

4 | Project Prioritization Method

4.1 OVERVIEW

The Project Prioritization Methodology (PPM) is intended to assist local entities and the MPO Technical and Policy Committees in aligning proposed projects with the established vision, mission and goals. Projects which are proposed to be included in the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will be evaluated and ranked based on data, studies and qualitative factors consistent with regional priorities and federal areas of emphasis.

The PPM is a new tool developed as part of the 2040 MTP Update at the recommendation of FHWA following its review of the MPO's decision-making processes. Project prioritization methodologies, and similar tools, are widely used in regional transportation and many other settings. These tools may differ in their complexity and their use of quantitative and qualitative evaluation, including cost-benefit analyses and numeric thresholds for measured standards. The PPM is intended to be refined and recalibrated over time through its use and re-evaluation. In particular, as the data collection of the MPO grows, more numeric comparisons can be employed. The PPM is intended to help formalize the review of projects, further align project selection with established goals, allow for flexibility in comparisons, and enhance the transparency of the decision-making process.



4.2 PROCESS

As the PPM will be used to develop the MPO's TIP, a call for projects will be issued and local entities will provide specific information to show how projects meet regional and national goals. Then, a committee will be formed for the purpose of reviewing and scoring the projects. The committee will include a member of the MPO Policy Committee, a member of the MPO Technical Committee, and two planners from the MPO. This preliminary review will produce a ranked list of projects.

The initial scores and findings will be reviewed with the MPO Technical Committee in a public meeting and Technical Committee members may make modifications to the scoring, findings and project ranking. Their work will be forwarded as a recommendation to the MPO Policy Committee, which will further review the project ranking and vote to establish the TIP.

4.3 MATCHING GOALS with CRITERIA

The MPO's regional goals blended with the planning factors set forth in MAP-21 yielded ten criteria, or Scoring Factors, to serve as the basis for the PPM. In this way, new projects will be proposed, funded, and constructed, with their impacts measured for consistency with the goals and objectives. Two other Scoring Factors emphasize the value of community planning and commitment to the project by including the project in the local entities Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan, and other local plan documents (e.g. transportation plan, comprehensive plan, economic development plan). Where scorers find that a project especially demonstrates fulfillment of a goal, Key Findings may be made and additional points earned. These Scoring Factors are found in the Scoring Matrix in Table 4-1 below. Table 4-2 shows the relationship of regional goals and national planning factors.

4.4 SCORING and KEY FINDINGS

Using the Scoring Matrix in Table 4-1, projects can earn points in three ways as follows:

Projects will be scored based on the regional and national goals and will earn a score of 0 points to 3 points based on how well a project meets the criteria, and whether that is demonstrated by data and local plans. There are ten such Scoring Factors. Guidance for earning 0 to 3 points is as follows:

- 3 points: The project demonstrates a thorough understanding of how this factor applies and provides clear and compelling documentation on how the project meets the factor.
- 2 points: The project demonstrates a basic understanding of this factor, and provides minimal documentation on how the project meets the factor.
- 1 point: The application demonstrates very little understanding of this factor, and does not provide any documentation on how the project meets the factor.
- 0 points: Does not meet the factor.

Projects will also be scored based on whether the project is included in a local entity planning document and the ICIP:

- 3 points: The project is in the local Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan.
- 0 points: The project is not in the local Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan.

- 3 points: The project is identified in an adopted local plan document.
- 0 points: The project is not identified in an adopted local plan document.

Where a project especially fulfills a goal, Key Findings can be made and one additional point may be earned:

- 1 point for each Key Finding demonstrating that the project especially fulfills a goal.

Table 4-1, Scoring Matrix

Scoring Factors (based on Regional and National goals)	Possible Points on Goals	Points Earned on Goals	Key Findings (+1 point per Key Finding in support of Scoring Factor)	Total Points
1. Support economic vitality	3	[0, 1, 2, or 3]	(Key Finding statement) [+1]	
2. Reflect regional coordination and stakeholder involvement	3			
3. Enhance connectivity for complete networks and intermodal connections	3			
4. Manage congestion and incorporate technology to promote system efficiency for all modes	3			
5. Increase accessibility and mobility for all users regardless of age, income or ability	3			
6. Enhance quality of life and preserve cultural and environmental resources	3			
7. Preserve the transportation system in a financially-sustainable, cost-efficient manner	3			
8. Consider the impacts of transportation on land use	3			
9. Increase the safety and security of the transportation system	3			
10. Promote improved public health	3			
ICIP. Inclusion in local Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan	3	[0 or 3]		
PLAN. Identified in local plan document	3			
Totals	36			

The scoring matrix is meant to require study of the many elements of a project, and to sort out the highest quality projects. However, prioritizing projects solely based on this scoring matrix may unduly emphasize the quality of the application and the capacity of the sponsoring entity. Therefore, in addition to a total score, Key Findings may also be made for each Scoring Factor. These may include the timing and severity of the issues a project addresses and should help support a score. These findings earned additional points during initial scoring, and should be considered when a final ranking of projects is completed. They are intended to build flexibility and transparency into the evaluation process.

The MPO does not award funds, and a project's overall score does not indicate that funding will be received. Rather, the PPM process will: (1) assist local entities in regional collaboration to identify high priority projects; (2) align projects with national goals which are used during funding decisions in statewide competitive processes; and (3) emphasize the use of data collection and performance-based programming as required by MAP-21.

Table 4-2, Relationship of FMPO Goals with MAP-21 National Planning Factors

The resulting "Blended Goals and Planning Factors" are the Scoring Factors used in the FMPO's Project Prioritization Methodology

FMPO Goals	MAP-21 National Planning Factors	Blended Goals and Planning Factors
A. Support the economic vitality of the MPO region by investing strategically in projects and programs which create long-term, financially-sustainable economic value	A. Support the economic vitality of the United States, the States, nonmetropolitan areas, and metropolitan areas, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency	1. Support economic vitality
B. Foster regional coordination on transportation projects and policies among all levels of government and stakeholder groups M. Foster public private partnerships aimed at reaching regional transportation goals		2. Reflect regional coordination and stakeholder involvement
C. Develop transportation network connections and associated facilities into a cohesive intermodal system	F. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes throughout the State, for people and freight	3. Enhance connectivity for complete networks and intermodal connections
D. Manage congestion by prioritizing projects that enhance the Quality of Service (QOS) of capacity-efficient modes like carpooling, transit, biking, and walking and reduce overall person delay H. Identify and implement new technology for balanced multi-modal transportation	G. Promote efficient system management and operation	4. Manage congestion and incorporate technology to promote system efficiency for all modes
E. Provide reasonable access and prevent negative impacts of the transportation system for all of the region's residents, regardless of age, income, ability or location	D. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and freight	5. Increase accessibility and mobility for all users regardless of age, income or ability
F. Minimize negative environmental impacts and enhance the environmental quality of the MPO region I. Develop a transportation system that enhances quality of life and works in concert with cultural and environmental resources.		6. Enhance quality of life and preserve cultural and environmental resources
G. Build, operate and maintain the metropolitan transportation system in a financially-sustainable, cost-efficient manner	H. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system	7. Preserve the transportation system in a financially-sustainable, cost-efficient manner
J. Integrate transportation and land use planning to improve quality of life and to protect the natural environment by using transportation investments to proactively shape land use patterns rather than react to growth	E. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns	8. Consider the impacts of transportation on land use
K. Ensure safety for all modes L. Coordinate with local agencies on security planning and strategies	B. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users C. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users	9. Increase the safety and security of the transportation system
N. Provide a transportation system which promotes healthy living		10. Promote improved public health

4.5 PRIORITIZED PROJECTS

The new PPM was used to develop the MPO’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the years 2016 to 2021. The TIP contains the list of projects which have funding and are planned to be built in the near term. Following the process described above, the PPM helped rank and prioritize roadway projects, Table 4-3, and bicycle and pedestrian projects, Table 4-4, within the MPO. These same projects are identified in further detail in Chapter 4, Roadway Plan, and Chapter 9, Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan. Further description of the TIP and funding for the projects is found in Chapter 13, Financial Plan. To date, the PPM has only been employed to rank projects included in the development of the new 2016-2021 TIP. Projects previously included in the 2014-2019 TIP were not all ranked. The MPO will work with local entities and NMDOT to complete the scoring and ranking of projects within the MPO.

Table 4-3, Ranked Roadway Projects in 2016-2021 TIP

Rank among Roadway Projects in 2016-21 TIP Call	Project Name	Lead Agency	Estimated Project Cost
1	East Pinon Hills Blvd Extension Phase II	Farmington	\$13,265,454
2	Pinon Hills Bridge Connection (CR 3900/ PHB Phase 3)	San Juan County	\$8,000,000
3	East Blanco	Bloomfield	\$2,000,000
4	Bridge Improvement CR 5500	San Juan County	\$3,600,000

Table 4-4, Ranked Bicycle/ Pedestrian Projects in 2016- 2021 TIP

Rank among Bike/Ped Projects in 2016-21 TIP Call	Project Name	Lead Agency	Estimated Project Cost
1	Aztec Ruins-Riverside Path	Aztec	\$293,460
2	Foothills from Rinconada to Mesa del Oso	Farmington	\$1,100,000
3	Riverside-Townsend Trail	Aztec	\$321,000
4	Kirtland Walk Path	San Juan County	\$1,000,000
5	20th Steet Sidewalk Project Phase 3	Farmington	\$340,590
6	Orchard Street Pedestrian Corridor	Farmington	\$2,200,000
7	Anesi Trail	Farmington	\$338,132
8	College Blvd Bike Lanes	Farmington	\$190,000
9	Lake Farmington	Farmington	\$384,000
10	Wildflower Mesa Sidewalk	Farmington	\$165,000