

SOUTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

The attached Project Ranking & Selection Process was developed by a special subcommittee of the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). This subcommittee, the Project Selection Committee, was formed in November of 1993 and is composed of representatives from the four counties, two central cities, NJDOT and NJ Transit. Meetings of the subcommittee were open to all TAC members.

This subcommittee was charged by the TAC to develop a process for ranking and selecting Transportation Improvement Projects (TIP) that complies with the new mandates found in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991. Two key provisions of ISTEA are that the members of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) are authorized to coordinate the identification and selection of transportation programs and projects and that the flexibility permitted in selecting projects requires a multimodal ranking and selection process.

The subcommittee developed its ranking and selection process under the following guidelines from the TAC.

1. The process should be simple.
2. It should recognize the special characteristics of our region.
3. The process should include geographical balance.
4. The process should consider transit as well as highway projects.
5. The outcome should not be completely dependent on the scoring, but should also allow for each jurisdiction's own priorities.

Using the above guidelines, the subcommittee developed an overall framework for the Ranking & Selection Process. The process consists of four distinct phases. The first involves screening the candidate projects, for eligibility; next, projects are scored by the sponsor. Thirdly, the subcommittee reviews the scores and accepts or adjusts, in consultation with the sponsor. Finally, the accepted rankings are fit into a financial plan and adjusted if necessary to reflect funding availability, prior commitments, and geographic equity. The goals to be addressed by projects on the TIP and the detailed criteria used for ranking candidate projects are outlined on the following pages.

It is expected that this process will continue to evolve as the region gains experience in the ranking and selection of projects under ISTEA.

SOUTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

RANKING SYSTEM FOR PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

General procedure: For each of seven categories, assign an overall score representing your judgement of the project's relative merit. The maximum score for each category reflects its relative significance in the ranking process.

1. Support the Regional Economy (15 points)

The project will support access to tourism destinations or recreational facilities.

The project will support transportation and circulation important to the agricultural economy.

The project will serve an existing or planned employment center or industrial park.

The project will have a significant impact on economic growth and development, will help broaden the economy, or is important in maintaining current economic activity.

The project will be important to the movement of freight or commodities or will improve access to ports, airports, ferries, freight distribution facilities, or major industrial districts.

_____ Basic score (max. 7.5 points)

x _____ Multiplier for scope of economic activity supported:
Regional = 2, County = 1.5, Local = 1

_____ Category 1 score (round to nearest whole number, max 15 points)

2. Improve Safety (20 points) - (Consider severity of problem and whether existing or potential.)

The project will correct or improve a verified or potential safety or accident problem.

The project is located on an official emergency evacuation route or will otherwise support emergency evacuation operations.

The project will provide for or enhance a safe alternate route or mode for travel.

The project will enhance signage, directions, turning movements, and the overall safe movement of pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicular traffic.

The project will relieve a known flooding, drainage, or water hazard.

The project will provide an intermodal safety improvement (e.g. signals at rail crossings).

The project will provide needed new or replacement guide rail.

The project will address a narrow bridge roadway.

The project will remedy or prevent a hazardous condition.

The project will address a security problem.

_____ Category 2 score (max. 20 points)

3. Reduce Congestion/Promote Mobility (15 Points)

The project will improve movement through an intersection or along a roadway or other transportation corridor.

The project will provide and alternate movement around a congestion problem or preserve a future route option.

Mass transit options or operations will be improved by the project.

The project will reduce congestion by reducing the number of vehicles.

The project will improve the mobility of an underserved population group.

If the project is on a roadway that is on the latest version of the New Jersey Congestion Management System roadway network, the project occurs on a section of roadway that is congested.

The project is in a corridor that is congested according to the latest version of the New Jersey Congestion Management System.

The project limits the need for capacity increases through alternative demand management strategies (see CFR 550.507(e)).

The project will not increase Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOV) by adding general purpose lanes to an existing highway (except for elimination of safety and bottleneck problems) or constructing a new general purpose highway on a new location.

_____ Basic score (max. 7.5 points) (Favor demand reduction for improvements of equal magnitude).

x _____ Multiplier for scope of problem:
Regional = 2, Corridor = 1.5, Local = 1

_____ Category 3 score (round to nearest whole number, max. 15 points)

4. Protect and Improve the Environment (10 points)

The project is an air quality Transportation Control Measure recognized in the State Implementation Plan. The project will reduce vehicle emissions (e.g. by facilitating traffic movement, reducing the number of vehicles, number of single occupant vehicles, reducing vehicle-miles traveled, or other measures).

The project is important in minimizing environmental impacts or will reduce existing impacts (e.g. non-point air and water pollution, noise, clean-ups).

The project will enhance the appreciation of the natural, cultural, or historic environment.

_____ Category 4 score (max. 10 points).

5. Preserve and Maintain the Existing Transportation System (20 points) –
(Consider severity of condition and extent of improvement – favor preservation over enhancements).

The project will address a problem in existing physical condition.

The project will extend the usable life of a facility or equipment.

The project will modernize or qualitatively enhance the functioning of the existing transportation system (not intended to include changes in highway capacity).

_____ Category 5 score (max. 20 points)

6. Favor Projects for More Important Facilities/ Services/ Programs (15 points)

For highway projects:

The project is on a road functionally classified as the following:

<u>Functional Classification</u>	<u>Points</u>
Interstate or Other Freeway/Expressway	5
Other Principal Arterial	4
Minor Arterial	3
Urban Collector or Rural Major Collector	2
Rural Minor Collector	1
Local	0

An assigned classification other than the official federal classification must be justified.

_____ Score for functional classification (max. 5 points)

+_____ Addition for relatively high volume for the classification (max. 3 points)

_____ Highway project sub-total (max. 8 points)

For non-highway projects: (Consider scope of project – regional, county, and local):

The route or service provides an important transportation connection.

The route or service has high ridership or use.

The project is responsive to current and future users.

The project will improve information, comfort, or convenience to users.

_____ Non-highway project sub-total (max. 8 points)

For all projects:

The project is a link or phase in a larger transportation project and will serve to help complete that project.

There is a relationship to other projects in the regional transportation system.

The project is an important support for other types of plans or projects of public agencies (e.g. land use plans, Intermodal Management System).

The project will employ new technology, which can provide knowledge useful to other members of SJTPO.

The project will be significant in some way not recognized elsewhere in this ranking system.

_____ Additional score (max. 7 points)

_____ Category 6 score (add additional score to either highway or non-highway subtotal, max. 15 points)

7. Favor Cost –Effective Projects (5 points)

The project will have a relatively large benefit compared to its cost (include consideration of any reduction in operating expenses.)

_____ Category 7 score (max. 5 points)

_____ **TOTAL SCORE** (max. 100 points)