

Prioritization 8.0 Local Input Point Methodology for the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization

February 18, 2026

Introduction

The methodology made by the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization which serves Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, and Washington Counties was developed to determine the regional and divisional priorities for transportation funding, as carried out through the State of North Carolina's Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) law and the associated Prioritization 8.0 process. The methodology intends to blend both measurable data and local jurisdictions' priorities. This methodology was developed to meet the requirements of Session Law 2012-84, which requires that MPO's and RPO's have a process for determining project prioritization.

STI divides available state and federal transportation funding into three categories: Statewide Mobility, Regional Impact, and Division Needs. For each category, NCDOT calculates quantitative scores based on a variety of criteria. In the Statewide Mobility category, projects are selected for funding based entirely on the NCDOT quantitative score. However, in the Regional Impact and Division Needs categories part of the final score is based on local input points assigned by the MPO or RPO and/or the NCDOT Division Engineer in that area. The local input points assigned by the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization (and other MPOs and RPOs) represent 15% of the final score for Regional Impact projects and 25% of the final score for Division Needs projects. Points assigned by NCDOT Division Engineers are also worth 15% of the Regional Impact score and 25% of the Division Needs score.

It should be noted that projects from higher categories are able to "cascade down" for eligibility in lower categories as well, should they be unsuccessful in getting selected for funding at the higher category. Thus, all Statewide Mobility projects are also eligible in the Regional Impact and Division Needs category, and all Regional Impact projects are also eligible in the Division Needs category.

Albemarle Rural Planning Organization has 1,400 local input points to assign in both the Regional Impact category and another 1,400 local input points in the Division Needs category. This document describes the method assigning these points. It should be noted that no more than 100 points can be assigned to a single project.

The local prioritization process consists of three parts: (1) ranking of projects at the countywide level; (2) quantitative scoring of projects; and (3) ranking of scored projects for assignment of points. Each of these is discussed in more detail below.

Description of Criteria and Weights

Countywide Ranking of Projects

Each Albemarle Rural Planning Organization county along with all of its municipalities must work together to develop a two ranked list of projects in all modes to submit to Albemarle Rural Planning Organization for use in the prioritization process. The first ranked list would be for Regional Impact category, and the second list would be for Division Needs category. These lists must be based on the list of projects that have been previously submitted to NCDOT—new projects cannot be added at this point in the process. These projects should be ranked in order from highest priority (#1) to lowest (#10). If there are more than ten projects within a county, then only the top ten should be ranked. It is up to the local jurisdictions, working together, to determine the best method for achieving this within each county; however, the following general rules apply:

- All jurisdictions should be given an opportunity to participate in the development of their county's ranked project list if they choose
- The process must include at least one meeting open to the public that allows for public comment
- There must be written documentation stating the reasoning behind the selected project ranking (this must be submitted to Albemarle Rural Planning Organization and will be posted online along with the project list)

These local ranked priority lists should be developed and submitted to Albemarle Rural Planning Organization **within 40 days** after NCDOT releases its draft quantitative scores for projects. Once submitted to Albemarle Rural Planning Organization, the local priority lists will be posted on the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization tab on the Albemarle Commission Website and made available for additional public comment prior to the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization Rural Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) approval of local input points on projects.

In Regional Impact category, all projects will receive 25% of their total Albemarle Rural Planning Organization score based on the ranking assigned to that project by local officials in the above-described countywide rankings. In Division Needs category all projects will receive 50% of their total Albemarle Rural Planning Organization score based on the ranking assigned to that project by local officials in the above-described countywide rankings. This applies to all modes. These points will be assigned as follows:

Priority # 1	100 points		Priority # 6	50 points
Priority # 2	90 points		Priority # 7	40 points
Priority # 3	80 points		Priority # 8	30 points
Priority # 4	70 points		Priority # 9	20 points
Priority # 5	60 points		Priority # 10	10 points

* All other projects (ranked lower or unranked) receive 0 points for this item.

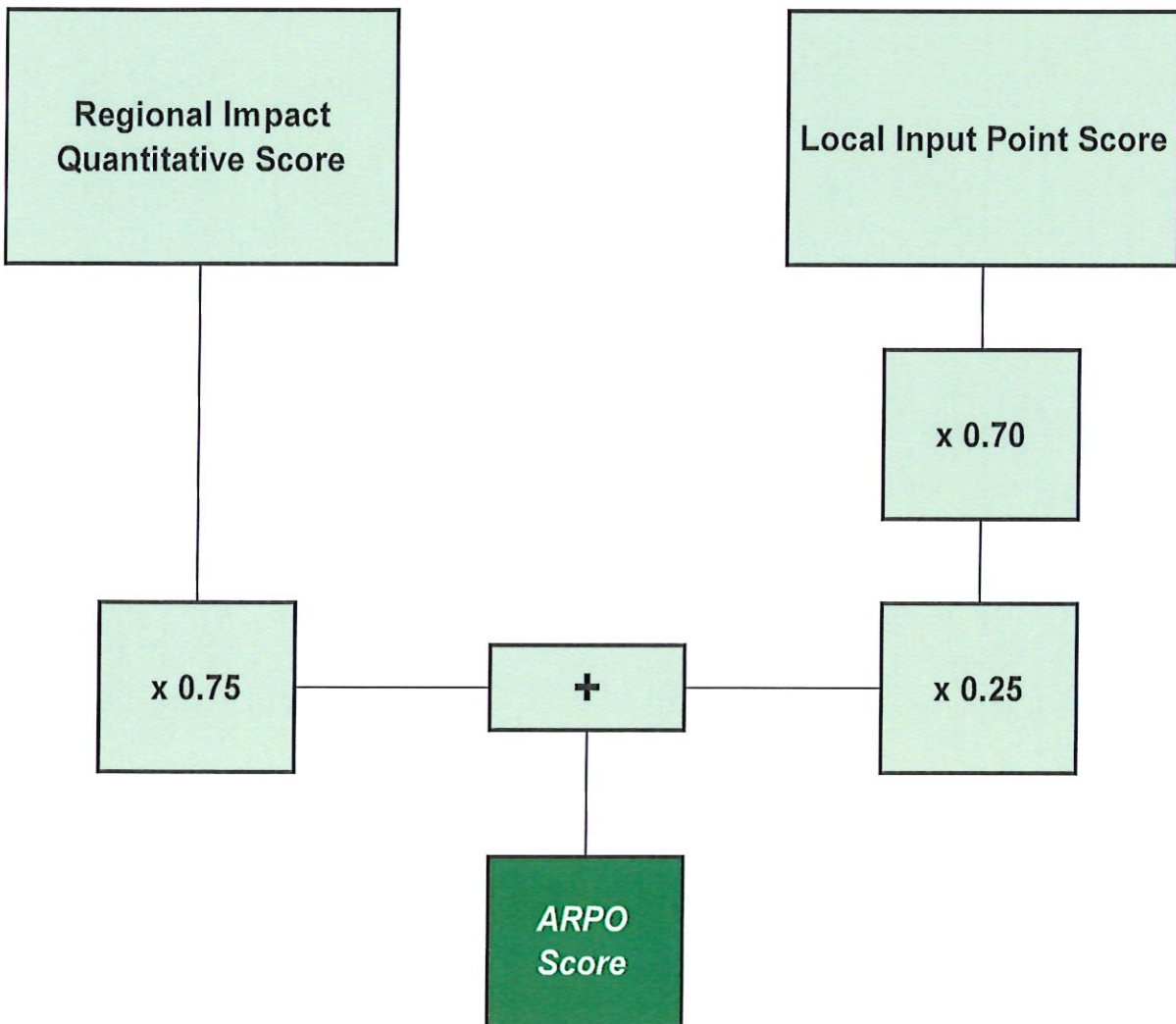
NCDOT Quantitative Scores

In Regional Impact, the remaining 75% of the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization score is based on the Prioritization 8.0 quantitative score calculated by NCDOT.

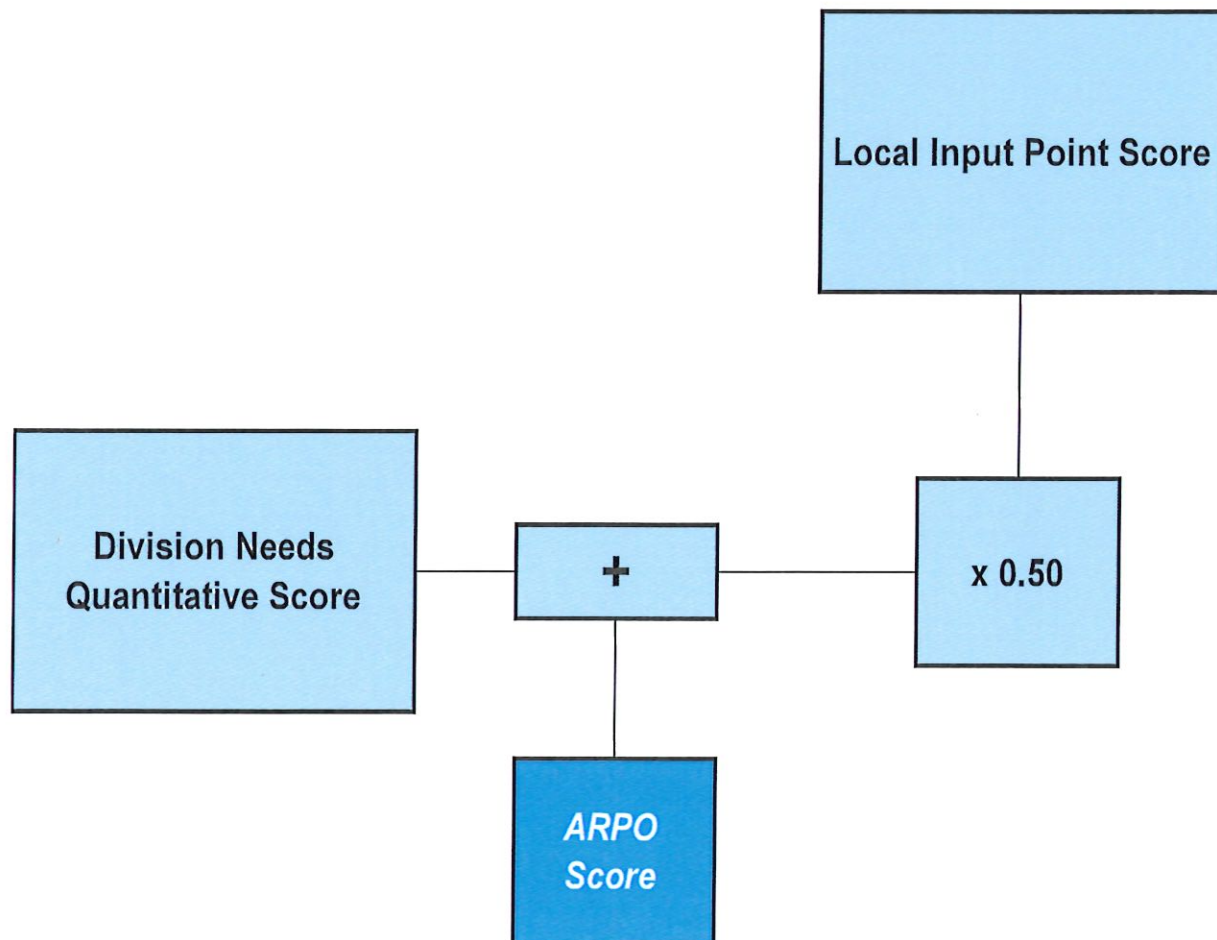
In the Division Needs category, it would be 50% of the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization score is based on the Prioritization 8.0 quantitative score calculated by NCDOT.

The elements that make up these scores are defined by NCDOT's Prioritization Work Group for each mode and category (see NCDOT's [Prioritization Resources](#) website for more information):

Regional Impact: Because all Prioritization 8.0 Regional Impact quantitative scores are on a 70-point scale, The local input will be multiplied by .70 to make it 70-point scale. (See process below)



Division Needs: Because all Prioritization 8.0 Division Needs quantitative scores are reported on a 50-point scale, The local input will be multiplied by .50 to make it 50-point scale. (See process below)



Project Ranking Approach/Point Assignment Process

Once all projects in each mode have been scored according to the criteria above, Albemarle Rural Planning Organization staff will develop a ranked list of projects within each county and within the region based on the outcome of the scoring for both Regional Impact and division needs. This ranked list of all projects in all modes will be used to develop the recommended point assignments that are presented to the public for comment and to the Rural Technical Coordinating Committee (RTCC) and RTAC for approval. There will be separate rankings for the Regional Impact category and the Division Needs category.

The recommendation will call for the top-scoring project for each of the 10 counties (regardless of mode) to be allocated 100 points each. Additionally, the two next-highest scoring projects within the region (regardless of county and mode) will also be allocated 100 points each. The remaining points will be divided evenly amongst the next four highest projects. If a county does not have at least two eligible projects, then additional projects can be selected by the county from other counties within the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization region.

No projects with a Prioritization 8.0 quantitative score less than 12 will be recommended for points.

Any project that local jurisdictions specifically request not be assigned points during the countywide project ranking process will not be recommended for points.

Point Flexing Policy

NCDOT allows RPOs to flex up to 500 points between the Regional Impact and Division Needs categories. Albemarle Rural Planning Organization has the option to apply this flexing policy by shifting up to 500 points from the Regional Impact category to the Division Needs category or by shifting up to 500 points from the Division Needs category to the Regional Impact category. The Albemarle Rural Planning Organization RTAC has the discretion to decide whether it wishes to flex any points between categories. If the RTAC chooses to flex local input points, Albemarle Rural Planning Organization must provide documentation of this decision to the NCDOT SPOT Office before the deadline for assigning Regional Impact category local input points.

Deviations from Methodology

These recommended point assignments will be presented to the RTCC and RTAC for their review and approval. The RTCC retains the discretion to make recommendations to the RTAC regarding changes to the list. The RTAC has the final discretion regarding assignment of local points and retains the flexibility to make changes to these point assignments if it is able to document a reason for doing so. These changes must be documented and made available to the public via the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization tab on the Albemarle Commission website.

Cascading Projects

Albemarle Rural Planning Organization will submit its Regional Impact local point assignments separately from its Division Needs local point assignments and will be able to learn which projects are funded in the Regional Impact category before assigning points in the Division Needs category. If a project does not receive funding in the Regional Impact category they will cascade down to the Division Needs category. If a project receives funding in the Regional Impact category and was in line to receive local input points in the Division Needs category the next project in line will take its place shifting all the placements up a slot.

Point Sharing

On projects that cross outside of the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization planning boundary, Albemarle Rural Planning Organization must coordinate with its neighboring organizations on the allocation of points. By right, Albemarle Rural Planning Organization may only assign the number of points equal to the percentage of the project that is located within the Albemarle Rural Organization planning boundary. Albemarle Rural Planning Organization will coordinate with its neighboring organizations to “share” points to ensure that these projects reach a point total of 100 points. In the event that point sharing is not necessary on these projects, either because the neighboring organization already plans to assign its full amount of points for the project or because the neighboring organization rejects the offer to share points, Albemarle Rural Planning Organization will only assign the points for the portion within its boundary and the remaining points will be allocated to the next-highest scoring project on the project list that did not already receive full points.

Schedule and Public Outreach/Material Sharing

Public Participation in Project Scoring Process

As part of this project scoring process, Albemarle Rural Planning Organization will post the list of projects being submitted for Prioritization 8.0, the county-level priority lists, the results of the quantitative analysis, the recommended draft local input point assignments, and the final approved local input point assignments at the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization tab of the Albemarle Commission Website. The link to the website:

<https://albemarlecommission.org/regional-planning/transportation-planning/sti-project-information/>

The public is invited to submit comments via email, phone, or mail, as well as in person at Albemarle Rural Planning Organization RTCC and RTAC meetings **at any point** throughout the process. Additionally, at least one public meeting will be held to gather comments at a time after the initial staff-recommended scoring is

developed based on this scoring methodology, but before the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization RTCC and RTAC vote on the assignment of points. Any comments provided by the public will be reviewed by the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization RTCC and RTAC before the vote on the assignment of points and those discussions will be documented in the meeting minutes.

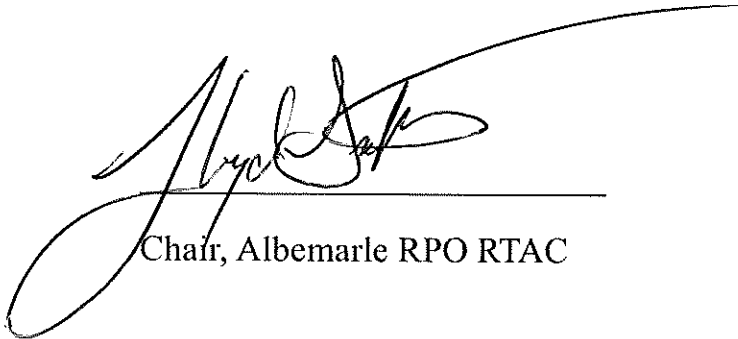
Proposed Schedule for Implementation of Policy in Prioritization 8.0

- Albemarle Rural Organization RTCC & RTAC adoption of project list to submit to NCDOT –September 17, 2025
- Adoption of **this policy** – expected no later than April 15, 2026 (with public hearing at beginning of RTAC meeting)
- NCDOT will release quantitative project scores and announce the projects that are funded in the Statewide category expected by the end of May 2026
- Next, each county, working jointly with its municipalities, will approve both a Regional Impact ranked list and a Division Needs ranked list of its top ten projects in each category and submit this list to Albemarle Rural Planning Organization staff within 40 days after NCDOT releases the project scores if possible
- Then Albemarle Rural Planning Organization staff will calculate scores for local point assignment based on this adopted methodology and post the scores and draft point assignments on the Albemarle Rural Organization tab on the Albemarle Commission website—expected by the middle of July 2026
- Then, the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization RTCC and RTAC will adopt Regional Impact category local input point assignments at one of their regular meetings—expected at the **August 19, 2026 meeting**

- NCDOT will announce the projects receiving funding in the Regional Impact category—expected near the end of September 2026
- Albemarle Rural Planning Organization staff will adjust the draft point assignments if needed in accordance with the cascading policy expected by September 30, 2026
- Finally, the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization RTCC and RTAC will adopt Division Needs category local input point assignments at one of their regular meetings—expected at their **October 21, 2026 meetings**. At the conclusion of this process, NCDOT will release a draft Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) based on the outcome of the Prioritization 8.0 process.

Adoption

A motion was made by Vice Chair Mathews and seconded by Larry McLaughlin for the adoption of this policy, and upon being put to a vote it was duly adopted on 02/18/2026.



Chair, Albemarle RPO RTAC



Secretary, Albemarle RPO RTAC