2025 Prioritization Criteria for the Prioritization Process

The proposed DelDOT prioritization criteria are currently under consideration by the Council on Transportation. The reasons for the proposed changes are:

- The current process was adopted on February 27, 2020 and the criteria are typically reviewed and considered for update every four to five years.
- DelDOT's investments in data collection and tools enables a more "data-driven" process.
- Other criteria / methods have evolved over the years through legislation,

During August and October 2024 meetings of the Council on Transportation, the DelDOT Planning Division proposed the following the revised percentages for each criterion along with their own updated methodologies.

The DelDOT Council on Transportation approved the Enhanced Project Prioritization Process, summarized below, at its Feb. 26, 2025 meeting:

Enhanced Project Prioritization Process Criteria (2025) Compared to Previous Criteria (2020)

	Percent of total score	
	2025 (proposed)	**2020 (previous)**
Safety	35%	35.0%
System Operating Effectiveness	15%	19.1%
Multi-modal Mobility / Flexibility / Access	10%	11.9%
Economic Development / Jobs and Commerce (previously *Revenue Generation / Economic Development / Jobs and Commerce*)	15%	13.1%
Social and Health Linkages (previously *Impact on the Public / Social Disruption / Economic Justice*)	10%	8.3%
Environmental Resiliency and Stewardship (previously *Environmental Impact / Stewardship*)	10%	6.6%
State and Local Priority	5%	6.1%

The 2025 project prioritization process evaluates projects 100% quantitatively, unlike the previous version that included 77.2% quantitative and 22.8% qualitative. The following pages contain explanation of the criteria and sub-criteria, where relevant.

Apply Component Criterion Values to Percentage

All criteria components receive a value of 0-1, scaled from a rating or ranking, and that 0-1 value is applied to the percent of total score seen above.

SAFETY (35.0%) - THE ABILITY OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM TO ALLOW PEOPLE AND GOODS TO MOVE FREELY AND WITHOUT HARM.

This criterion assesses the extent to which a project addresses identified safety issues. It combines:

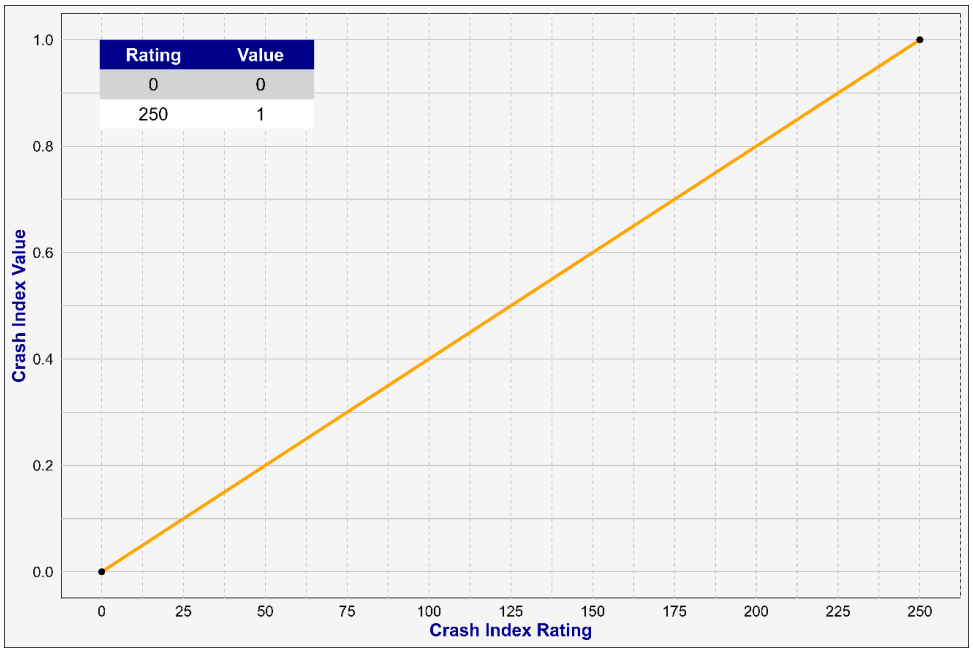
- 15% for a Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Frequency Score
- with 20% for either its
    - Crash Index value if an intersection improvement project, or
    - Critical Crash Ratio value if a corridor or roadway segment improvement project

Crash Index for intersection improvements project (20%)

The Crash Index of location is based on three (3) most recent complete calendar years of crash data. This information is provided by DelDOT's Traffic Engineering Section. The Crash Index is only applied to proposed intersection improvement projects.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

The crash index CI = (Number of Fatal Crashes * 40) + (Number of Injury Crashes * 4.5) + (Number of Property Damage Only Crashes *1). If the crash index calculation is greater than or equal to 250, then the project will receive the max. value of 1.

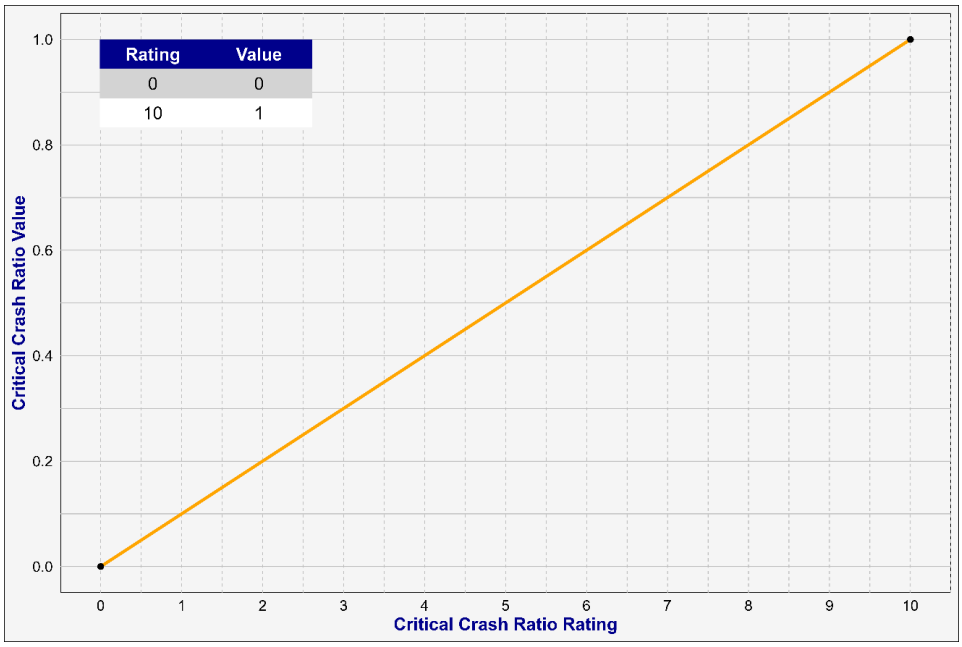


Critical Crash Ratio for Corridor/Roadway Segment Improvements (20%)

The Critical Crash Ratio is a site selection methodology calculated by including three (3) most recent complete calendar years of crash data and comparing crash rates along each roadway against statewide averages of similar roadway types such as interstate, state routes, arterial, collector, and local roadway types. This site selection process will consider all injury crashes due to complexities associated with identifying a crash based on injury severity. This information is provided by DelDOT's Traffic Engineering Section. The Critical Crash Ratio is applied to corridor and roadway segments.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

The Critical Crash Ratio value is entered and the score value is determined utilizing the linear scale below. The project critical crash ratio value may be zero. If the crash index calculation is greater than 10, then the project will receive the max value of 1.



Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Frequency Score (15%)

The DelDOT's Traffic Engineering Section leads the HSIP with support from both internal and external partners. The HSIP is comprised of several programs (and subprograms/components) that are designed to prioritize resources that target the most critical safety improvement opportunities as identified through data-driven approaches. Below are some examples of programs included in Delaware's HSIP:

- Hazard Elimination Program (HEP)

- Highway-Rail Grade Crossing (HRGX)

Component Criterion Value Calculation

A project is ranked based on the ranking on the HSIP Frequency table. A score (see table for details) will be assigned for the average rank over the last 5 program years provided through the HSIP Network Screening process.

HSIP Frequency Table

Ranking	Points
within top 10	1
11 to 50	0.666
51 to 100	0.5
101 to 500	0.333
501 to 1000	0.25
over 1001 or N/A	0

SYSTEM OPERATING EFFECTIVENESS (15%) - THE ABILITY OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM TO EFFICIENTLY MOVE PEOPLE, GOODS AND SERVICES WITHOUT EXCESSIVE DELAY OR INCONVENIENCE.

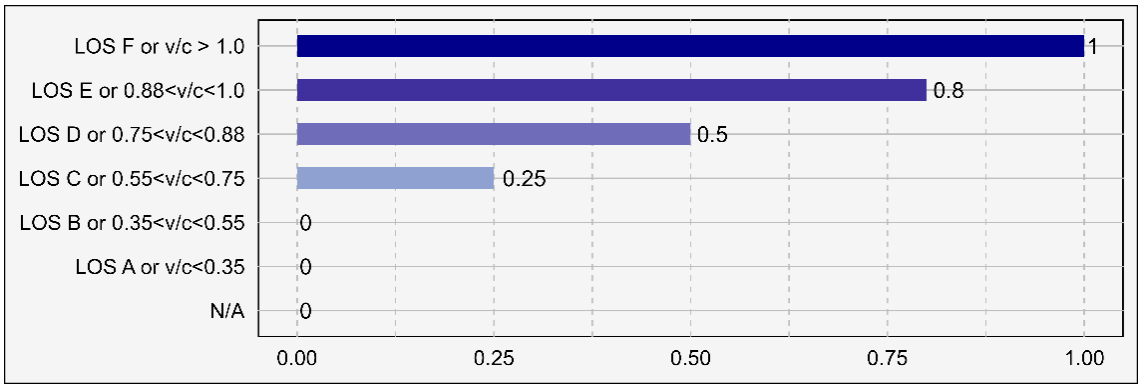
This criterion is used to assess the extent to which the Project meets operating objectives as described in the State Strategies for Policies and Spending and in regional or local community plans.

Existing Congestion Level (5%)

The existing congestion level is calculated for the intersection or roadway segment. LOS is determined by data no more than 3 years old from Traffic Impact Studies, Traffic Management Center, Traffic Volume Count, Travel Demand Model, or other plans and studies done throughout the state.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

The intersection/roadway congestion level is selected and the score value is determined using the table below.

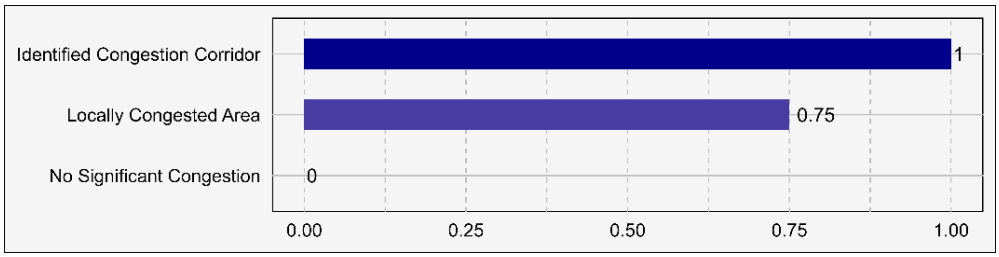


Congestion Management (5%)

Existing congestion is identified by a project's location along a congested corridor or within a congested area. Congested corridors are identified and adopted by the local MPOs, DelDOT's most recent county-specific Transportation Operation Management Plans (TOMP), and/or the City/County Comprehensive Plans.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

A project can be along a congested corridor, in a locally congested area, or in an area without significant congestion. Project areas are classified and the score value is determined using the table below.



Recent Growth (2.5%)

Recent Growth uses the 2020 US Census Tract for the year 2020 base year and Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC) building permits from 2020 to the most current full year available. Building permit data will be updated annually when it becomes available.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

Use natural break of percentage change in number of housing units per acreage to determine the recent growth score:

Class 1 = very high growth (1.0 point)

Class 2 = high (.67 points)

Class 3 = medium (.33 points)

Class 4 = slow (no points)

Projected Growth (2.5%)

Projected Growth is based on 2020 and 2050 DelDOT travel demand model forecast volumes, using estimated percentage change in volumes on the roadway(s). The travel demand model base year and forecast year will be updated every five years to reflect planning needs.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

Class 1: estimated more than 50% percent change = very high growth (1.0 point)

Class 2: estimated 50% percent change = high growth (.67 points)

Class 3: estimated 30% percent change = medium growth (.33 points)

Class 4: estimated 10% percent change = low growth (0 points)

MULTI-MODAL MOBILITY/FLEXIBILITY/ACCESS (10%) - THE ABILITY OF A PROJECT TO IMPROVE SAFE, EFFICIENT MOBILITY FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES TO WALK, BICYCLE, USE MICROMOBILITY DEVICES, OR TRANSIT TO REACH EVERYDAY DESTINATIONS FROM THEIR FRONT DOOR ON APPROPRIATE AND ACCESSIBLE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE.

This criterion is used to assess the extent to which the project is located within an area which may have an existing demand for bicycling and walking and whether the project improves connectivity and accessibility of the existing system.

Bicycle Mode (5%)

The Delaware Bicycle Mobility Tool was developed in 2015 in conjunction with Dr. Peter Furth from Northeastern University, providing a new metric of suitability for roadways for bicycling called “Level of Traffic Stress” (LTS). This metric ranks roads as Level of Traffic Stress 1 (LTS1) through Level of Traffic Stress 4 (LTS4), depending on the intensity of automobile traffic and provisions made for bicycle traffic. A statewide Level of Traffic Stress model has been used to develop travel models which compare how proposed bicycle and pedestrian projects can improve cycling mobility at the household level. Per the State Bike Plan, there are five categories of ‘destinations’: Schools, Community Centers, Employment Centers, Transit, and Parks. Statewide datasets have been developed for each of these categories, referred to as Points of Interest (POIs).

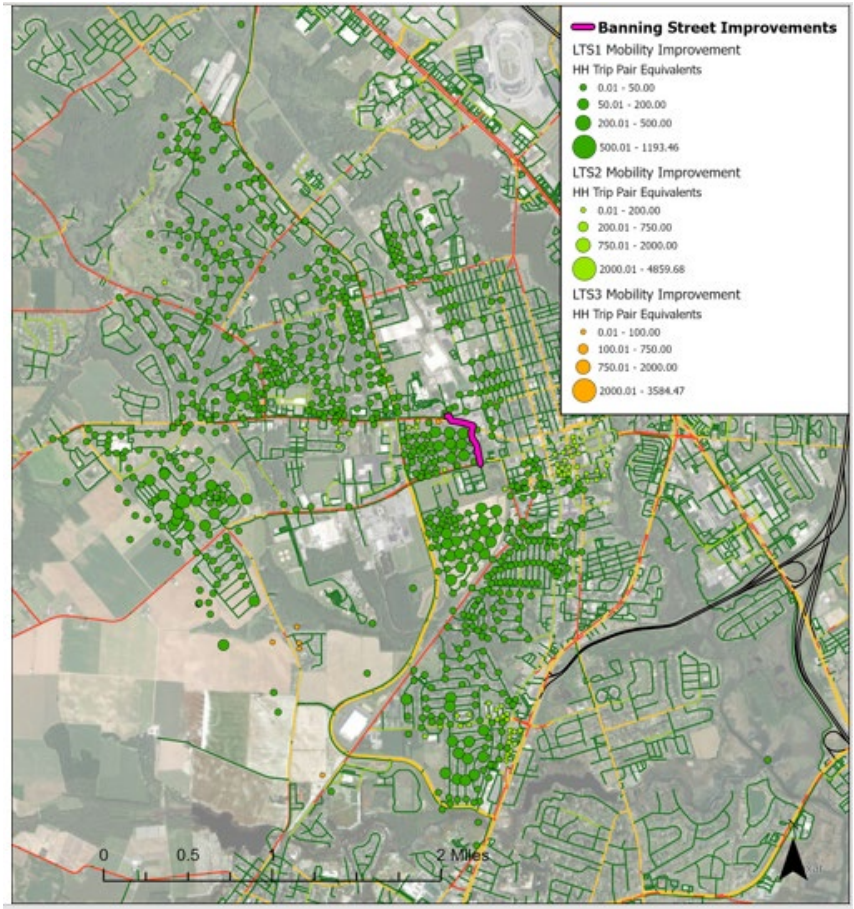


Figure 1: visual representation of improvements to mobility at different LTS levels.

The Delaware Bicycle Mobility Tool evaluates how well-connected households are to the POI locations on each LTS (e.g., how well connected is everyone in New Castle County to Public Schools, LTS2 streets and pathways). This analysis provides insights into the connectivity of the existing

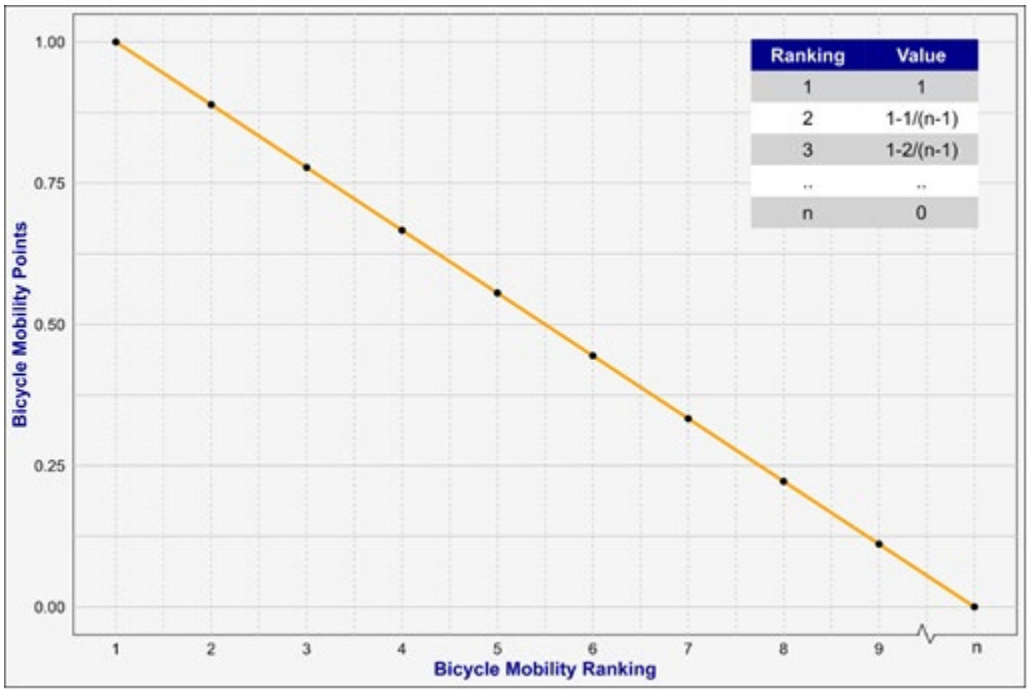
bicycle network and allows DelDOT to assess how new bicycle or pedestrian projects will improve the number of households which are connected to important POIs on each LTS. DelDOT can then model and understand how its proposed projects will improve mobility for the whole spectrum of bicycle and micromobility users, beyond the connectivity of the existing system. These improvements to mobility at each Level of Traffic Stress can be visualized geographically, as shown in (Figure 1). Improvements to bicycle mobility are quantified in two key ways:

A) Creating new connections to places that people want to go, building pathways, shortcuts, or cut throughs that didn't previously exist.

B) Improving intersections and roadways that provide more direct access from people's residences to places they want to go; reducing detours required to reach destinations under low-stress cycling conditions.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

A project is evaluated and ranked by evaluating improvements to bicycle mobility for five destination categories (transit, schools, employment center, community centers, parks) at each LTS (LTS1, LTS2, LTS3, LTS4) from the no-build condition to the build condition. A weighted improvement score is calculated for all projects, which are then ranked using a linear scoring rubric as shown below, using an example where the n^{th} number of projects are ranked. Actual scores will depend on total number of projects ranked, with the top rank project will receive the highest score of 1 while the bottom ranked project always receiving the lowest score of 0.



Pedestrian Mode (3%)

A network and spatial analysis of the state was performed to understand the accessibility of walksheds, or areas within a ½ mile walk of residential areas (on sidewalks, pathways, and lower-stress roadways), to gain insight into areas where frequent pedestrian activity might be expected. Within each walkshed, pedestrian-oriented businesses, locations, and services were counted. These points of interest were based on geocoded points representing all licensed businesses in the state, classified with North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes that were queried for common pedestrian trip generators. Each walkshed was associated with the population originating from it (expressed as household units, aggregated to the nearest intersection), or the Origin Population. The Origin Population and the Destination Count values were simplified to 20 meter by 20 meter cells for the entire state (for overlapping walksheds, the Maximum value of the Destination Count was chosen, and the Sum value of the overlapping Origin Population was chosen). The value of the Maximum Destination Count and Sum Origin Population counts were then multiplied by each other to produce a kind of origin-destination-pair index for the entirety of the state, referred to as the 'Everyday Walking Zone' Score. Breakpoints were then arbitrarily chosen to produce Five Strata of 'Everyday Walking Zones' where, based on the land use, we can assume a certain likelihood of frequent, utilitarian pedestrian travel activity.

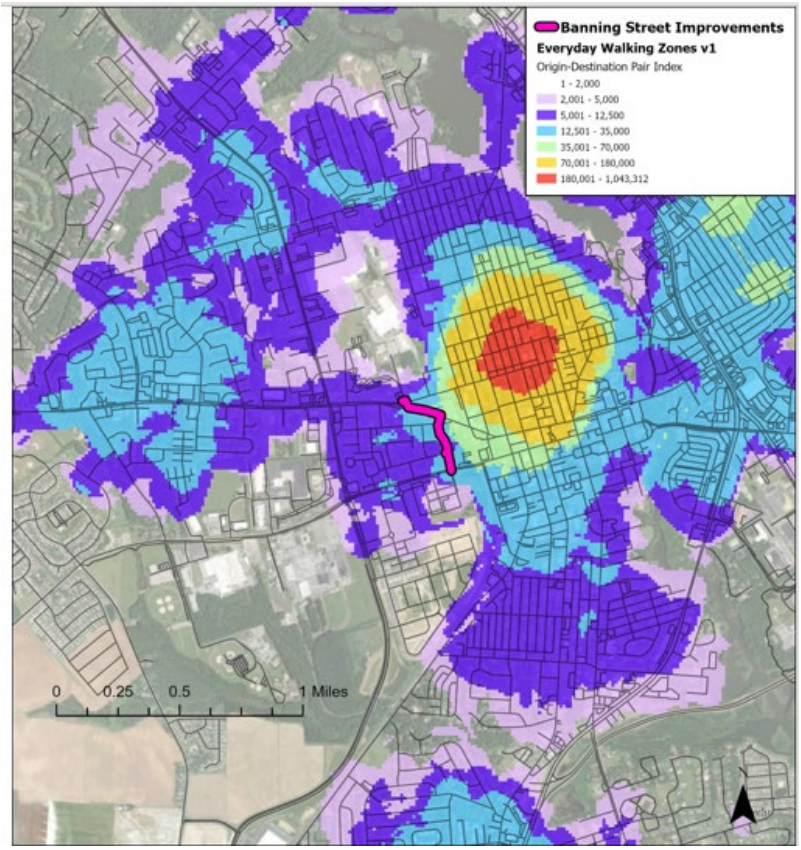
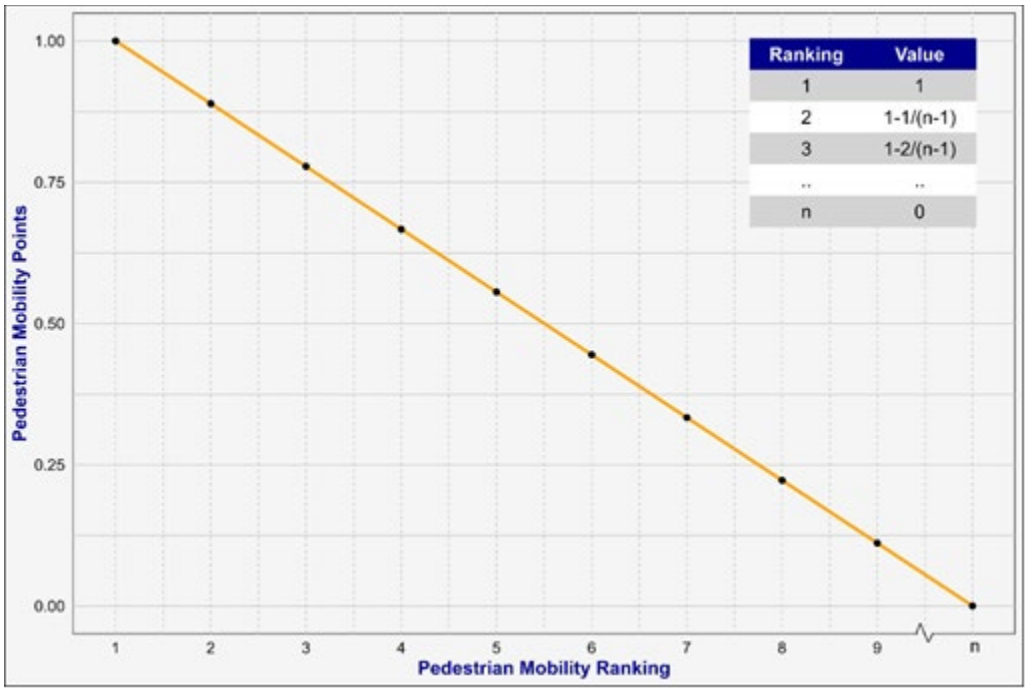


Figure 2

A higher Everyday Walking Zone Score indicates that the project is located, spatially, in an area where we would expect frequent, utilitarian pedestrian travel activity as shown in Figure 2.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

The mean Everyday Walking Zone Score is calculated along the length of the potential project. The chart below shows the linear scoring of the ranked projects for a situation based on the n^{th} number of projects are ranked. Actual scores will depend on total number of projects ranked, with the top rank project will receive the highest score of 1 while the bottom ranked project always receiving the lowest score of 0.



ADA and Transit Mode (2%)

The ADA Construction Inspection Application (ACIA) will be applied here. The ACIA identifies the sidewalk and transit bus stop in either compliance in blue or non-compliance in red according to the facility types (Figure 4). Delaware Transit Corporation data will also be used to identify transit stops.

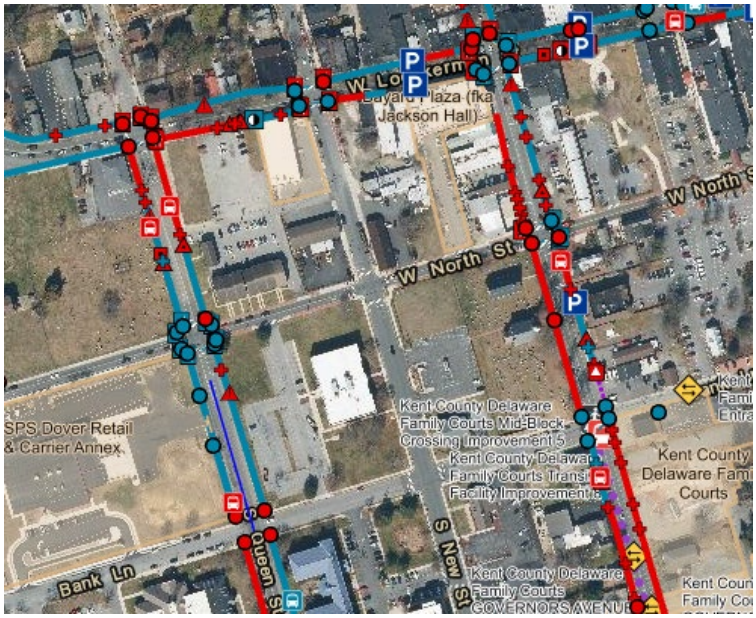


Figure 3

Component Criterion Value Calculation

A project is either improving or not improving any non-compliance facilities. This information is entered and a score value of either zero (not improving) or 1 (improving).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/JOBS & COMMERCE (15%) - THE ABILITY OF A PROJECT TO FACILITATE OR SUPPORT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT.

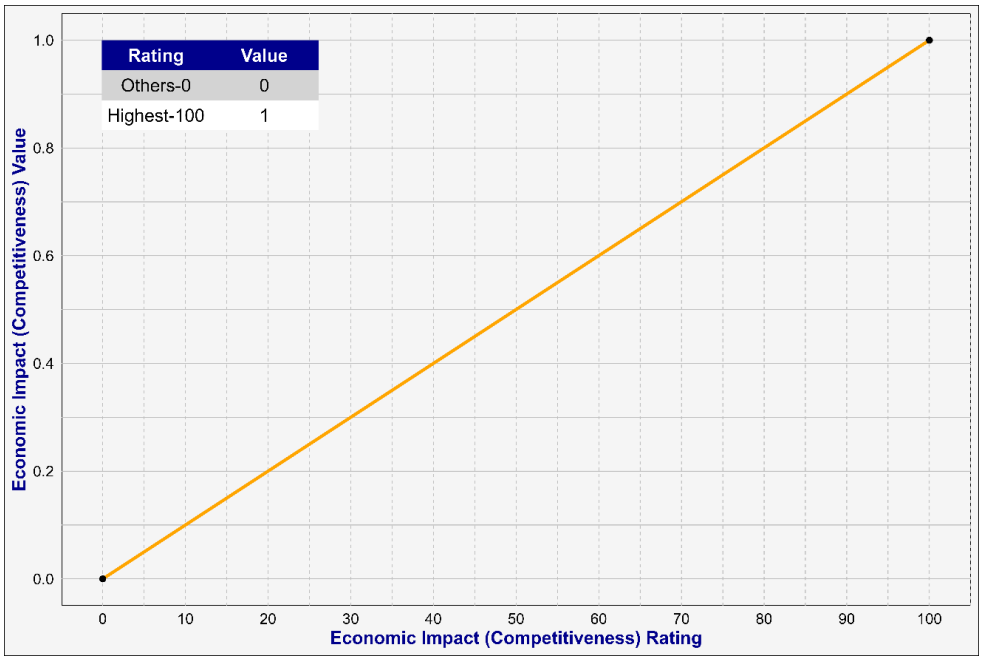
This criterion is used to assess the extent to which the Project has the potential to generate revenue or will support economic development and benefit commerce.

Economic Impact (Competitiveness) (5%)

A program called Transportation Economic Development Impact System (TREDIS) will be used to assess a project's economic impact. Based on the Delaware statewide travel demand model's project outputs of Vehicle Miles Travel and Vehicle Hours Travel, TREDIS will estimate the future year percentage change in employment and economy of the project within the county. The 5% Economic Impact (Competitiveness) is split between percentage Change in Employment (2.5%) and Percentage Change in GDP (2.5%)

Component Criterion Value Calculation

A project is ranked by comparing the percentage change in employment and economy of each project within the county estimated by TREDIS. Their percentages are scaled accordingly. The top project with the most percentage change in economic impact/employment from each county will be scored with a maximum score of 100 and the project with the least percentage change in employment in county will receive a score of 0. Every program year, one project from each county is expected to receive a full score, resulting in three projects statewide that received the score of 100.



Identified in a Transportation Improvement District (TID) (4%)

A Transportation Improvement District (TID) is a geographic area identified in a local jurisdictions comprehensive plan where growth is planned and there is a desire for a comprehensive approach to adequate facilities. These are areas where the State has partnered with the local jurisdictions to provide the necessary infrastructure to keep pace with the development within the TID.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

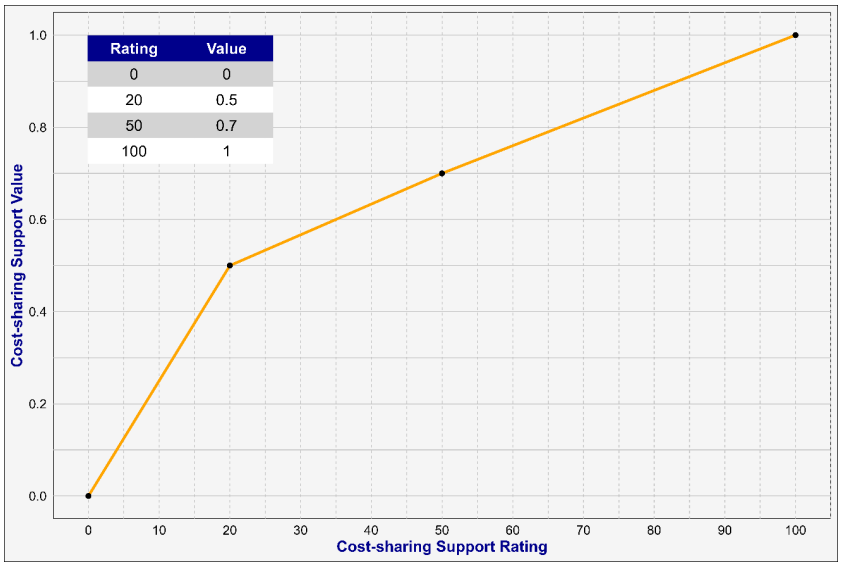
A project is either in or not in a Transportation Improvement District as determined by DelDOT. This information is entered “Yes, within a TID” or “No, not in a TID” a score value of either 1 or 0.is assigned.

Cost-sharing Support (2%)

This criterion supports the active development that has been approved by the local land use agencies. Projects are identified that will support the proposed development and where there is a cost sharing percentage identified as part of the approval.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

The percentage of private contributions of a project is estimated by DelDOT staff. The score value is determined utilizing the linear scale below with 20% match or greater receiving a value of 0.5 and 100% receiving a value of 1. If a project does not have any outside funding source, then the value is zero.

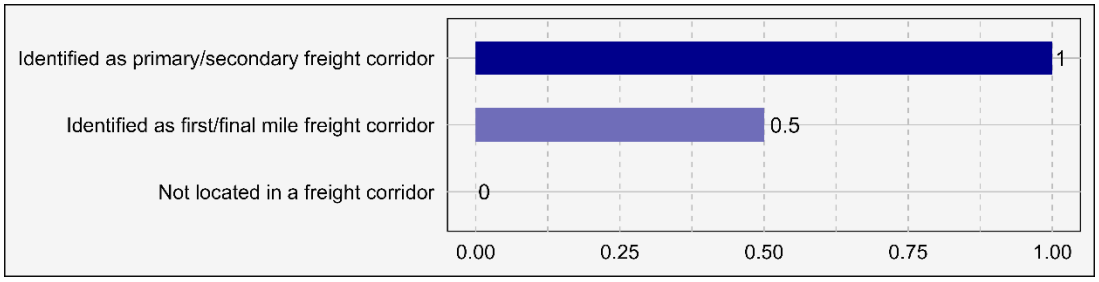


Freight Corridor (3%)

The Delaware Freight Plan has identified primary and secondary freight corridors throughout the state. It is critical that these corridors allow the efficient movement of goods and services so that Delaware can remain competitive in attracting business to the state. The first/final mile roadways are critical elements of the freight transportation system because they link freight facilities with major corridors for regional and interstate travel such as I-95, and US-13. Since first/final mile roadways serve as connectors to major corridors, they are often very short road segments along lower functionally classified routes that also support multiple users including passenger vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians, and may not have been designed to easily accommodate truck traffic.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

The project is evaluated to determine if it exists on either a primary or secondary freight corridor or identified as the first/final mile. If it is not located on a freight corridor then it receives a value of zero.



Freight Bottleneck (1%)

The Delaware Freight Plan has identified fifteen freight bottleneck areas throughout the state that would affect freight mobility and reliability. The freight bottleneck areas consider such factors as daily truck traffic volume, daily truck traffic percentage, daily truck trip generation (based on zone estimates using employment details), truck routes, and crash impacts. This effort would result in fostering more the efficient movement of goods.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

The project is evaluated to determine if it exists in an area identified as a freight bottleneck area or, for a standalone intersection improvement project, within a 1-mile radius. If it is not located in any freight bottleneck area, then it will not receive any value.

SOCIAL AND HEALTH LINKAGES (10%) - THE EFFECT OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ON EXISTING POPULATION AND COMMUNITY.

This criterion assesses the project's community impacts as it relates to existing communities and population centers.

Emphasis Areas (5.0%)

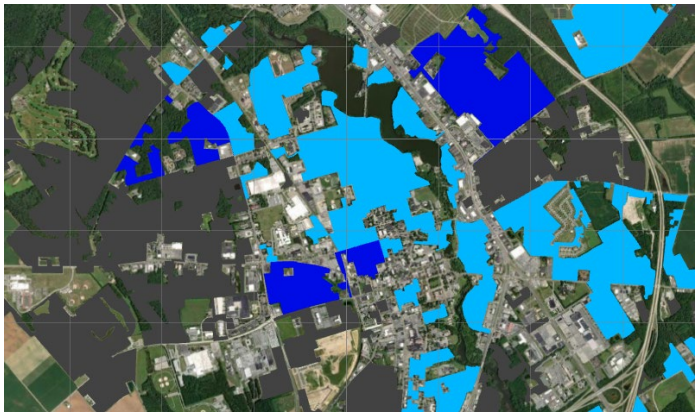
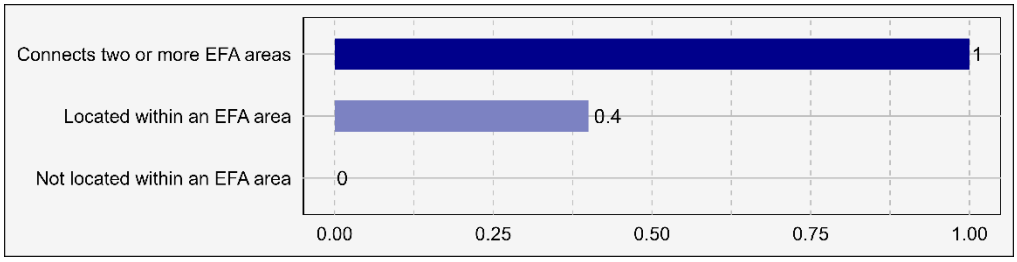


Figure 4

The Delaware Equity Analysis Tool is used to ensure that capital resources are equitability distributed to marginalized, underserved, and disadvantaged communities and the benefits of these resources are also experienced there too. This analysis allows DelDOT to better understand the make-up of our communities to better serve and connect to the people across Delaware. Figure 5 depicts the Equity Focus Areas (EFA) identified as either moderate (light blue) or significant (darker blue), from the equity analysis tool. The EFA will be updated on a regular basis and serve as the Emphasis Areas. More information on the tool and its applications can be found at: https://resiliency-deldot.hub.arcgis.com/pages/equity-in-transportation

Component Criterion Value Calculation

If the project within or adjacent to two emphasis areas, then it will receive a full 5% (with 1 point). If the project is located within or adjacent to one of the emphasis areas then it will receive 2% (with 0.4 point). If a project is not within or adjacent to any emphasis areas, then it will receive 0% (0 points).



Social and Health Related Elements (5.0%)

This criterion is based on areas where low income and/or minority populations are concentrated. The percentages of low income and/or minority populations is a proxy value to account for social determinants of health. A percentile is calculated for each census block using American Community Survey data estimates from the EPA's EJScreen tool (50th percentile represents the state average).

Figure 5 shows the map application of the Delaware percentile of low-income population Census tract dataset where darker color represents a higher percentile.



Figure 5

Component Criterion Value Calculation

1 point: project is located where the percentile of low income/minority population is above 90.

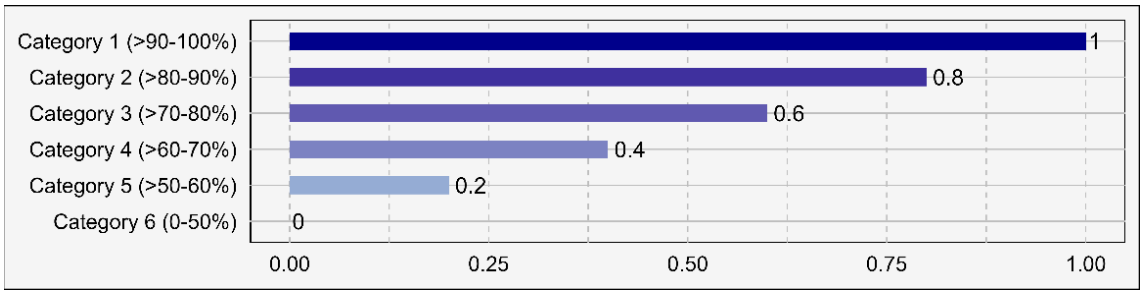
0.8 point: project is located where the percentile of low income/minority population is between 80 and 90.

0.6 point: project is located where the percentile of low income/minority population is between 70 and 80.

0.4 point: project is located where the percentile of low income/minority population is between 60 and 70.

0.2 point: project is located where the percentile of low income/minority population is between 50 and 60.

0 point: project is located where percentile of the low income/minority population is below 50.



ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCY & STEWARDSHIP (10%) - THE EFFECT OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ON ENERGY USE AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

This criterion is used to assess the extent to which the Project mitigates the threat or damage to the environment especially flood risk.

Frequently Flooded Roadway Risk (10%)

Roadway flooding as a result of coastal flooding inundation and/or storm surge is the biggest threat to our transportation infrastructure. Based on numerous weighted datasets related to Delaware's transportation network, such as evacuation routes, social and community facilities, and roadway flooding, the Division of Transportation Resilience and Sustainability has identified and prioritized over 250 miles of frequently flooded roadway segments statewide. Figure 6 shows the map application of the frequently flooded roadways dataset, which represents the priority segments.



Figure 6

Component Criterion Value Calculation

1 point: project is located where the extremely high Flood Risk Assessment value is 10% or less.

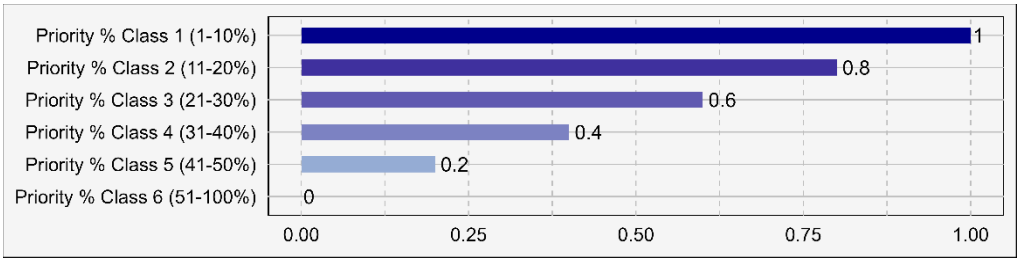
0.8 point: project is located where very high Flood Risk Assessment value is between 11% and 20%.

0.6 point: project is located where high Flood Risk Assessment value is between 21% and 30%.

0.4 point: project is located where very above moderate Flood Risk Assessment value is between 31% and 40%.

0.2 point: project is located where moderate Flood Risk Assessment value is between 41% and 50%.

0 point: project is located where moderate Flood Risk Assessment value is between 50%.and above.


Priority % Class 1 (1-10%)
Priority % Class 2 (11-20%)
Priority % Class 3 (21-30%)
Priority % Class 4 (31-40%)
Priority % Class 5 (41-50%)
Priority % Class 6 (51-100%)
1
0.8
0.6
0.4
0.2
0
0.00
0.25
0.50
0.75
1.00

STATE AND LOCAL PRIORITY (5%) – THE ABILITY OF A PROJECT TO MEET STATE AND LOCAL NEEDS.

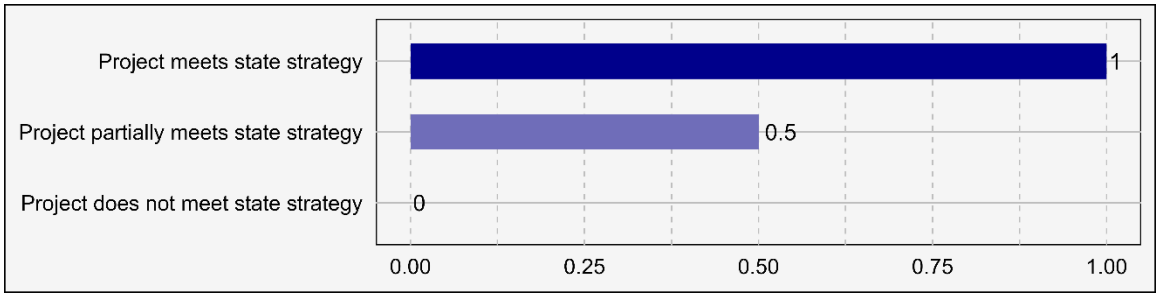
This criterion will assess the extent to which a project contributes towards statewide/regional growth management and the project is identified through an existing MPOs and Sussex County project prioritization program.

Delaware Strategies for State Policies and Spending (3%)

This criterion supports the active development that has been approved by the local land use agencies. Projects are identified that will support the development patterns identified in the Delaware Strategies for State Policies and Spending.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

The project is evaluated to determine if it addresses criteria identified in the Delaware Strategies for State Policies and Spending program. If the project meets more than half of the 2020 or the latest Delaware State Strategies needs based on the level it is located (Levels 1, 2, or 3) then it receives a full value of 1 (3%). The project located (Levels 1, 2, or 3) scores a 0.5 (1.5 %) if it meets some but less than half of the 2020 State Strategies needs. The State Strategies is updated every five years. The project receives a 0 score if the project is in Levels 4 or 5 ('out of play').

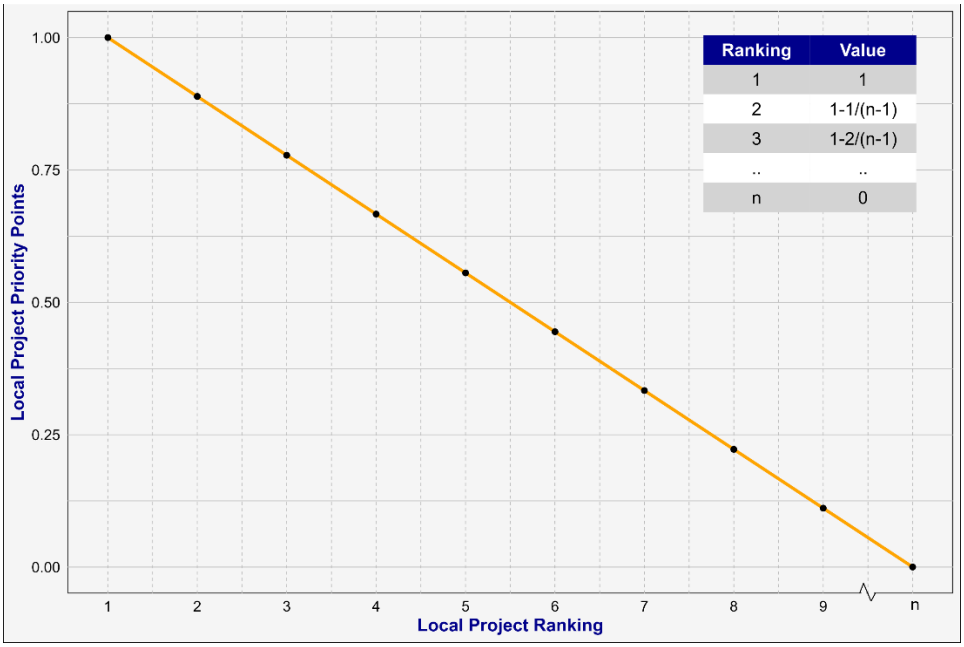


Local Priority (2.0%)

This criterion supports project that have been identified as a priority by the MPOs and Sussex County.

Component Criterion Value Calculation

The projects identified by the Delaware MPOs and Sussex County for the program year will receive their 0-1 value based on each MPO and Sussex County ranking. Actual scores will depend on total number of projects ranked, with the top rank project will receive the highest score of 1 while the bottom ranked project receiving the lowest score of 0. Since each MPO and Sussex County will rank their respective projects independently, it is possible to have one project from each county receive a score of 1.


1.00
0.75
0.50
0.25
0.00
Local Project Priority Points
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
n
Local Project Ranking
Ranking
Value
1
1
2
1-1/(n-1)
3
1-2/(n-1)
..
..
n
0