improving access to opportunity in rural and less-affluent areas and improving interconnectivity of the transportation network. **Total = 50%** (Division Engineer and Local Input Points account for remaining 50%)	**25%**	**25%**

Public Transportation Projects

Public Transportation projects may be scored and funded by the Regional or Division funding categories. Different types of public transportation projects (vehicle, passenger facility, administrative/maintenance/operations facility, and fixed guideway) have different scoring processes for the Regional and the Division categories. Because of the different project types and the different funding categories, the MPO requested that public transportation operators prioritize their own new project requests before submitting their new project to the MPO. The DCHC MPO recommended that the public transportation operators review and consider the NCDOT's scoring criteria for Public Transit that is included later in this section.

Three of the public transportation operators in the DCHC MPO will have the opportunity to submit 10 projects and Orange Public Transit will have the opportunity to submit five. The SPOT process limits the number of high priority projects that MPOs may submit. If all public transportation operators submit the maximum number of projects, this will result in the DCHC MPO receiving more projects than the MPO can submit to NCDOT. The DCHC MPO will coordinate with the Division Engineers with the hope that the Division Engineers would be able to submit projects that the DCHC MPO cannot submit.

Public Transit Scoring (Vehicle)

Funding Category	Quantitative Data	Local Input	
		Division Input	MPO/RPO Input
Regional Impact	**Access = 10%** • Measurement of the reported annual hours of operation compared to the number of vehicles in the fleet. **System Safety = 10%** • Measurement of the reported annual miles compared to the 3 year average of reported incidents. **Impact = 20%** • Measurement of the number of existing and projected annual passenger trips compared to the number of existing passenger trips. **Cost Effectiveness = 20%** • Measurement of the total projected passenger trips compared to the cost of the project to the state. **Market Share = 10%** • Measurement of the number of existing and projected annual passenger trips compared to the population in the service area. **Total = 70%** (Division Engineer and Local Input Points account for remaining 30%)	**15%**	**15%**

Funding Category	Quantitative Data	Local Input	
		Division Input	MPO/RPO Input
Division Needs	**Access = 5%** • Measurement of the reported annual hours of operation compared to the number of vehicles in the fleet. **System Safety = 10%** • Measurement of the reported annual miles compared to the 3 year average of reported incidents. **Impact = 15%** • Measurement of the number of existing and projected annual passenger trips compared to the number of existing passenger trips. **Cost Effectiveness = 15%** • Measurement of the total projected passenger trips compared to the cost of the project to the state. **Market Share = 5%** • Measurement of the number of existing and projected annual passenger trips compared to the population in the service area. **Total = 50%** (Division Engineer and Local Input Points account for remaining 50%)	**25%**	**25%**

Public Transit Scoring (Passenger Facility)

Funding Category	Quantitative Data	Local Input	
		Division Input	MPO/RPO Input
Regional Impact	**Impact = 20% (Expansion projects only)** • Measurement of the number of existing and projected annual passenger trips compared to the number of existing passenger trips. **OR** **Age = 20% (Non-expansion projects)** • Age of the facility divided by 45 years (considered the useful life). **Cost Effectiveness = 20%** • Measurement of existing annual passenger trips compared to the cost of the project to the state. **Market Share = 15%** • Measurement of the number of existing and projected annual passenger trips compared to the population in the service area. **Ridership Growth = 15%** • Growth trend of ridership over the past 5 years. **Total = 70%** (Division Engineer and Local Input Points account for remaining 30%)	**15%**	**15%**
Division Needs	**Impact = 15% (Expansion projects only)** • Measurement of the number of existing and projected annual passenger trips compared to the number of existing passenger trips. **OR** **Age = 15% (Non-expansion projects)** • Age of the facility divided by 45 years (considered the useful life). **Cost Effectiveness = 20%** • Measurement of existing annual passenger trips compared to the cost of the project to the state. **Market Share = 15%** • Measurement of the number of existing and projected annual passenger trips compared to the population in the service area. **Ridership Growth = 15%** • Growth trend of ridership over the past 5 years. **Total = 50%** (Division Engineer and Local Input Points account for remaining 50%)	**25%**	**25%**

Public Transit Scoring (Admin/Maintenance/Operations Facility)

Funding Category	Quantitative Data	Local Input	
		Division Input	MPO/RPO Input
Regional Impact	**Impact = 20% (Expansion projects only)** • Measurement of the existing and additional capacity compared to the existing capacity. **OR** **Age = 20% (Non-expansion projects)** • Age of the facility divided by 45 years (considered the useful life). **Cost Effectiveness = 20%** • Measurement of existing annual passenger trips compared to the cost of the project to the state. **Market Share = 15%** • Measurement of the number of existing and projected annual passenger trips compared to the population in the service area. **Ridership Growth = 15%** • Growth trend of ridership over the past 5 years. **Total = 70%** (Division Engineer and Local Input Points account for remaining 30%)	**15%**	**15%**
Division Needs	**Impact = 15% (Expansion projects only)** • Measurement of the existing and additional capacity compared to the existing capacity. **OR** **Age = 15% (Non-expansion projects)** • Age of the facility divided by 45 years (considered the useful life). **Cost Effectiveness = 20%** • Measurement of existing annual passenger trips compared to the cost of the project to the state. **Market Share = 15%** • Measurement of the number of existing and projected annual passenger trips compared to the population in the service area. **Ridership Growth = 15%** • Growth trend of ridership over the past 5 years. **Total = 50%** (Division Engineer and Local Input Points account for remaining 50%)	**25%**	**25%**

Public Transit Scoring (Fixed Guideway)

Funding Category	Quantitative Data	Local Input	
		Division Input	MPO/RPO Input
Regional Impact	**Mobility = 20%** • Measurement of the projected annual trips. **Cost Effectiveness = 15%** • Measurement of the cost per trip over the life of the project. **Economic Development = 20%** • Measurement of the projected new employment and population growth in the fixed guideway corridor over 20 years. **Congestion Relief = 15%** • Measurement of the projected travel time savings to a passenger over 30 years. **Total = 70%** (Division Engineer and Local Input Points account for remaining 30%)	**15%**	**15%**
Division Needs	**Mobility = 15%** • Measurement of the projected annual trips. **Cost Effectiveness = 15%** • Measurement of the cost per trip over the life of the project. **Economic Development = 10%** • Measurement of the projected new employment and population growth in the fixed guideway corridor over 20 years. **Congestion Relief = 10%** • Measurement of the projected travel time savings to a passenger over 30 years. **Total = 50%** (Division Engineer and Local Input Points account for remaining 50%)	**25%**	**25%**

Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects
Bicycle and pedestrian projects are scored and funded by the Division funding category. Unlike highway projects and public transportation projects, the NCDOT utilizes only one scoring process for bicycle and pedestrian projects.

The SPOT process limits the number of high priority projects that MPOs may submit. Therefore, in the event that the MPO receives more new project request than can be submitted, the TC will apply a **preliminary ranking** for each funding category based on the criteria for each funding category listed below. The criteria were developed by the NCDOT to reflect the SPOT 4.0 Workgroup recommendations that were approved by the NCDOT Board of Transportation in July 2015.

Funding Category	Quantitative Data	Local Input	
		Division Input	MPO/RPO Input
Division Needs	**Safety = 15%** • Measurement of number of bicycle and/or pedestrian crashes, speed limit, and safety benefits to determine adequacy of safety for users of the project. **Access = 10%** • Measurement of the quantity and significance of destinations associated with the project as well as the distance to the primary destination. Measures benefit to the community as a result of constructing the project. **Demand = 10%** • Measurement of the density of population and employment within a walkable or bike-able distance of the project. • Measures user benefit as a result of constructing the project. **Connectivity = 10%** • Measurement of the degree of bike/ped separation from the roadway, ADA compliance, and connectivity to a similar or better project type. **Cost Effectiveness = 5%** • Measurement of combined user benefits of Safety, Access, Demand, and Connectivity criteria compared to the cost of the project to NCDOT. **Total = 50%** (Division Engineer and Local Input Points account for remaining 50%)	**25%**	**25%**

Rail Projects

Rail projects may be scored and funded by any of the three funding categories (Statewide, Regional, or Division). The NCDOT has developed a different rail project scoring process for each of the three funding categories. Because the MPO does not yet know which rail projects will be scored in which of the funding categories, the MPO will utilize three different preliminary project ranking processes to determine rail project priorities. The MPO will coordinate closely with the NCDOT Rail Division on the identification, prioritization, and submission of rail projects. If the DCHC MPO receives more new rail project requests than the DCHC MPO can submit to NCDOT, the TC will apply a **preliminary ranking** for each funding category based on the criteria for each funding category listed below. The criteria were developed by the NCDOT to reflect the SPOT 4.0 Workgroup recommendations that were approved by the NCDOT Board of Transportation in July 2015. If the DCHC MPO does not receive more new rail project requests than can be submitted, the DCHC MPO will submit all new rail project requests and will not need to conduct a preliminary ranking process for rail projects.

Funding Category	Quantitative Data	Local Input	
		Division Input	MPO/RPO Input
Statewide Mobility (Class I Freight Only)	**Cost Effectiveness = 35%** • Measurement of monetized benefits compared to the project cost to NCDOT, and the jobs created for the region. **System Health = 35%** • Measurement of the volume to capacity ratio, and various measurements of accessibility and connectivity provided by the project via vicinity to points of interest, improvements to statewide rail networks, or employment density. **Safety and Suitability = 20%** • Measurement of potentially hazardous rail crossings. **Project Support = 10%** • Measurement of outside contributions to the project compared to the cost of the project to the state. **Total = 100%**	--	--

Regional Impact	**Cost Effectiveness = 25%** • Measurement of monetized benefits compared to the project cost to NCDOT, and the jobs created for the region. **System Health = 20%** • Measurement of the volume to capacity ratio, and various measurements of accessibility and connectivity provided by the project via vicinity to points of interest, improvements to statewide rail networks, or employment density. **Safety and Suitability = 15%** • Measurement of potentially hazardous rail crossings. **Project Support = 10%** • Measurement of outside contributions to the project compared to the cost of the project to the state. **Total = 70%** (Division Engineer and Local Input Points account for remaining 30%)	**15%**	**15%**
Division Needs	**Cost Effectiveness = 20%** • Measurement of monetized benefits compared to the project cost to NCDOT, and the jobs created for the region. **System Health = 10%** • Measurement of the volume to capacity ratio, and various measurements of accessibility and connectivity provided by the project via vicinity to points of interest, improvements to statewide rail networks, or employment density. **Safety and Suitability = 10%** • Measurement of potentially hazardous rail crossings. **Project Support = 10%** • Measurement of outside contributions to the project compared to the cost of the project to the state. **Total = 50%** (Division Engineer and Local Input Points account for remaining 50%)	**25%**	**25%**

RECOMMENDED ALLOCATION OF THE MPO'S LOCAL INPUT POINTS

Overview

Upon submission by the MPO and NCDOT Division Engineers, projects within the MPO will by scored according to NCDOT's quantitative ranking methodology. The DCHC MPO will receive the results of the NCDOT quantitative scoring process and the project data used by NCDOT to develop the scores. DCHC MPO staff, in coordination with the staff of MPO member jurisdictions and agencies, will use the project data and collect additional data (if needed) to apply the MPO methodology to projects in the Regional and Division funding categories. Projects in the Statewide category are not eligible for MPO Local Input Points and therefore, will not be ranked by the DCHC MPO as part of this process. The Project Priority Ranking for the Regional and Division category projects will then be presented to the MPO TC and the MPO Board.

The DCHC MPO's project ranking process and subsequent allocation of Local Input Points must capture the goals of the DCHC MPO and not just be purely based on the results of data-driven processes. The process and results should also capture input received from citizens, elected officials, and stakeholders in the DCHC MPO area. It is important to consider the needs of all communities that are located in the DCHC MPO area in the allocation of Local Input Points to priority projects.

Collaboration with NCDOT Divisions is also an important component of the DCHC MPO's project ranking process and subsequent allocation of Local Input Points. Projects that receive the MPO's Local Input Points ***and*** Division Engineer Points will have an overall better score than projects that don't receive points from both the MPO and a Division Engineer. Coordinating with NCDOT Division Engineers will ensure that priority projects in the DCHC MPO area have the best possible chance to be funded in the next NCDOT STIP and MPO TIP.

Ranking Processes for the Allocation of Local Input Points

There are separate ranking processes based on the primary mode of transportation and project type. Furthermore, there are variations within each of the processes for the STI funding category (Regional or Division). There are no ferry routes or eligible airports within the DCHC MPO so those modes are not included in the DCHC MPO ranking process. Similar to the NCDOT quantitative methodology, the ranking processes are independent of each other and the points for different modes are not directly comparable. The ranking processes are summarized in the table on the following page.

Summary Table: Ranking Processes for the Allocation of Local Input Points

Mode or Project Type	Funding Category		
	Statewide	**Regional**	**Division**
Highway	No MPO Methodology. The MPO does not submit ranking points to projects in the Statewide category.	Yes	Yes
Bicycle/Pedestrian		No. The STI legislation does not allow any bike/ped to be considered for Regional funding.	Yes
Public Transit-Vehicle		Yes	Yes
Public Transit-Passenger Facility		Yes	Yes
Public Transit-Admin/Maintenance/ Operations Facility		Yes	Yes
Public Transit-Fixed Guideway		Yes	Yes
Rail Freight		Yes	Yes

If a Statewide project cascades down to the Regional category, it will be scored according to the Regional methodology. If a Statewide or Regional project cascades down to the Division category, it will be scored according to the Division methodology.

The result of the application of the project ranking process will be lists of projects in priority order by mode /project type/category. The next step is to assign the MPO's Local Input Points to specific projects. The MPO has 1,800 Local Input Points to allocate among Regional projects and 1,800 Local Input Points to allocate among Division projects.

For the MPO's 1,800 Regional points, the MPO staff's recommendation to the MPO TC will assign points among modes and project types according to the following:

- 800 points to Highway
- 300 points to Public Transit
- 700 points could be assigned to any mode and project type

For the MPO's 1,800 Division Local Input Points, the MPO staff's recommendation to the MPO TC will assign points among modes and project types according to the following:

- 300 points to Highway
- 500 points to Public Transit
- 200 points to Bicycle and Pedestrian
- 800 points could be assigned to any mode and project type

Within each mode and project type, Local Input Points will be assigned in order of the MPO's score. Exceptions may be made if the project costs more than the funding available in that category or if the project will not be competitive within its Region or Division even with the application of Local Input Points. Statewide projects that cascade down to the Regional category will only be considered for

Regional Local Input Points if the project is not considered likely to be competitive for Statewide category funding during the next Prioritization cycle. Statewide or Regional projects that cascade down to Division will only be considered for Local Input Points if the project is less than $5 million. This limitation is due to the very limited amount of funding available in the Division category that is not STP-DA or TAP (funding that is directly allocated to certain MPOs and that is not subject to the Prioritization process but is subject to the STI legislation), and the number of projects that only qualify in the Division category. Local Input Points will generally be concentrated among fewer projects. The minimum number of Local Input Points will be assigned to each project to ensure that it maintains its relative position in its Region or Division.

The MPO staff's recommendation to the MPO TC for the unassigned Local Input Points in the Regional and Division categories will be informed by:

- The priorities of the current MTP including the adopted distribution of funding between modes and the air quality horizon year of projects;
- The number of eligible projects within the MPO within each funding mode /project type/category;
- The likelihood of receiving funding through STI considering the amount of funding available within each Division or Region, historical funding levels for the mode, and the normalization limitations that NCDOT has adopted;
- The effect that receiving funding for a project may have on the likelihood of other projects being funded in the Division or Region considering the limitations set by the STI legislation; and
- Geographic and jurisdictional balance.

MPO staff will document the reasoning used to justify the proposed assignment of Local Input Points. The MPO TC will receive the MPO's staff's recommendation and may consider adjustments based on the above factors for its recommendation to the MPO Board.

During the period that the draft point assignment is released for public comment, the MPO staff and the MPO TC may make further adjustments to their recommendation based on the above factors as well as:

- Coordination with the Division Engineers on the assignment of points; and
- Public input and support as evidenced through public comments submitted to the MPO, the MPO's public hearing, public involvement efforts of local governments, and local referenda.

All public involvement for this process will be conducted in accordance with the DCHC MPO's Public Involvement Policy. Details of the DCHC MPO public involvement policy are described below.

1) Approval of the Allocation of Local Input Points

The MPO Board will release the draft Project Priority Ranking and application of Local Input Points for public comment and hold a public hearing at a MPO Board meeting. After review and public comment, the MPO Board will approve the final application of Local Input Points. The MPO Board's approval will be informed by the following:

- The priorities of the current MTP including the adopted distribution of funding between modes and the air quality horizon year of projects;
- The number of eligible projects within the MPO within each funding mode /project type/category;

- The likelihood of receiving funding through STI considering the amount of funding available within each Division or Region, historical funding levels for the mode, and the normalization limitations that NCDOT has adopted;
- The effect that receiving funding for a project may have on the likelihood of other projects being funded in the Division or Region considering the limitations set by the STI legislation;
- Geographic and jurisdictional balance;
- Coordination with the Division Engineers on the assignment of points;
- Public input and support as evidenced through public comments submitted to the MPO, the MPO's public hearing, public involvement efforts of local governments, and local referenda;
- The MPO Board members' knowledge of the urban area and the policies of their communities; and
- Other factors as identified. If the MPO Board varies from the recommended allocation of points, MPO staff will document the rationale and will post the documentation on the MPO's website.

After the MPO Board approves the allocation of Local Input Points to projects in the DCHC MPO area, MPO staff will submit the projects with the Local Input Points applied to NCDOT for use in the STI process.

Public Involvement

All public involvement for this process will be conducted in accordance with the DCHC MPO's Public Involvement Policy.

As is the MPO's standard practice for all DCHC MPO Board and TC agenda items, all relevant materials, documentation of this process, and TC and MPO Board meeting materials and minutes will be posted on the DCHC MPO's website www.dchcmpo.org. Documentation of the process will include a description of the MPO Board's rationale for assigning Local Input Points to projects.

The DCHC MPO Public Involvement Policy sets a minimum 21-day public comment period for this process and requires a public hearing at a MPO Board meeting. This public comment period and public hearing will be advertised to the public in accordance with the Public Involvement Policy. Public comments will be documented, summarized, and responses will be provided. In addition, all DCHC MPO Board and TC meetings are public meetings and include the opportunity for public comment. Comments provided at any meeting will be considered.

Comments on the DCHC MPO's *Methodology for Identifying and Ranking TIP Project Requests* or any information contained within may be submitted in writing to the DCHC MPO using the contact information below. Comments may also be offered during any DCHC MPO Board or DCHC MPO TC meeting. All meetings are open to the public and meeting schedules are available on the DCHC MPO's website www.dchcmpo.org

Lindsay R. Smart, AICP
Senior Transportation Planner
DCHC MPO
City of Durham Transportation Department
101 City Hall Plaza
Durham, NC 27701
e: Lindsay.smart@durhamnc.gov