



ARPO Prioritization 7.0 Methodology

Session Law 2012-84 requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Rural Planning Organizations (MPO's and RPO's) to develop a ranking process for highway, bicycle/pedestrian, public transit, aviation, rail and ferry projects. The ranking process must be data driven and include a combination of quantitative data and qualitative and local input. The following process applies to all projects ranked as "regional" and "division" funding in the counties of Currituck, Camden, Gates, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Chowan, Washington, Tyrrell, Hyde and Dare. Funding levels are as defined in the 2013 Strategic Transportation Investment Law. Following is a timeline for project solicitation, project ranking process and ARPO point assignment. These dates are subject to change as we work through this process.

Time Frame	Description	Action
January 2023	Solicit new projects. If new projects exceed SPOT's cap for new projects, the RTCC will make a recommendation to the RTAC at the April meeting.	RPO Staff
April 2023	RTAC finalizes and tentatively approves project list	RTCC/RTAC
May 1- May 31, 2023	Project list released for 30 day public comment period.	RPO Staff
September 2023	Public Hearing- RTAC final approval of project list	RTCC/RTAC
September 2023	Projects entered into SPOT Online	RPO Staff
January 2024	RTAC tentatively approves Methodology	RTCC/RTAC
Feb. 1-March 1 2024	Methodology released for 30 day public comment period.	RPO Staff
April 2024	RTAC approves Methodology	
May 2024	Score Regional and Division projects based on Local Input methodology	RPO Staff
July 2024	RTAC tentatively approves Regional and Division Local Input methodology project scores	RTCC/RTAC
Aug. 1- Aug. 31 2024	Regional and Division Local Input Methodology scores released for 30 day public comment period	RPO Staff
Fall 2024	TIP Unit programs Statewide projects	NCDOT
Fall 2024	Final approval of Regional and Division Local Input Methodology project scores and assign local input points to regional projects.	RTAC
Fal/Winter 2024	Regional local input points entered into SPOT Online	RPO Staff
Winter/Spring 2025	Review regional scores with RTAC and assign final Division local input points.	RTAC
Spring 2025	Division scores entered into SPOT Online	RPO Staff
Summer 2025	Draft STIP released	NCDOT

During January of 2023, the ARPO started soliciting projects from local government Managers and Planners who, in turn, solicited projects from organizations and the public in their respective communities.

In April of 2023, the results of the project solicitation will be reviewed by the Rural Technical Coordinating Committee (RTCC) and then be presented to the Rural Technical Advisory Committee (RTAC) for tentative approval. If new projects exceed the maximum number allowed, the RTAC will choose which projects to submit based on recommendations from NCDOT Division 1, the RTCC, and RPO staff. The process and point assignment methods will be reviewed by the RTCC and presented to the RTAC, for tentative approval, at their January 17, 2024 meetings.

The methods described herein are subject to change based on the public comment process described later in this document.

The project list will be released for a 30 day public comment period in May of 2023 and a Public Hearing for final approval of the project list and Local Input Methodology will be held in September of 2023.

In January of 2024, RTAC members will meet and tentatively approve the Local Input Methodology and give final approval to the Methodology at their April 2024 meeting. The public will be given the opportunity to comment on the Methodology February 1 through March 1 of 2024. In July of 2024, Regional and Division local input scores will be reviewed by the RTAC scores and released for a 30 day public comment period on August 1, 2024. In the fall of 2024, the RTAC will hold a Public hearing for final approval of both the Regional and Division scores and the RTAC will assign local input points to Regional projects. During this time, results of the public comment period will also be reviewed and considered by the RTAC prior to approving the final Local Input Methodology Regional and Division scores.

In the late fall/ early winter of 2024, the RTAC will meet to discuss the SPOT finalized Regional scores and assign final Division local input points to projects.

In the summer of 2025, the NCDOT will release the Draft STIP.

Public Input process

Methodology

This methodology will be tentatively approved by the RTCC and RTAC at their January 2024 meeting. Once approved by the RTAC, the RPO will release the draft methodology for a 30-day public comment period on February 1, 2024. This comment period will be advertised on the RPO website at www.albemarlecommission.org/planning/ and via local media. The results of the public comment period will be presented to the RTCC and RTAC at their April 2024 meeting where the public will also be able to submit comments in person. All public comments will be documented and reasonable edits to the methodology may be made prior to RTAC approval and submittal to the SPOT office. All public comments will be documented, filed by the RPO and distributed to local entities to consider for future prioritization processes and transportation plans. No new projects will be added to the Prioritization 7.0 list due to the fact the NCDOT deadline for submitting new projects will have passed.

Project ranking

RPO staff will present the recommended point assignments and scores of all projects to the RTCC and RTAC at their July 2024 meetings. Once approved by the RTAC, RPO staff will release the recommended projects and point assignments for a 30-day public comment period. This comment period will be advertised on the RPO website www.albemarlecommission.org/planning/ and via local media. The results of the public comment period will be presented to the RTCC and RTAC at their Fall 2024 meetings where the public will also be able to submit comments and all public comments will be documented. In the fall of 2024, the RTAC will be asked to approve the final point assignments for Regional projects and the Spring of 2025 for Division projects. Once complete, the list and points assignments will be available on the RPO website.

Ranking Process

Division level

Projects involving SR routes, bicycle and pedestrian transportation, transit, airports and ferry vessels are evaluated at the Division level. The Albemarle Rural Planning Organization receives 1400 local allocation points at the Division level. Once all projects are scored using the methodology described below, the ARPO staff will develop a ranked list of projects within each county and within the RPO as a whole based on the outcome of the scoring. This ranked list will be used to develop the recommended point assignments that are presented to the public for comment and to the TCC and TAC for approval. The top scoring Division level project, within each county will be allocated 100 points to reach the ARPO's total allocation of 1400 points providing for geographic equity of projects. In the event that any counties do not have at least one Division level project, which meets the criteria above, one project from each mode which quantitative score exceeds 10 points in the Division needs category will be selected from the list of remaining projects within the RPO as a whole in order to reach the ARPO's allocation of 1400 points. Projects will be selected in the following order, Highway, Aviation, Ferry, Transit and Bike and Ped. Should two or more projects of the same or different modes tie, the Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT) score will be used as the tie-breaker. Since funding in the Division category is limited, Statewide or Regional projects, that cost more than \$20,000,000, that cascade down to the Division level will not be considered for Division qualitative points.

Division Level (Highways and ferries)

Criteria	0 points	5 points	10 points	15 points
Safety score	0-25	26-49	50-74	75-100
	Calculation based on the crash frequency and severity along sections of a particular roadway. This score is generated in the quantitative scoring process.			
Transportation Plan consistency	Project is not in STIP, CTP, or other locally adopted plan	Project will be incorporated into CTP or other locally adopted plan.		Project is in STIP, CTP, or other locally adopted plan.
	Is the proposed project part of an existing, or proposed, adopted Plan?			
Economic Development/ Employment access		Provides access within a 20 mile radius of an existing or proposed employment center* with 20 or more employees.	Provides access within a 15 mile radius of an existing or proposed employment center* with 100 or more employees.	Provides access within a 10 mile radius of an active industrial/business park or proposed new employment center* with more than 100 employees.
	Does the project provide direct connection to a downtown district, business district, government center, educational center healthcare center, and prison, military base or agricultural center? Must meet both distance and employment criteria to be eligible to receive points.			
Multimodal elements	Project does not incorporate or connect to facilities of another mode			Project incorporates or connects to facilities of another mode
	Does the project incorporate other modes of transportation (a sidewalk along a road etc.)?			
Existing deficiency	Existing facility/service available		Existing facility/service available, but contains gap with lower level of service/intermittent service	No existing facility/service available.
	Does the project address an existing gap in the transportation system?			
Roadway and shoulder width	Currently exceeds NCDOT minimum standards	Currently meets NCDOT standards		Currently does not meet NCDOT standards
	Does the current condition not meet, meet or exceed NCDOT minimum standards?			
Evacuation	The project is not an official NCDOT evacuation route			The project is an official NCDOT evacuation route
	Is the project part of an official NCDOT evacuation route?			

*An employment center is defined as a downtown district, business district, government center, educational center healthcare center, prison, military base, or agricultural center.

Division Level (bicycle and pedestrian transportation, transit, aviation)

Criteria	0 points	5 points	15 points	25 points
Transportation Plan consistency	Project is not in STIP, CTP, LCP, CTSP, ALP or other locally adopted plan	Project will be incorporated into CTP or other locally adopted plan. .		Project is in STIP, CTP, LCP, CTSP, ALP or other locally adopted plan.
	Is the proposed project part of an existing, or proposed, adopted Plan?			
Economic Development/ Employment access		Provides access within a 3 mile radius of a proposed or existing employment center* with more than 20 employees.	Provides access within a 2 mile radius of an existing or proposed employment center* with more than 100 employees.	Provides direct access within 1 mile radius of an active industrial/business park or proposed new employment center* with more than 100 employees.
	Does the project provide direct connection to a downtown district, business district, government center, educational center healthcare center, prison, or agricultural center?			
Multimodal elements	Project does not incorporate or connect to facilities of another mode			Project incorporates or connects to facilities of another mode
	Does the project incorporate other modes of transportation (a sidewalk along a road etc.)?			
Existing deficiency	Existing facility/service available		Existing facility/service available, but contains gap with lower level of service/intermittent service	No existing facility/service available.
	Does the project address an existing gap in the transportation system?			

*An employment center is defined as a downtown district, business district, government center, educational center, healthcare center, and prison, military base or agricultural center.

Regional level (NC Routes)

Projects involving NC routes are evaluated at the Regional level and the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization also receives 1400 points for these projects. Once all projects are scored using the methodology described below, the ARPO staff will develop a ranked list of projects within each county and within the RPO as a whole based on the outcome of the criteria below. This ranked list will be used to develop the recommended point assignments that are presented to the public for comment and to the TCC and TAC for approval. The top scoring Division level project, within each county will be allocated 100 points to reach the ARPO's total allocation of 1400 points provided their quantitative score exceeds 10 points in the Regional needs category. This promotes geographic equity of projects. In the event that any counties do not have at least one Regional level project, which meets the criteria above, one projects from each mode which quantitative score exceeds 10 points in the Regional needs category will be selected from the top of the list of remaining projects within the RPO as a whole in order to reach the ARPO's allocation of 1400 points. Should two or more projects of the same or different modes tie, the Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT score will be used as the tie-breaker. Since funding in the Division category is limited, Statewide or Regional projects, that cost over 20,000,000, that cascade down to the Division level will not be considered for Division qualitative points.

Regional level (Highways and transit)

Criteria	0 points	5 points	10 points	15 points
Safety score	0-25	26-49	50-74	75-100
	Calculation based on the crash frequency and severity along sections of a particular roadway. This score is generated in the quantitative scoring process.			
Transportation Plan consistency	Project is not in STIP, CTP, or other locally adopted plan	Project will be incorporated into CTP or other locally adopted plan.		Project is in STIP, CTP, or other locally adopted plan.
	Is the proposed project part of an existing, or proposed, adopted Plan?			
Economic Development/ Employment access		Provides direct access within a 20 mile radius of an existing or proposed employment center* with more than 20 employees.	Provides direct access within a 15 mile radius of an existing or proposed employment center* with more than 100 employees.	Provides direct access within a 10 mile radius of an active industrial/business park or proposed new employment center* with more than 100 employees.
	Does the project provide connection to a downtown district, business district, government center, educational center healthcare center, military base, prison, or agricultural center? Must meet both distance and employment criteria to be eligible to receive points.			
Multimodal elements	Project does not incorporate or connect to facilities of another mode			Project incorporates or connects to facilities of another mode
	Does the project incorporate other modes of transportation (a sidewalk along a road etc.)?			
Existing deficiency	Existing facility/service available		Existing facility/service available, but contains gap with lower level of service/intermittent service	No existing facility/service available,
	Does the project address an existing gap in the transportation system?			
Roadway and shoulder width	Currently exceeds NCDOT minimum standards	Currently meets NCDOT standards		Currently does not meet NCDOT standards
	Does the current condition not meet, meet or exceed NCDOT minimum standards?			
Evacuation	The project is not an official NCDOT evacuation route			The project is an official NCDOT evacuation route
	Is the project part of an official NCDOT evacuation route?			

*An employment center is defined as a downtown district, business district, government center, educational center healthcare center, prison, military base, or agricultural center.

Any justification/rationale for local point assignment deviation from the RTAC adopted and SPOT office approved Methodology by the RTAC will be posted on the ARPO website for public inspection. Special consideration to deviate from the approved Methodology includes, but is not limited to, projects not being competitive in their respective categories, projects that are not far enough along in the planning process to warrant funding, projects that have strong local government support, and projects that have strong public support. Any deviation from the approved Methodology must be agreed upon by a majority of RTCC and RTAC members as outlined in the ARPO Bylaws. This allowance is envisioned as a safety net to provide local oversight to the data-driven process and to compensate for any peculiar scores where the prioritization methodology fails to operate as expected. Any local point assignment deviation from the methodology will be fully disclosed to the public and reason(s) why placed on the RPO website.