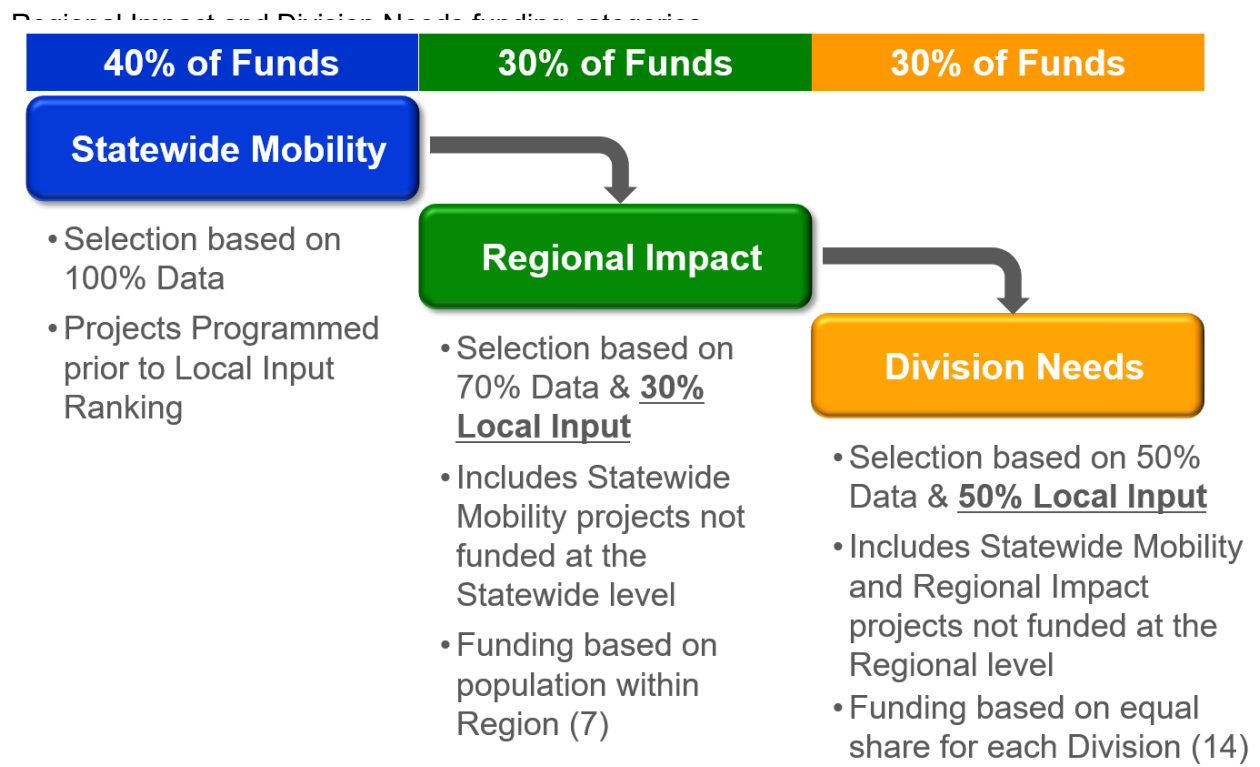


FRENCH BROAD RIVER MPO P 7 (SPOT) METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) law governs the process in which the State of North Carolina prioritizes transportation projects. The law was passed in 2013 with the intent of creating a data-driven, collaborative process between NCDOT, planning organizations, local governments, and the public to efficiently utilize funding for transportation improvements across the state.

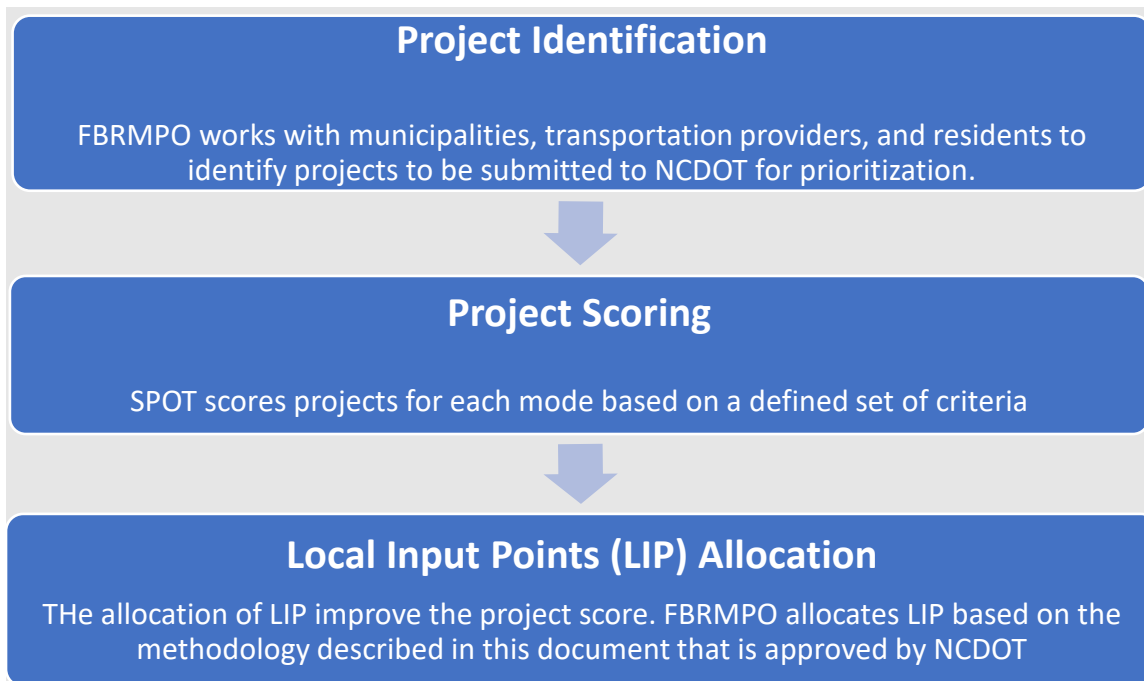
As part of the prioritization process, projects are solicited from planning organizations and NCDOT Divisions. Projects submitted into the prioritization process are placed into three different funding categories based on facility and project types: Statewide Mobility, Regional Impact, and Division Needs. Project scoring for the Statewide Mobility funding category is based solely on quantitative data developed by the Prioritization Workgroup. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs), and Division Engineers assign local input points to projects in the Regional Impact and Division Needs funding categories. These points are applied in the calculation of the final project scores for Prioritization 5.0 to determine which projects are funded at the



Project eligibility for each STI category, as defined in law, are shown below:

STI Project Eligibility			
Mode	Statewide Mobility	Regional Impact	Division Needs
Highway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interstates (existing & future) • NHS Routes • STRAHNET Routes • ADHS Routes • Not Completed Intrastate projects • Designated Toll Facilities 	Other US and NC Routes	All County (SR) Routes
Aviation	Large Commercial Service Airports (\$500,000 Cap)	Other Commercial Service Airports not in Statewide (\$300,000 cap)	All airports without Commercial Service (\$18.5M cap)
Bicycle-Pedestrian	N/A	N/A	All Projects (\$0 State funds)
Public Transportation	N/A	N/A	All other service including terminals, stations, facilities, etc.
Rail	Freight Capacity Service on Class 1 Railroad Corridors	Rail service spanning two or more counties not Statewide	Rail Service not included on Statewide or Regional

To ensure local input points are being applied through a process that is transparent, MPOs and RPOs are required to develop a methodology that outlines how they will determine which projects will have local input points applied. This local input methodology for the French Broad River MPO has been developed to meet the requirements of Session Law 2012-84 which requires that MPOs and RPOs have a process that includes at least two criteria (with at least one being qualitative), for determining project prioritization.



FRENCH BROAD RIVER MPO PRIORITIZATION TASKS

The French Broad River MPO engages in the prioritization process in the following ways:

1. Selection of transportation projects to be considered in the prioritization process
2. Apply local input points to projects in the Regional Impact and Division Needs funding categories using a process that follows the MPO's local input methodology
3. Involve the public in the MPO's tasks during the prioritization process
4. Consider/Adopt the 2026-2033 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

As stipulated by the STI legislation, local points may be assigned to projects in the Regional Impact and Division Needs categories, but not the Statewide Mobility category. The French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) may allocate the following number of local points for projects in the eligible categories:

- 1900 points – Regional Impact projects
- 1900 points – Division Needs projects

A committee of TCC and MPO Board members was created to develop a local input point methodology. The contents of this memorandum describe the methodology developed by the committee, which the FBRMPO proposes to use to allocate its local input points. NCDOT requires that the methodology include the following:

- Two criteria (at least one must be qualitative)

- Public involvement (on the proposed methodology, and the preliminary assignment of local input points to projects based on the approved methodology)
- Dissemination of methodology, local points and public input on FBRMPO's website (www.frenchbroadrivermpo.org)

POINT ASSIGNMENT PROCESS

OVERVIEW AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles will be used for the allocation of FBRMPO's local points.

Cascading Projects

During the prioritization process, projects are allowed to “cascade” from one funding category into another. For example, if a project in the Statewide Mobility funding category is unsuccessful at being funded, the project may cascade into the Regional Impact and/or Division Needs funding categories to be funded. The same may be applied to Regional Impact projects which may cascade to the Division Needs funding category. Projects may not cascade in the opposite direction (i.e. Division Needs to Regional Impact or Statewide Mobility).

MPO Cascading Policy: The MPO will- by default- **not** assign points to any cascading project, but reserves the right to address cascading projects on a case-by-case basis, and will provide written explanation and justification for any cascading project that justifies an exception.

Non-Highway Projects

Regional Impact Non-Highway Policy: The MPO will reserve 200 points in the Regional Impact tier that will be prioritized for non-highway modes, but may be used towards highway projects if the Board finds insufficient warrant for the application of points towards these modes.

Division Needs Non-Highway Policy: The MPO will reserve 700 points for Division Needs that will be prioritized for non-highway modes, but may be used towards highway projects if the Board finds insufficient warrant for the application of points towards these modes.

General Application and Deviations from Methodology Scoring

Projects with the highest MPO Scores will be given the maximum number of points allowable within their funding category until the MPO points are expended **or** 150% of the estimated amount of funding available within that funding category is expended. If no funding is projected to be available in this round of prioritization in a funding tier, the MPO will consider putting points on a minimum of three projects as way to state regional priorities, with one of those projects being non-highway. .

The MPO Board can adjust projects receiving points or adjust the number of points given to a project based on their discretion, recommendations from the TCC and other MPO committees, and/or public input. Any exceptions will require written explanation to be provided to NCDOT and be part of an open, public process that complies with Chapter 143, Article 33C of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Point Sharing Among Planning Organizations

Assignment of local points to a project that crosses MPO boundaries may be based on a proportionate share of project mileage within FBRMPO and after confirmation from adjacent RPO that they will assign proportionate points to project.

MPO/RPO	Project Miles	% of Project in MPO	Max. Points per PO
FBRMPO	3.52	55%	55
LOSRPO	2.88	45%	45
TOTAL	6.4	100%	100

Local Input Point Flexing Policy

The FBRMPO has the option to apply the Local Input Point Flexing Policy. This means that up to 500 LIP can be transferred from one category to the other. If the organization utilizes flex LIP, the FBRMPO will provide written documentation to the SPOT office prior to assigning Regional Impact Local Input Points.

NCDOT Division 13 and 14 Coordination

Coordination with NCDOT Division 13 and 14 staffs will occur as FBRMPO’s LIP are being allocated in an effort to ensure that mutual assignment of local points can be considered.

Final point assignments submitted to the NCDOT Strategic Prioritization Office (via SPOT Online) must be adopted by FBRMPO Board.

TOTAL SCORE AND PROJECT RANKING APPROACH

STATEWIDE MOBILITY

Modes Considered: Highway and Aviation

Projects considered for funding in the Statewide Mobility funding category will be programmed based solely on the quantitative scoring developed by NCDOT and the P 7.0 workgroup. The MPO methodology for local input points does not apply to determining funding at this funding category.

However, please note the MPO’s Cascading Policy for projects that are eligible for Statewide Mobility but may cascade to other funding categories.

REGIONAL IMPACT

Modes Considered: Highway and Aviation

Projects considered for funding in the Regional Impact funding category will be subject to scoring through the MPO's methodology. The following (sometimes overlapping) steps will be taken to determine what projects are assigned local input points from the MPO:

- Unfunded Statewide Mobility projects will be considered for cascading on a case-by-case basis
- Highway, Aviation, and Rail projects will be scored based on the methodology detailed below
- Draft Local Input points will be applied to the highest scoring projects until MPO local input points or 150% of estimated funding available is exhausted. If no funding is available, the MPO will consider putting points on a minimum of three projects as a way of stating priorities with one non-highway project.
- Public Input will be solicited on the Draft Point Assignment
- Discussion/Approval of Local Point Assignment from the MPO Prioritization Subcommittee, TCC, and Board

DIVISION NEEDS

Modes Considered: Highway, Bicycle/Pedestrian, Transit, and Aviation

Projects considered for funding in the Division Needs funding category will be subject to scoring through the MPO's methodology. The following (sometimes overlapping) steps will be taken to determine what projects are assigned local input points from the MPO:

- Unfunded Statewide Mobility and Regional Impact projects will be considered for cascading on a case-by-case basis
- Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit projects will be scored based on the methodology detailed below and compete for 500 local input points reserved for these modes
- Highway and Aviation projects will be scored based on the methodology detailed below
- Draft Local Input points will be applied to the highest scoring projects until MPO local input points or 150% of estimated funding available is exhausted. If no funding is available in a Division Needs tier, the MPO will consider putting points on a minimum of three projects as a way of stating priorities, with one non-highway project.
- Public Input will be solicited on the Draft Point Assignment
- Discussion/Approval of Local Point Assignment from the MPO Prioritization Subcommittee, TCC, and Board

DESCRIPTION OF CRITERIA AND WEIGHTS

Projects will be scored based on the transportation mode. These include: Highway, Aviation, Bicycle/Pedestrian, and Transit. There are no Rail or Ferry projects within the FBRMPO planning area.

HIGHWAY

There are overarching criteria that link back to goals in the MTP (shown in blue in the table). The sub criteria under each criterion describe the data points that the FBRMPO use to measure the merits of a particular highway project. Criteria for the other modes follow the remainder of the narrative.

Maximum Points	Minimal Need	Low Need	Moderate Need	High Need
Improve Safety on Surface Streets and Highways				
NCDOT P 7.0 Safety Score				
24	Projects scoring below the 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category	Projects scoring within the 25 th - 49.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category	Projects scoring within the 50 th – 74.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category	Projects scoring within the top 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category
	0 Points	8 Points	16 Points	24 Points
Address Congestion and Bottlenecks				
NCDOT P 7.0 Congestion Score				
17	Projects scoring below the 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category	Projects scoring within the 25 th - 49.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category	Projects scoring within the 50 th – 74.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category	Projects scoring within the top 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category
	0 Points	6 Points	12 Points	17 Points

Improve Non-Motorized Transportation Options				
	Bicycle and Pedestrian Average Risk Score			
12	Projects scoring below the 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category	Projects scoring within the 25 th - 49.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category	Projects scoring within the 50 th – 74.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category	Projects scoring within the top 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category
	0 Points	3 Points	6 Points	9 Points
	Proposed Complete Streets Treatment			
	No Complete Streets Recommendations	Bikeable Shoulder	Sidewalks and/or On-Street Bike Lanes	Multi-Use Path and/or Protected Bike Facilities
	0 Points	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points
Maintain and Improve Safe Freight Movement				
	NCDOT P 7.0 Freight Score			
10	Projects scoring below the 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category	Projects scoring within the 25 th - 49.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category	Projects scoring within the 50 th – 74.9 th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category	Projects scoring within the top 25th percentile of all projects in the MPO Planning Area considered in each respective category
	0 Points	3 Points	7 Points	10 Points
Planning Process				
	Is the Project in the FBRMPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) or a Locally Adopted Plan?			
10	Project not adopted in the FBRMPO MTP or Locally Adopted Plan		Project is adopted in the FBRMPO MTP or Locally Adopted Plan	
	0 Points		10 Points	

Ensure Changes Respect Our Unique Places and Environments		
	Is the project located within an area of existing public utility service area?	
7	Partially or Completely Outside Existing Public Water/Sewer Service Area	Completely Inside Existing Public Water/Sewer Service Area
	0 Points	5 Points
	Does the project use a non-widening strategy from the MPO's Congestion Management Process (CMP) to address congestion?	
	The project does not use a non-widening strategy from the CMP to address congestion	The Project uses a non-widening strategy from the CMP to address congestion on a CMP Corridor
	0 Points	2 Points
Resiliency		
	Does the project overlap with identified environmental threats to the transportation network?	
5	Project does not overlap with documented 100-year floodplain, historic landslide location, or identified wildlife corridor	Project overlaps with documented 100-year floodplain, historic landslide location, or identified wildlife corridor
	0 points	5 points
Local Priorities		
15	<p>Local Priority points will be distributed based on county-level meetings with TCC and/or MPO Board members or Local TAC. County groups including local government representation will pick priority projects for each tier. Each priority project will receive an additional 15 points in this methodology. Each county group will receive the following number of priority projects to pick, loosely based on proportion of population:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buncombe- 5 projects Henderson- 3 projects Haywood- 2 projects Madison- 1 project 	

NON-HIGHWAY MODES

AVIATION

- Aviation projects must be requested to cascade to Regional Impact and/or Division Needs categories, per the MPO's cascading policy outlined in this methodology. Aviation projects will use the P 7.0 score and local priority points to score the project at the Regional Impact or Division Needs level. This score (out of 100) will be used to compete with other modes at that funding category.

Quantitative P7.0 Score				
	P 7.0 Score Assigned Based on Rank within FBRMPO Percentile (from the corresponding funding category)			
75	Projects scoring below the 25th percentile of all projects in the region	Projects scoring within the 25 th - 49.9 th percentile of all projects in the region	Projects scoring within the 50 th – 74.9 th percentile of all projects in the region	Projects scoring within the top 25th percentile of all projects in the region
	0 Points	25 Points	50 Points	75 Points
Planning Process				
	Is the Project in the FBRMPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) or a Locally Adopted Plan?			
10	Project not adopted in the FBRMPO MTP or Locally Adopted Plan		Project is adopted in the FBRMPO MTP or Locally Adopted Plan	
	0 Points		10 Points	
LOCAL PRIORITIES				
15	See the Highway Methodology for Local Priorities. All modes will compete for the same set of points.			

RAIL, BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN, AND TRANSIT

- Bicycle and Pedestrian projects will not receive local input points from the MPO without written affirmation of required local match from a sponsoring local government representative as well as the use of local priority points from the MPO's methodology.
- Bicycle and Pedestrian projects will be scored based on the P 7.0 score, planning background, and local priority points. These projects will compete for the Division Needs points reserved for rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit projects.
- Transit projects will be scored based on the P 7.0 score and local priority points. These projects will compete for the Division Needs points reserved for rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit projects.

- Rail projects may compete at the Regional Impact or Division Needs tiers and will be scored based on the P 7.0 Quantitative Score, planning background, and local priorities. These projects will compete for points reserved for rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit projects.

Quantitative P 7.0 Score				
75	P 7.0 Score Assigned Based on Rank within FBRMPO Percentile (from the corresponding funding category)			
	Projects scoring below the 25th percentile of all projects in the region	Projects scoring within the 25 th - 49.9 th percentile of all projects in the region	Projects scoring within the 50 th – 74.9 th percentile of all projects in the region	Projects scoring within the top 25th percentile of all projects in the region
	0 Points	25 Points	50 Points	75 Points
Planning Process				
	Is the Project in the FBRMPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) or a Locally Adopted Plan?			
10	Project not adopted in the FBRMPO MTP or Locally Adopted Plan		Project is adopted in the FBRMPO MTP or Locally Adopted Plan	
	0 Points		10 Points	
LOCAL PRIORITIES				
15	See the Highway Methodology for Local Priorities. All modes will compete for the same set of points.			

SCHEDULE AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

At a minimum, the FBRMPO will follow its Public Involvement Process for the Prioritization List will include the following steps based on the FBRMPO's adopted **Public Involvement Plan**, section V.C. on page 16:

- After consideration and preliminary adoption by the MPO Board, the draft Prioritization List will be published for a minimum two-week (14-day) public comment period and the notice will be advertised using our media resources provided in Appendix C of the Plan.
- The notices for the public comment period and the public hearing will include an announcement stating that persons with disabilities will be accommodated. Special provisions will be made if notified 48 hours in advance (i.e. having available large print documents, audio material, someone proficient in sign language, a translator or other provisions as requested). The Prioritization List will be on file for review at the Land-of-Sky Regional Council Office, and available in a PDF format for downloading from the FBRMPO website. Written comments will be received during the comment period and will be directed to the FBRMPO. The FBRMPO's contact person, phone number and e-mail address will be included in the public notice. The FBRMPO will assemble all comments and forward comments to the MPO Board.
- The Board will hold a public hearing on the draft Prioritization List. The public hearing will be held at a location which is accessible to persons with disabilities. The Board will approve a final Prioritization List after considering the public comments received. The Prioritization List shall be submitted to the NCDOT at or before the NCDOT public hearings for input into the STIP. The MPO Board may elect to open a dialogue with the State on specific project priorities.

The Effect of MPO Local Input Points on Project Prioritization

The MPO's allocation of local input points on projects in the Regional Impact and Division Needs funding categories plays a part in determining the project's overall score in the state's prioritization process. For each funding category the MPO's allocation of local input points accounts for the following percentage of a project's P 5.0 score:

Regional Impact Funding Category – 15%

Division Needs Funding Category – 25%

MATERIAL SHARING

The FBRMPO plans to maintain complete transparency through the local input scoring process. All relevant materials will be posted on the FBRMPO website in accordance with the MPO's Public

Involvement Policy and will remain available until after the adoption of the TIP and STIP by the MPO Board, and NC Board of Transportation, respectively.

The FBRMPO plans to maintain the following resources on its website:

- A link to NCDOT's Prioritization homepage
- The FBRMPO prioritization methodology
- A schedule of the local input process
- Draft and final local input point scores and records of deviations