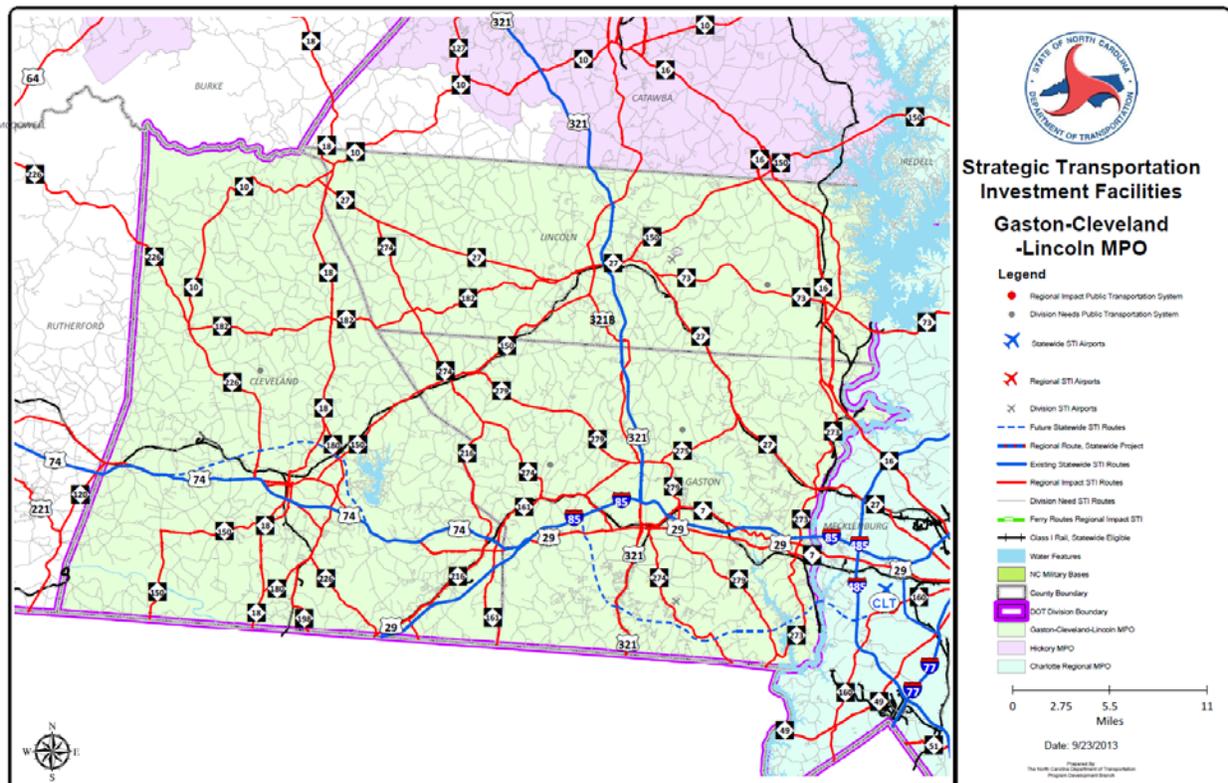


150 South York Street
 Gastonia, NC 28053
 Phone (704) 866-6837

Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln MPO SPOT 4.0 Project Solicitation and Ranking Process Adoption Date: December 2, 2015 Amended February 3, 2016

Introduction: The North Carolina legislature and NCDOT require all metropolitan and rural planning organizations develop a project solicitation and ranking process to evaluate all transportation project categories (highway, non-motorized, public transportation, aviation, rail and ferry). This process has been approved by the NCDOT to ensure compliance with the legislative intent of the mandate.

Applicability: This process would apply to all projects ranked by the GCLMPO in that fall in the “regional” and “division” tier levels, as defined in the Strategic Highway Investments (STI) legislation and depicted in the map below.





150 South York Street
Gastonia, NC 28053
Phone (704) 866-6837

Schedule

Project Solicitation: The MPO solicited candidate projects for 30 days in July 2015. The results of this process were presented to the MPO Board at its August 2015 meeting, where the MPO Board approved the list based on staff and TCC recommendations and public comments for submittal to NCDOT. MPO staff subsequently submitted the MPO Board-endorsed projects into NCDOT's SPOT On!ine tool (web based system) in November 2015 for project evaluation and quantitative scoring.

Project Ranking Timeline: The TCC and MPO Board of the MPO will evaluate candidate projects for the three counties during the separate 60-day windows for Regional and Division tier projects, with local points assigned and submitted to the SPOT office by September 30, 2016.

Public Input Process

Project Solicitation: The MPO announced a 30-day project solicitation period to all member governments and interested persons. The MPO issued press releases in newspapers of general circulation in Cleveland, Gaston, and Lincoln counties soliciting candidate projects. The MPO also held a public input session in each of the three counties in July 2015. Information regarding the public input sessions and this solicitation period was also advertised through the MPO website. The results of the input sessions and all submitted projects were presented to the MPO Board for their review at their August 27, 2015 meeting.

Project Ranking

Regional Tier: The MPO staff will present the recommended local points assignments for Regional Tier projects, based on the ranking process described in this document, to the TCC and MPO Board in March 2016. The MPO will then be asked to release these scores for a 15-day public comment period in April 2016. The results of the public comment period will be presented to the MPO Board at their May 2016 meeting. At that time the MPO Board will be asked to approve a project list and final points assignment. The project list and points assignment will be available on the MPO website.

Division Tier: The MPO staff will present the recommended local points assignments for Division Tier projects, based on the ranking process described in this document, to the TCC and MPO Board at their July 2016 meetings. The MPO will then be asked to release these scores for a 15-day public comment period in August 2016. The results of the public comment period will be presented to the TCC and MPO Board at their September 2016 meetings. At that time the MPO Board will be asked to approve a

150 South York Street
Gastonia, NC 28053
Phone (704) 866-6837

project list and final points assignment. The project list and points assignment will be available on the MPO website.

Regional and Division level projects will be ranked based on the criteria listed in the table below. While most criteria are self-explanatory, some do merit additional explanation.

Safety Score is a calculation based on the crash frequency and severity along sections of a particular roadway. The crashes are then normalized based on traffic volumes to establish rates. These rates are compared to statewide averages for similar facilities to determine how the road performs compared to its peers.

Cost-Effectiveness is a calculation of the cost per vehicle or user to improve a facility one mile. This calculation allows different types of roads or projects to be compared based on how much it costs to improve the road per individual vehicle or implement the project per individual user.

Transportation Plan Consistency is a yes or no question to determine if the proposed project is found in an existing adopted transportation plan for the area. Intersection projects are typically not identified in transportation plans, but if they improve segments of roads identified as needing improvement, they will receive 10 points. Intersection projects on roads not recommended for improvement will receive five points.

Addressing **Environmental Justice (EJ), Land Use and Economic Development** is a goal of the GCL MPO. The MPO wants to help implement projects that increase mobility and accessibility to communities with concentrations of lower-income households, persons of color, and households without access to automobiles. The MPO also wants to help implement projects that support local land use and economic development plans and initiatives.

Ranking Process

Regional Level Projects: All NC routes, US 29, and US 74 east of I-85 in Gaston County are found on the Regional Level. These projects would be evaluated by the criteria, weighting, and scoring as detailed in the table on the following page. Only highway and multi-county public transportation capital projects would fall under this category.

150 South York Street
 Gastonia, NC 28053
 Phone (704) 866-6837

Regional Level Projects					
Criteria	0 points	5 points	10 points	15 points	20 points
Existing Congestion (20 max)	Volume to capacity less than 0.5	Volume to capacity btw 0.51 and 0.75	Volume to capacity btw 0.76 and 0.9	Volume to capacity btw 0.91 and 1.0	Volume to capacity over 1.0
Existing Safety (20 max)	SPOT safety points less than 30	SPOT safety points btw 31-50	SPOT safety points btw 51-65	SPOT safety points btw 66-80	SPOT safety points over 80
Cost-Effectiveness (15 max)	Cost per vehicle/equivalent greater than \$1,500 per mile	Cost per vehicle/equivalent btw \$1,000-\$1,500 per mile	Cost per vehicle/equivalent btw \$500-\$999 per mile	Cost per vehicle/equivalent less than \$499 per mile	
Freight Volume (10 max)	Less than 500 trucks/equivalent per day	Btw 500-1,000 trucks/equivalent per day	More than 1,000 trucks/equivalent per day		
Transportation Plan Consistency (10 max)	Project is not in CTP or Thoroughfare Plan	Project type, such as intersections, not considered in plans	Project in CTP or Thoroughfare Plan		
Cost (10 max)	Cost over \$50 million	Cost \$25-49 million	Cost less than \$25 million		
Multimodal Accommodations (5 max)	Project does not include bike/ped/transit/rail facilities	Project includes bike/ped/transit/rail facilities			
Supports Environmental Justice (EJ), Land Use and Economic Development (5 max)	Project adds capacity or accessibility where growth is not encouraged	Project adds new capacity or accessibility in support of EJ, land use or economic development			
Local Funding Contribution (5 max)	No local funding	At least 5% local funding of total project cost (or 25% for locally-administered projects)			

150 South York Street
 Gastonia, NC 28053
 Phone (704) 866-6837

Division Level Projects: All highway projects on SR roads, and all other modes (public transportation, bicycle/pedestrian, and ferry projects) would be evaluated through the process detailed below.

Division Level Projects					
Criteria	0 points	5 points	10 points	15 points	20 points
Existing Lack of Capacity (20 max)	Volume to capacity less than 0.5 (roads and rail), existing facilities available (other modes)		Volume to capacity btw 0.51 and 0.75 (roads and rail), intermittent or incomplete facilities/transit available (other modes)		Volume to capacity over 0.75 (roads and rail), no facilities/transit available (other modes)
Cost-Effectiveness (20 max)	Cost per daily user greater than \$4,000 per user per mile	Cost per daily user btw \$2,000-\$4,000 per user per mile	Cost per daily user btw \$1,500-\$1,999 per user per mile	Cost per daily user btw \$1,000-\$1,499 per user per mile	Cost per daily user less than \$999 per user per mile
Total Cost (10 max)	Cost over \$10 million	Cost \$5-10 million	Cost less than \$5 million		
Plan Consistency (10 max)	Project is not in an adopted land use, transportation, transit or other plan	Intersections not improving recommended corridors	Project supports an adopted land use, transportation, transit or other plan		
Project Feasibility (10 max)	Significant ROW, EJ or environmental concerns	Moderate ROW, EJ or environmental concerns	No ROW, EJ or environmental concerns		
Multimodal Accommodations (10 max)	Project does not include bike/ped/transit/ rail facilities		Project includes bike/ped/transit/ rail facilities		
Supports Environmental Justice (EJ), Land Use and Economic Development (10 max)	Project adds capacity or accessibility where growth is not encouraged	Project adds some new capacity or accessibility in support of EJ, land use or economic development	Project adds significant new capacity or accessibility in support of EJ, land use or economic development		
Local Funding Contribution (10 max)	No local funding	At least 5% local funding of total project cost (or 25% for locally-administered projects)	At least 10% local funding of total project cost (or 30% for locally-administered projects)		

150 South York Street
Gastonia, NC 28053
Phone (704) 866-6837

Use of Public Input and Comments in Final Rankings: The TCC and MPO Board will review all input received through the public input process to confirm the individual candidate project descriptions and details. The TCC and MPO Board may choose to remove or modify projects before ultimately approving the points assignments, but no new projects will be added after the NCDOT deadline for submitting candidate projects for evaluation through the SPOT process.

Tie Breakers: Priority shall be given to low-cost projects in the event of a tie for projects at the bottom of the regional and division priority lists for point assignment by the GCL MPO.

Project Continuity: For projects split in phases, the GCL MPO will give consideration to assigning points to phases in the order already proposed by the NCDOT. This will only apply to project phases whose scores are within 10 points of each other according to the adopted GCL MPO's ranking process.

Grandfathering: Follow-on phases of projects, such as a paving phase after a grading phase, will not be evaluated by the MPO if the NCDOT states that the follow-on phase is a committed project.

Project Scheduling and Implementation: Projects partially funded at the Statewide Tier will be considered committed, and not eligible for consideration at the Regional or Division tiers. The GCL MPO will not consider assigning points to projects where additional funds will not advance completion due to project design, right-of-way, or other project development requirements.

Project Competitiveness: Candidate projects that score well within the GCL MPO process, but are in the bottom half for the applicable tier through the NCDOT's SPOT process will be removed from consideration if their composite with MPO and/or Division points is not competitive for funding. It will be replaced with the highest scoring project not yet assigned MPO points.

Transferring Points to Projects Outside MPO: The MPO Board may elect to assign points to projects outside the MPO Study Area. In these instances, the points being transferred shall be removed from the lowest-scoring project within the affected tier.

Final Ranking and Local Points Assignment: The GCL MPO receives 1,800 points to allocate to projects for local prioritization. All eligible projects by level (Regional or Division) would receive the maximum points, based on the weighting provided to the MPO within the STI legislation. The MPO would assign maximum points to the top 18



150 South York Street
Gastonia, NC 28053
Phone (704) 866-6837

projects in the Regional and Division levels based on rankings created through the processes described in this document. The GCL MPO will assign a proportional number of points to any project that is also partially located in another transportation planning organization's study area based on the percent of mileage within the GCL MPO's study area. The remaining points shall be assigned to a new project added at the end of the applicable tier's priority list.

Deviation from Process: The MPO TCC and Board may elect to deviate from this process when assigning points. If the ultimately adopted points assignment differs from staff recommendations, the MPO shall post an announcement and rationale for deviation on the MPO's web site, and distribute to entire MPO membership and current sunshine list.