

2009 Transportation Needs List Project Ranking Criteria and Procedures

1. Air Quality - Improves or maintains current air quality status.

Project improves current air quality status: 1 point awarded for the percentage of
Each Kg of pollutant reduction (Max 30 points)

Project has no impact on air quality status: 0 points

Project degrades current air quality status: No points awarded, project is omitted from list

The Mobile 6.2 Air Quality Model will produce outputs with the full spectrum of pollutants. In addition to Carbon Monoxide, there will be values for reductions of Fine Particulate Matter, Nitrous Oxide and Volatile Organic Compounds. Air Quality is an important factor in determining the ranking of proposed Needs Projects. The top ranking project for Air Quality improvements will be used to create a 30 point norm and each project will be valued on a sliding scale from 0 – 30.

2. Congestion - Relieves congestion. See explanations of capacity and level of service.

Project receives 15 times its V/C ratio if the V/C ratio is less than or equal to 1.

Project receives 15 times its V/C ratio, plus 5 points if the V/C ratio is greater than or equal to 1
Maximum score of 25 points

3. Safety

Accident history will be an indicator of a safety deficiency in an existing road and the project evaluation will be based on the accident data. The Needs project will receive a maximum of 20 points based on the level of safety improvement anticipated to occur. Proposed new roads will receive a score based on the accident history and proposed improvement to existing roads in the vicinity. A sliding scale will be developed based on the evaluation of the Needs projects.

4. Community Transportation Benefits

Projects receive up to 3 points for the listed criteria with High = 3, Medium = 2, and Low = 1.
Maximum score of 21 points.

Economic Development: Improves access to existing employment centers or opens access to land zoned, or identified in development guides, for future employment.

Overall Network Value: Facility provides new or improved access to relieve already congested roads, links together existing roads, or provides travel patterns or modes currently unavailable in the network.

Freight Development: Facility provides new / improved access to or opens access to land identified for industrial or commercial use.

Cost Efficiency: Comparison of project cost to existing V/C ratio.

Natural Environment Compatibility: New roads which have a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), projects which further the goals of the Early Action Compact (EAC) or have a significant positive impact on air quality, and projects which avoid sensitive wetlands and other natural resources.

Built Environment Compatibility: Road improvements that can be built within the existing right-of-way, projects which don't produce significant damages to existing homes and businesses and projects with little impact on historic or cultural resources.

Environmental Justice: New facilities or facility improvements will be considered a benefit to Minority and Low-Income (MLI) populations by providing greater choice and availability of transportation options, stimulating economic development or redevelopment investments, and/or has little or no impact to existing homes and businesses.

5. Community Investment

Projects that have received local support and funding through the development of a project feasibility study or an environmental assessment, or the acquisition of right-of-way will receive a maximum of 4 points.

6. Incompatibility with Local Plans

Projects that are not an element of a Thoroughfare Plan/Map, Comprehensive Plan or other locally adopted Plan will have 5 points deducted from their overall score.

Notes

Projects already programmed with committed funding in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) shall be exempt from the needs report process.

“Have-to” projects such as those required by federal, state and local regulations, or to maintain service, shall be given top priority. Examples include transit operating assistance, projects required by the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), vehicle replacement, bridge replacement, pavement rehabilitation and required maintenance.

In the unlikely event that two or more projects receive the same number of points in the ranking process, the TCC and TAC shall be responsible for breaking the tie.

As some criteria may require considerable professional evaluation, Winston-Salem DOT staff shall be responsible for making such evaluations in formulating the initial prioritized needs list. This list shall be subject to review and adjustment by the TCC and the TAC.

Procedures

Due to the scarcity of available funding, submitting bodies are required to submit only their highest priority Highway Program project and Bicycle and Pedestrian Project.

Each submitting body shall submit one Highway Program project and one Bicycle and Pedestrian Project per Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) voting member. Highway Program projects of regional significance may be submitted in addition to each submitting body's project. A regionally significant project is defined in the Federal Register in 40 CFR Part 93.101. See attached memorandum from NCDOT for guidance.

Each submitting body shall provide specific project descriptions, brief project justifications, project length, posted speed limit, and other pertinent data to which they have access. Winston-Salem Department of Transportation (DOT) staff will be available to assist in this process if necessary.

Projects shall be categorized by Winston-Salem DOT into the following potential funding categories: Surface Transportation Program (STP), Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ), Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) projects. Each category shall be prioritized separately.

FTA projects shall be prioritized by Winston-Salem Transit (WSTA) staff and Board. Bicycle and Pedestrian projects shall be prioritized by the Bicycle and Greenway Planning Subcommittee and Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). STP projects shall be prioritized by Winston-Salem DOT staff according to the point system described under "Transportation Needs List Project Ranking Criteria." CMAQ projects shall be prioritized by air quality emissions benefits.

Air quality analysis shall be performed by the Forsyth County Environmental Affairs Department using CMAQ procedures or other suitable techniques. Projects found to degrade air quality will not be prioritized and will not be included in the Needs Report.

Incompatibility with the adopted Thoroughfare Plan shall be determined by Winston-Salem DOT Transportation Planning Section staff. Incompatibility with comprehensive plans shall be determined by Davidson, Davie, Stokes and Winston-Salem City/County planning staff.

Safety analysis shall be performed by Winston-Salem DOT Transportation Operations Division staff using the North Carolina Department of Transportation Traffic Surveys Accident Data or other locally available accident data.

Existing volume/capacity (V/C) ratios shall be determined by Winston-Salem DOT Transportation Planning Section staff based on traffic counts provided by NCDOT and Winston-Salem DOT staff, and roadway capacities based on Generalized Level of Service Volume Tables developed by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). FDOT Generalized Tables are based on nationally accepted techniques. For new facilities, V/C ratios shall be evaluated on the adjacent facilities which would be impacted by the proposed new facilities.

Points shall be totaled for all STP projects, and the projects shall be ranked with the projects having the highest number of points ranking number 1, the project having the second highest number of points ranking number 2, and so on.

Memo

To: Janet D’Ignazio
 From: David Hyder
 CC: Manager Program Development, Unit Head, Urban Area Coordinator
 Date:
 Re: Regional Significance of

Below is a summary of the case both pro and con regarding the regional significance of project------. I have arranged the case in column form preceded by the definition of regional significance from the Federal Register.

The Federal Register defines regional significance in *40 CFR Part 93.101*. The definition is:
“Regionally significant project means a transportation project (other than an exempt project) that is on a facility which serves regional transportation needs (such as access to and from the area outside the region, major activity centers in the region, major planned developments such as new retail malls, sports complexes, etc., or transportation terminals as well as most terminals themselves) and would normally be included in the modeling of a metropolitan area’s transportation network, including at a minimum all principal arterial highways and all fixed guideway transit facilities that offer an alternative to regional highway travel.”

Two items in the definition require additional discussion. First, I believe access means a direct connection rather than incidental network access. Otherwise every street in the network provides regional access. Second, the definition says that highways functionally classified as principal arterials as a minimum should be regionally significant. However, *40CFR Part 93.105(c)(1)(ii)* states that in addition to principal arterials exactly which minor arterials and other facilities should be considered regionally significant should be determined by the State DOT, MPO, State Air Agency, and Local Agency.

Criteria	For Regional Significance	Against Regional Significance
Access to and from the area outside the region		
Access to major activity centers in the region		
Access to major planned developments (e.g., new retail malls, sports complexes, or transportation terminals)		
Transportation Terminals		
Principal Arterial		
Fixed guideway transit		
Included in the regional travel demand model		

Based on my experience as a transportation modeler in North Carolina I put the least weight on whether the facility is included in the travel model or not. Inclusion in the model is necessary, but not sufficient for regional significance.