

NBAMPO

New Bern Area

Metropolitan Planning Organization

Local Input Methodology and Ranking Process



**Continuing • Cooperative • Comprehensive
Transportation Planning**

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Description of Criteria and Weights	7
Total Score and Project Ranking Approach	8
Points Assignment Process	9
Schedule and Public Outreach	10
Material Sharing	11

Introduction

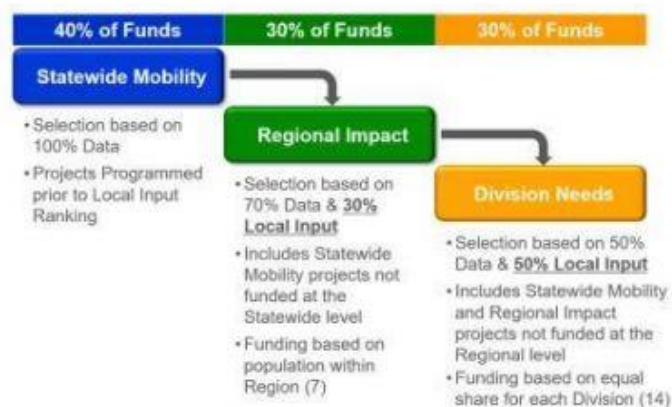
The New Bern Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (NBAMPO) will collaborate with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to submit and rank transportation projects under the NCDOT Prioritization Process. The results of this effort will provide input into the development of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

The Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) law (GS – 136 – 189.10 and .11), enacted in 2013, directs the NCDOT to select and fund major capital improvement projects using a data-driven prioritization process in combination with local input. Under STI, all major capital mobility/expansion and modernization projects across all six modes of transportation compete for funding. Each project is classified into one of three funding categories – Statewide Mobility, Regional Impact, or Division Needs – where it competes for funding with other eligible projects.

This ranking process is the Local Methodology of the MPO used to evaluate and determine assignment of points towards priority projects that will be submitted to the NCDOT. The NCDOT provided guidance for the NBAMPO to follow. This guidance requested that each planning organization and Division develop and implement a local input point methodology that maintains criteria transparency, material availability, and process documentation and maximizes the opportunity for public review and input. This document represents the NBAMPO’s efforts to follow the guidance and requirements of the NCDOT.

Statewide Mobility eligible projects compete against all other projects in this category across the state, and project selection is based 100% on the data-driven quantitative score. Regional Impact projects compete against all other projects in this category within the same funding region, and selection is based 70% on the quantitative score and 30% on the local input. Division Needs projects compete against all over projects within the same NCDOT Transportation Division, (NBAMPO is in Division 2), and selection is based 50% on quantitative score and 50% local input.

The STI law includes an innovative component known as cascading, where projects not funded in the Statewide Mobility category are eligible for funding in the Regional Impact category. Similarly, projects not funded in the Regional Impact category are eligible for Division Needs funds. Projects that cascade down are then subject to the scoring criteria and local input for the respective funding category.



Project eligibility for each STI category, as defined in law, is shown below.

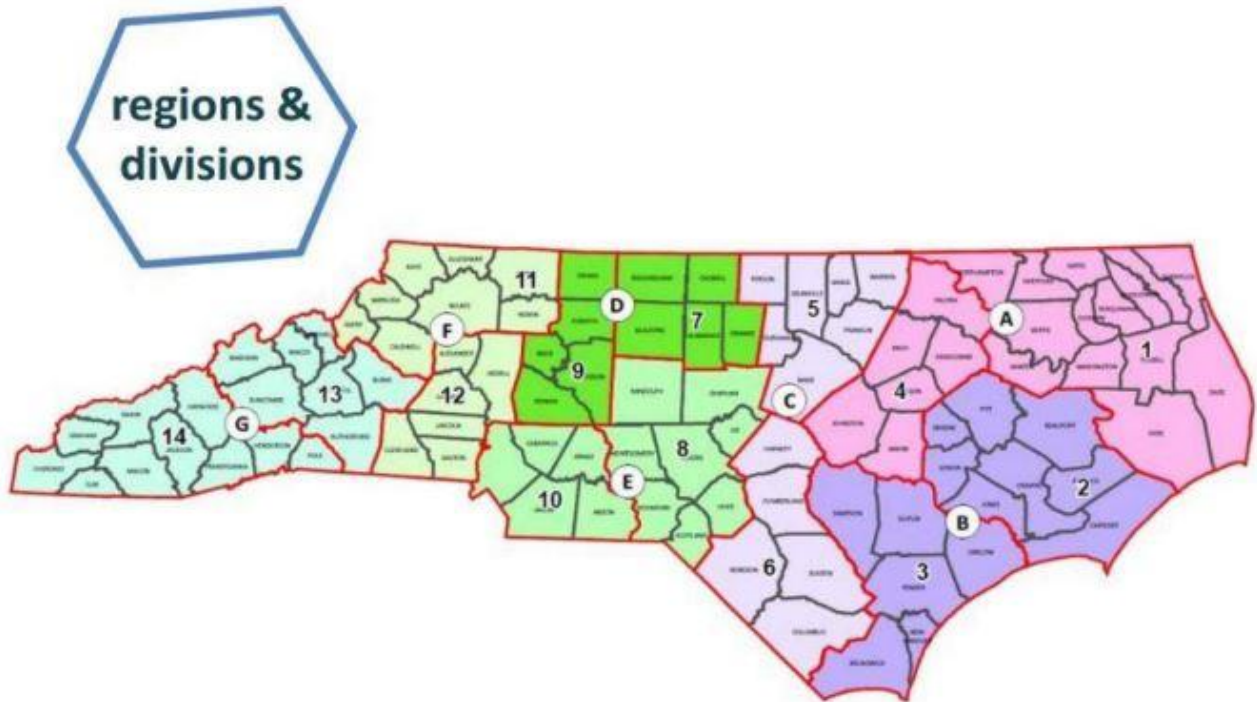
STI Project Eligibility			
Mode	Statewide Mobility	Regional Impact	Division Needs
Highway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interstates (existing & future) NHS routes (as of July 1, 2012) STRAHNET Routes ADHS Routes Uncompleted Intrastate projects Designated Toll Facilities 	Other US and NC Routes	All County (SR) Routes
Aviation	Large Commercial Service Airports (\$500K cap)	Other Commercial Service Airports not in Statewide (\$300K cap)	All Airports without Commercial Service (\$18.5M cap)
Bicycle-Pedestrian	N/A	N/A	All projects (\$0 state funds)
Public Transportation	N/A	Service spanning two or more counties (10% cap)	All other service, including terminals, stations, and facilities
Ferry	N/A	Ferry expansion	Replacement vessels
Rail	Freight Capacity Service on Class I Railroad Corridors	Rail service spanning two or more counties not Statewide	Rail service not included on Statewide or Regional

MPOs/RPOs and Divisions indicate priority by applying local input points to projects. Each organization receives a baseline of 1,000 local input points, with additional points based on population. The NBAMPO has a total of 1,200 points to apply to projects in the Regional Impact category and a total of 1,200 points to apply to projects in the Division Needs Category. State law requires NCDOT to approve how each organization will assign points to projects (maximum number of points assigned to any one project cannot exceed 100 points), in a document known as their Local Input Methodology.

Classification of Transportation Projects: Highway projects associated with US Highway 70 (future I-42), US Highway 17/Business US 17, and NC Highway 55 in the New Bern Area MPO are classified as Statewide Projects. These projects are evaluated and prioritized solely by NCDOT and are based on quantitative data provided by the MPO and the NCDOT. No local input ranking is applied to Statewide projects, however, the NBAMPO has the option to assign points to Statewide projects that cascade down into the Regional and Division Needs categories.

The New Bern Area MPO, comprised of the City of New Bern, Town of Bridgeton, Town of River Bend, Town of Trent Woods and portions of Craven County, is in Region B, which consists of NCDOT Highway Divisions two (2) and three (3).

Regional funds are distributed by population. The state is divided into seven (7) regions, and 14 Highway Divisions. Each region has two Highway Divisions, as seen below.



The New Bern Area MPO Regional highway projects include NC 43. All Regional projects (all modes of transportation) will receive a quantitative evaluation by NCDOT. In addition to this quantitative score, local input will be added to the project evaluation. For Regional projects, the NCDOT quantitative value will be 70% and local input will be 30% of the project evaluation.

The New Bern Area MPO is included in NCDOT Highway Division Two (2), which includes the counties of Beaufort, Craven, Carteret, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Pamlico and Pitt. The 14 Highway divisions of the state will receive equal funding amounts for Division category projects. Highway projects associated with NC Secondary Routes (SR #'s) will fall into the Division category. The NCDOT quantitative score for Division projects will make up 50% of the project evaluation. The local input value for Division projects (all modes) will be 50% of the project evaluation.

The local input for the New Bern Area MPO and Division projects will come from the MPO and NCDOT Division Two (2) (The NBAMPO Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Division Two (2) Engineer). In both Regional and Division projects, the local input will be equally divided between the MPO and Division Engineer.

The Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation accepted new projects from January – July 2020 from the MPO to be evaluated within the Prioritization 6.0 process. The list of new projects submitted for Prioritization 6.0 are approved by the MPO's Transportation Advisory Committee.

Under the Strategic Transportation Investments Law, limitations on new project submittals have been established by the NCDOT. The NBAMPO is allowed to submit the following number of new projects:

- New Highway Projects 14
- New Aviation Projects 14
- New Bicycle/Pedestrian Projects 14
- New Public Transportation Projects 14
- New Rail Projects 14

The NBAMPO will evaluate highway projects included in their long-range transportation planning document (Metropolitan Transportation Plan: Destination 2040) as part of their project submissions for each funding tier (Statewide, Regional and Division).

Projects for the Coastal Carolina Regional Airport fall into the Division Needs category.

Bicycle/Pedestrian projects fall into the Division Needs category.

The NBAMPO public transportation projects in the Regional and Division Needs categories are coordinated with the Craven Area Rural Transit System (CARTS).

Description of Criteria and Weights

The State of North Carolina, NCDOT and the NBAMPO will implement transportation projects that fulfill the requirements of the STI law. To ensure the projects of the STIP are beneficial to the community and support the good of the public, projects in the Prioritization 6.0 process must be evaluated using a minimum of two criteria. One criteria must be a qualitative criterion and one criteria may either be a qualitative or quantitative criterion.

The NCDOT will calculate a quantitative score for all projects submitted to the Prioritization 6.0 process. This number is developed by NCDOT using the project description and supporting project facts provided by the NBAMPO. The NCDOT will supply to the NBAMPO this quantitative score in May 2021.

The NBAMPO will have the opportunity to add a local input score to transportation projects in the Regional and Division categories. The local input score will be based on quantitative and qualitative evaluations of the project. The NBAMPO proposed that the quantitative and qualitative criteria for local input weigh equally in the Prioritization 6.0 process (50% each).

The local input quantitative criteria will be the quantitative value calculated by the NCDOT and provided in May 2021. Project viability will be the local qualitative criteria used by the NBAMPO in the Prioritization 6.0 process. Project viability is a qualitative assessment of the practicality and reasonableness of a project.

Although values of quality cannot be measured specifically like tangible quantities, the NBAMPO will assess the viability of a project. The table below identifies the attributes used to describe the viability of a project. Both Regional and Division projects of all modes will be evaluated for viability. The combination of the SPOT score plus the output of the viability score will be added together and assigned as the preliminary input points for the NBAMPO projects.

<u>Viability</u>	<u>Regional Score</u>	<u>Division score</u>
MTP	0 to 20	0 to 20
Right-Of-Way	0 to 20	0 to 10
NEPA	0 to 5	0 to 5
Multimodal Accommodations	0 to 5	0 to 5
Viability Score (Total)	0 to 70	0 to 50

The NBAMPO will use the following guidelines to establish the project viability score.

MTP: Projects in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), will receive points as follows:

MTP Phase One	20 points for Regional or Division projects
MTP Phase Two	10 points for Regional or Division projects
MTP Phase Three	5 points for Regional or Division projects

Right-Of-Way: Projects receive points based on amount of right-of-way expected to be needed as follows:

R-O-W needs established	5 points for Regional, 2 points for Division
R-O-W purchase has started	10 points for Regional, 5 points for Division
R-O-W needs are in hand	20 points for Regional, 10 points for Division

NEPA: Projects get more points the further along they are in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process at the time of point assignment and will receive points as follows:

Project has initiated NEPA process (as determined by the project manager)	1 point for Regional or Division projects
Initial environmental document complete	3 points for Regional or Division projects
Final environmental document complete	5 points for Regional or Division projects

Multimodal Accommodations: Projects with multi-modal attributes will receive points as follows:

Projects which connect two modes of transportation	1 point for Regional or Division projects
Projects which connect more than two modes	5 points for Regional or Division projects

The NBAMPO and the NCDOT are the sources for these qualitative measurements to calculate viability. The NBAMPO will use the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and project databases to establish the viability evaluation.

Total Score and Project Ranking Approach

All New Bern Area MPO projects in the Prioritization 6.0 process will be given a Priority Ranking, which is a number based on the quantitative and qualitative criteria of each project. The Priority Ranking is a number equal to the NCDOT quantitative score plus the project viability total score. For example, the

following numbers represent the possible maximum Priority Ranking for Regional and Division category projects:

	<u>Regional</u>	<u>Division</u>
NCDOT Quantitative	70	50
<u>Viability Total</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>50</u>
Priority Ranking #	140	100

Similarly, the Priority Ranking for each transportation project in the Prioritization 6.0 process will be calculated. By sorting the Priority Ranking numbers in descending order of value, a prioritized order of MPO transportation projects in the Prioritization 6.0 process is established. The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) will approve the Priority Ranking numbers of all projects in the Prioritization 6.0 process.

The Priority Ranking number is used to assign local input points, but it is not the value for the NBAMPO transportation projects, which will be reported back to NCDOT in June 2021 for Regional Projects and November 2021 for Division Projects.

Points Assignment Process

Regional Projects

The New Bern Area MPO has a total of 1,200 points allocated to projects that meet Regional scoring criteria. The NBAMPO will give the maximum score of 100 points to the top projects in all applicable modes (Highway, Transit, Rail, Bike/Ped) until the total allowable points are expended.

Division Projects

The New Bern Area MPO has a total of 1,200 points allocated to projects that meet Division scoring criteria. The NBAMPO will give the maximum score of 100 points to the top projects in all applicable modes (Highway, Transit, Rail, Bike/Ped) until the total allowable points are expended.

All projects receiving points will receive the maximum 100 points allowed per project or maximum number of points allowed if projects are shared by both MPO and RPO.

Points not allocated to projects within the New Bern Area MPO can be transferred to another MPO or RPO assuming both organizations agree to point sharing. If the NBAMPO contributes points to another MPO or RPO, a written agreement will be provided to NCDOT.

Deviation Clause: The NBAMPO TCC and TAC boards are free to deviate from the preliminary points assignment when finalizing scores, to compensate for situations where the methodology does not accurately reflect the TAC’s priorities, and to ensure points assignment to projects at the relevant category. Any variation in point assignments from the preliminary scores must have justifications documented in the meeting minutes and posted on the NBAMPO website. Anticipated justifications include, but are not limited to: project cost, points sharing arrangements, estimated points required for funding, geographic equity, modal distribution, new information and public comment.

Use of Public Input and Comments in Final Rankings: The TCC and TAC will review all input received through the public input process to confirm the individual candidate project descriptions and details. The TCC and TAC may choose to remove or modify projects before ultimately approving the point's assignments, but no new projects will be added after the NCDOT deadline for submitting candidate projects for evaluation through the SPOT process. Any modifications and rationale for point adjustment will be available for public review on the NBAMPO website when final points per project are posted.

Schedule and Public Outreach

Project Solicitation: The NBAMPO solicited candidate projects for 30 days in ****. The results of this process were presented to the TAC at it's ***** meeting, where the TAC was asked to endorse the project list for submittal to NCDOT. In the event that the number of new projects exceeded the maximum possible, the TAC chose projects to submit based on Division 2 and NBAMPO staff recommendations. NBAMPO staff will subsequently submit the TAC endorsed projects into NCDOT's SPOT office Online tool (web based system) for project evaluation and quantitative scoring.

Public Involvement: The NBAMPO will announce the 30-day project solicitation period to all member governments and interested persons. The NBAMPO will also issue press releases in newspapers of general circulation in Craven County soliciting candidate projects. The NBAMPO held a public input session in ****. Information regarding the public input session and this solicitation period was advertised through the NBAMPO website and social media applications. The results of the input sessions and all submitted projects was presented to the TAC for their review, who used the input in determining which projects to submit for technical evaluation by the NCDOT's Strategic Prioritization Office for Transportation (SPOT), who calculates the technical scores for candidate projects.

Project Ranking: Using the methodology described above, the NBAMPO will present the recommended local point assignments for Regional projects to the TCC at their **** meeting. Upon the approval of the TAC, the NBAMPO will release the recommended projects, point assignments, and the methodology used to assign the points for a 30-day public comment period. The 30-day period will also be advertised on the NBAMPO website and social media applications. The results of the public comment period will be presented to the TCC and TAC at **** meetings. At that time, the TAC will be asked to approve the project list with final point assignment for Regional projects. After approval, the project list with assigned points will be available on the NBAMPO website. The TCC and TAC of the NBAMPO will evaluate the full list of new and previously evaluated projects for the New Bern Urbanized Area between ****, with local points assigned and submitted to the SPOT office by the end of April 2021.

At the end of May 2021, NCDOT will release a draft list of programmed Regional impact projects and the NBAMPO will begin to evaluate local input point assignment to Division Needs projects. Using the methodology described above, the NBAMPO will present the recommended local point assignments for Division projects to the TCC at their **** meeting. Upon the approval of the TAC, the NBAMPO will release the recommended projects, point assignments, and the methodology used to assign the points for a 30-day public comment period. The 30-day comment period will also be advertised on the NBAMPO website and social media applications. The results of the public comment period will be presented to the TCC and TAC during **** meetings. AT that time, the TAC will be asked to approve the

project list with final point assignments for Division Needs projects. After approval, the project list with assigned points will be available on the NBAMPO website. The Draft STIP will be released in May 2022 and will also be available on the NBAMPO website.

Material Sharing

For information on the New Bern Area MPO Local Methodology (as described above), MPO transportation plans and news of STI and Prioritization, visit the NBAMPO website at www.nbampo.org and NCDOT at www.ncdot.gov/strategictransportationinvestments/.