

Capitol Region Council of Governments

STP-Urban Program

Project Selection Policy

The project selection policy is used by the CRCOG Transportation Committee to guide the project selection process for the STP-Urban Program. The policy guidelines are used to select projects from the proposals submitted by CRCOG's member towns and regional transportation agencies such as the Greater Hartford Transit District.

- I. Project Selection & Funding Process
- II. Project Rating Criteria

Adopted by the CRCOG Transportation Committee on September 25, 2006

Project Selection & Funding

1. Total Program Award (\$20,000,000 TOTAL, \$16,000,000 FEDERAL)

CRCOG will approve up to \$20,000,000 (\$16,000,000 federal) in projects. This includes the anticipated funds in the STP-Urban program for FFY 2010 and FFY 2011. With a three to four-year lead time to select and design projects, it is necessary to initiate the project selection process now in order to be ready for construction in FFY 2010 and FFY 2011.

2. Eligible Projects

Any project eligible under the SAFETEA-LU provisions for the STP Urban program may be submitted.

3. Target Projects: Traditional Roadway Projects

CRCOG is primarily seeking to fund traditional roadway improvement projects that will substantially improve the physical condition of our roads and bridges (including major culverts) or correct existing traffic problems related to congestion, safety (accidents), and geometry.

4. Consideration of Nontraditional Projects

The Committee will consider funding proposals for nontraditional projects. However, since the proposed project rating system might not be well suited to rating nontraditional projects, CRCOG staff will evaluate each nontraditional project on an individual basis.

Examples of nontraditional projects are: transit capital improvements; planning studies; technology transfer projects; research projects; fringe and corridor parking; carpool projects; management systems; and wetland mitigation and banking.

Up to \$1,000,000 will be reserved for nontraditional projects. Nontraditional awards will not count against a town's award limit. Special consideration will be given to those that have air quality benefits and those that advance environmental justice goals.

5. Project Cost Limits (\$100,000 to \$2,500,000)

CRCOG will fund projects that cost between \$100,000 and \$2,500,000. For projects smaller than \$100,000 the administrative costs associated with a federal program can be prohibitive (studies are an exception to this). Extremely large projects will take a disproportionate share of program funds. Therefore, projects greater than \$2,500,000 (\$2,000,000 federal share) will be not be approved. The City of Hartford is provided an exception to this under article 11 on the following page

6. Town Liability for Cost Increases

A town will be held liable for any increase in the cost of its project beyond five (5) percent. The determination of liability will be made after a project approved by CRCOG is submitted to ConnDOT's Project Development Unit for a scope and cost review. The new cost estimate prepared by ConnDOT will be compared to the cost estimate submitted by the town and given preliminary approval by CRCOG.¹ If the ConnDOT cost estimate exceeds the CRCOG approved cost by more than five percent, the town will be required to either pay the entire amount of the increase in excess of the five percent or request a review by the Cost Review Subcommittee.

¹ CRCOG staff conducts its own cost review to assure all relevant cost factors such as contingencies and incidentals have been applied. If these are missing, CRCOG staff add these to the cost estimate prior to Transportation Committee approval of projects. However, unlike ConnDOT staff, CRCOG staff do not conduct a full scope review to determine if the project has addressed all relevant design issues such as sight line restrictions, design speed, drainage, and structural deficiencies.

7. Funds Reserved for Pavement Rehabilitation and Stand-Alone Sidewalk Projects: (\$3,000,000)

A maximum amount of \$3,000,000 (\$2,400,000 federal) shall be reserved for pavement rehabilitation and stand-alone sidewalk projects. Under no circumstances shall the total amount awarded to pavement rehabilitation projects exceed \$3,000,000. This maximum amount is consistent with the State limit of no more than 15 percent of total program funds for pavement rehabilitation. There is no minimum amount reserved for pavement rehabilitation projects.

NOTE: Per State policy for pavement rehabilitation, towns that are awarded a pavement rehabilitation project will be reimbursed only for work done "within the curb lines." Curbs themselves are not eligible, neither are items outside the curbs such as lighting. Even items such as drainage are not reimbursable. This is strictly for pavement rehabilitation, and only pavement rehabilitation. Stand-alone sidewalk projects must be constructed on STP eligible roadways and provide a safety benefit to the community. Per DOT, the replacement of existing sidewalks due to their age and condition will not be eligible nor will enhancement elements such as park benches or ornamental lighting. ConnDOT's guidelines for pavement rehabilitation and stand-alone sidewalk projects can be found later in this document.

8. Stand-Alone Sidewalk Project Cost Limit: (\$750,000)

The funding limit for any single stand-alone sidewalk project is \$750,000 (\$600,000 federal). No community shall receive more than one pavement rehabilitation / sidewalk project. CRCOG supports improvements that expand walking and bicycling within the region however caution towns that sidewalk projects may not be cost effective to fund within this program. Sidewalk projects will likely include right-of-way and easements for grading, which should not be overlooked.

9. Pavement Rehabilitation Cost Limit: for Individual Project or Town (\$750,000)

The funding limit for any single pavement rehabilitation project is \$750,000 (\$600,000 federal). No community shall receive more than one pavement rehabilitation / sidewalk project.

10. Town Funding Limit (\$2,500,000)

No town will be awarded more than \$2,500,000 (\$2,000,000 federal) in projects.

11. City of Hartford Funding Limit (\$3,500,000)

The funding limit for the City of Hartford is set at \$3,500,000 (\$2,800,000 federal). The City is eligible for up to this amount, but shall not receive more than this amount, and is required to compete with all other proposals

12. Eligible Applicants

Applications will be accepted from eligible CRCOG towns and designated regional transportation agencies. The designated agencies are: CRCOG, Greater Hartford Transit District, and The Rideshare Company. Requests from any other organization must be made through a member town or designated agency.

13. Eligibility of State Highways

Projects on State highways will be considered eligible projects if they are proposed by member towns or designated agencies.

14. Project Rating & Approval Process

- Step 1: **Staff Rates Projects.** All proposals shall be rated by CRCOG staff using the approved rating criteria.
- Step 2: **Staff Prepares Primary & Secondary Lists.** The staff will rank all projects in order of highest rated to lowest rated. Based on the project rankings, CRCOG staff will prepare a primary list of projects that consists of:
- (1) projects that can be funded within the total funding award limit, and
 - (2) projects that fall within all other selection guidelines such as the town funding limit.
- Staff will also prepare a secondary list of projects that consists of all those not included in the primary list.
- Step 3: **Subcommittee Reviews Project Ratings.** The STP Subcommittee will review all the project ratings done by staff. They will also review which projects were included on the primary list. The Subcommittee may make revisions as warranted.
- Step 4: **Approval by the Transportation Committee.** The primary list shall be submitted to the full Transportation Committee for its consideration and approval.
- Step 5: **Review of Alternate Funding Opportunities.** CRCOG staff will present the secondary list to ConnDOT to identify projects on the list that might be funded through other federal or state programs.

15. Project Rating Criteria

The project rating system is described in the attached "Project Rating Criteria ". CRCOG staff shall rate each project on each of the criteria listed. Staff ratings will be reviewed by the STP subcommittee.

Most of the criteria require some subjective judgments about the potential benefits of the project. The subjective nature of the rating system is due to the need to apply the rating system to a broad range of project types. To assure consistency in the rating process, CRCOG staff shall follow the guidelines specified in the attached "Project Rating Criteria".

16. Future Award Policies

Any future award policies and award decisions will be made completely independent of this award policy and associated funding decisions. Projects that fail to win funding approval in the first solicitation will not receive any preferential status in future solicitations. Towns that receive awards in the initial solicitation shall not be penalized in future solicitations.

17. Cost Containment Policy

CRCOG's cost containment policy will remain in effect.

18. Project Time Limits

All approved projects are expected to make reasonable progress toward initiation and design completion. If a project schedule slips due to reasons outside of securing permits or DOT/DEP review, municipalities will be put on notice. CRCOG staff will bring schedule issues to the Cost Review Subcommittee for their review and action. A '3-strikes' approach will be taken whereas a letter will be sent to the Chief Elected Official putting the municipalities on notice. After 3 notices, if the Subcommittee is not satisfied with the progress, it shall recommend project termination to the Transportation Committee.

The suggested deadlines are based on the assumption that project designs should be substantially complete within three to four years from CRCOG's approval of STP project list.

Suggested deadlines:²

- a. Approved project scope & cost estimate: 6 – 12 months
 - ConnDOT scope review & preparation of cost estimate based on the defined scope.
- b. Final design approval: 36 months

19. Project Submissions

Municipalities can submit no more than three (3) proposals under the traditional category (inclusive of pavement rehabilitation and stand-alone sidewalk proposals). For the nontraditional category, municipalities shall submit no more than 1 proposal.

² The ability to meet deadlines is dependent in part on the time it takes ConnDOT to review the initial proposal and/or subsequent design submittals. Failure to meet a deadline due to unusually long review times by ConnDOT or other State or federal agencies shall not be reason for project termination.

Project Rating Criteria

Each traditional project is rated using the criteria listed below. The number of maximum possible points assigned to the criteria reflects the relative importance of the criteria.

Points are awarded on the basis of how well the project meets the criteria. For example, a project that provides a major traffic flow and safety improvement will be awarded the maximum 15 points for the traffic improvement criterion. A project with no traffic flow or safety improvement will be given a score of zero on the traffic improvement criterion.

Rating Criteria (Traditional Project):

1. Structural Improvement	15 points maximum
2. Traffic Improvement	15 points maximum
3. Traffic Volume	15 points maximum
4. Regional Significance	15 points maximum
5. Other Benefits	6 points maximum
6. Municipal Road	10 points maximum
7. Traffic Calming; Transit, Ped or Bicycle Supportive	12 points maximum
8. Derived From Corridor Study	4 points maximum
9. Environmental Justice	8 points maximum
TOTAL Possible Points	100 points maximum

1. Structural Improvement: Pavement, Drainage, Bridge/Culvert (15 points)

The structural improvement rating provides an indication of the extent to which the project will help correct or reduce a structural problem with a road, a bridge, or a culvert. A town must provide documentation of: (1) the existing structural problems, and (2) how the proposed project will correct the problem. The town should provide any available deficiency ratings such as the town's own pavement condition inventory or the State's ratings on local bridges. Photographs would also be helpful. The town should also describe how the project will address each of the deficiencies it identifies.

CRCOG staff will review the documentation on each project. They will then rate each project based on their professional judgment, the general criteria listed below, and the town's documentation.

General criteria: (indicate existing conditions & conditions after improvement)

Roadway Pavement:	pavement condition rating (e.g., good, fair, poor)
Roadway Drainage System:	adequacy of subsurface drainage system (water in base?) adequacy of surface drainage system (icing or ponding?)
Bridges & Culverts:	bridge condition rating (super structure, deck) hydraulic capacity (adequate for 25, 50, or 100 year flood?)

When assigning a project rating, staff will consider the range of existing problems (pavement, drainage, and culvert/bridge), the severity of the problems, and the degree to which the problem will be reduced.

2. Traffic Improvement: Flow, Safety, & Geometrics (15 points)

The traffic improvement criterion provides an indication of whether or not the proposed project will help improve traffic flow, traffic safety, or roadway geometrics. The applicant must provide documentation of: (1) the nature and severity of the existing problems, and (2) how the problems will be corrected by the proposed project. CRCOG staff will review the documentation and determine whether the improvement qualifies as major, moderate, minor, or none.

Points to address in documentation:

	Existing Problem	Proposed Improvement	Appropriate Criteria
Traffic Flow	Is there an existing congestion problem? What is the severity of the problem?	Will the proposal reduce the congestion problem? To what degree will it reduce it?	Level-of-service (LOS) before & after the proposal is implemented. Highway Capacity Manual procedures recommended but not required.
Traffic Safety	How many accidents occurred in the last 3 years ? Provide accident records, summary of accident types, <u>or</u> collision diagrams.	How many of those accidents would the proposed project have eliminated (3 years)?	Expected accident reduction over a 3-year period.
Roadway Geometry	Are there any geometric deficiencies on the road? Examples: excessive grade, substandard width, excessive horizontal curvature, poor sight line, improper super elevation. Describe the problems & their severity.	Will the proposed project correct the problem and to what degree?	Indicate degree of improvement in appropriate measure such as: expected improvement in sight distance, or increase in design speed from 25 to 35 mph.

3. Traffic Volume or Transit Ridership (15 points)

This criterion provides a general indication of the number of people who benefit from the proposed project. Measurement method is dependent on the type of project proposed. For roadway improvement projects, the applicant must supply data on either the annual average daily traffic (AADT) or the peak hour volume of traffic (PHV). For transit projects, the applicant must supply data on the number of transit riders who will benefit from the project. For projects other than road or transit improvements, the applicant must provide some other estimate of the number of people who will benefit and give an explanation of how the estimate was prepared. Submit documentation on one of the following:

1. ADT,
2. PHV,
3. Transit Riders

When using ADT, the score is calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{Score} = \text{ADT}/12,000 \times 15$$

where ADT = Average Daily Traffic, and the maximum ADT that will be considered is 12,000.

4. Regional Significance (15 points)

Regional significance provides an indication of how widespread or localized the *transportation* benefits of the project are. The applicant must describe the area of impact of the project. For example, does the project benefit only a very small area, an entire town, multiple towns, or most of the region? A proposal can also receive rating points if it helps improve access to regional **public** facilities such as hospitals, colleges, and airports; on an evacuation route; or to an emergency shelter.

The applicant should provide documentation on (1) the size of the area that benefits from the proposed project, and (2) information on any regional **public** facilities that benefit from the proposed project. The documentation should demonstrate how the area or regional facilities benefit.

CRCOG staff will review the documentation and determine whether the project qualifies as regional, subregional, townwide, or localized.

5. Other Benefits (6 points)

Proposals can receive up to six extra points if the proposed project has any of the benefits listed below.

Environmental & Historic Preservation (maximum 3 points)

If the project will have a positive environmental impact, or will serve to advance recognized historic preservation goals of the community, the project is eligible for additional points. When considering environmental benefits, CRCOG staff will consider a wide range of potential environmental improvements such as air quality, water quality & flow, wetlands mitigation, open space improvements, etc.

Economic Development (maximum 3 points)

Projects that help the economic development goals of the community will receive additional points.

6. Municipally Owned Arterial or Collector Road (10 points)

A proposal will be awarded 10 extra points if the project is located on an arterial or collector road that is owned by the municipality (as versus State ownership).

7. Traffic Calming; Transit, Pedestrian or Bicycle Supportive (12 points)

Proposals can receive up to 12 extra points if the proposed project has any of the benefits listed below.

 Traffic Calming (maximum 3 points)

If the project will have a positive effect on reducing vehicular travel speeds, altering driver behavior and/or reducing the negative effects of automobile use, the project is eligible for additional points. When considering traffic calming benefits, CRCOG staff will evaluate a wide range of potential traffic calming improvements such as speed humps, reduced lane width, streetscaping elements, or other measures appropriate to the type of street. Proposals should indicate the severity of the existing problem and the degree to which the proposed improvements will reduce the problem.

 Transit Supportive (maximum 3 points)

If a proposal benefits the region's transit system or transit users it can receive up to an extra three points. Proposals should indicate if bus shelters are being proposed or if sidewalks to bus stops are being improved or installed.

 Pedestrian Supportive (maximum 3 points)

Proposals that improve pedestrian mobility and/or safety will receive up to three additional points. Proposals should indicate pedestrian measures that are being proposed such as new sidewalks, crosswalks, or pedestrian traffic signal equipment and how the measures will improve pedestrian safety.

 Bicycle Supportive (maximum 3 points)

If the project helps to improve the mobility and safety of bicyclists, or helps achieve the goals of the Regional Bicycle Plan, it can receive up to an extra three points. Proposals should indicate how bicycle provisions (ie. pavement striping to provide exclusive bicycle lane) will advance the vision of safety, convenience and improved linkages.

8. Derived From Corridor Study (4 points)

A proposal will be awarded up to four extra points if the project is the result of a recommendation from a corridor study initiated through CRCOG.

9. Environmental Justice (8 points)

A proposal will be awarded up to eight extra points if the proposed project benefits low income and/or minority neighborhoods. A map of the environmental justice target areas is attached to this document.

It is up to each applicant to provide a description and explanation of how they meet any of these criteria. CRCOG staff will review each application and determine the number of points warranted for the benefits described by the applicant.

Rating Criteria (Nontraditional; Pavement Rehabilitation / Stand-Alone Sidewalk Project):

Since the proposed project rating system might not be well suited to rating nontraditional, pavement rehabilitation and stand-alone sidewalk projects, CRCOG staff will subjectively evaluate each project.

Nontraditional projects will be evaluated on an individual basis. Projects that demonstrate air quality benefits and environmental justice goal advancement will be given special consideration.

Pavement rehabilitation projects will be evaluated, but not limited, to the following criteria: the existing roadway issues and deficiency rating, drainage issues (ponding), average annual daily traffic (AADT) / peak hour volume of traffic (PHV), how widespread or localized the benefits of the project are.

Stand-alone sidewalk projects will be evaluated, but not limited, to the following criteria: the pedestrian user (i.e. elementary school children, handicap individuals, teenagers), whether or not the sidewalk fills a gap or connects pedestrian destinations, right-of-way impacts, safety benefit to the community.

Connecticut Department of Transportation
STP-Urban Pavement Rehabilitation/Sidewalk Guidelines

General Principles

The STP-Urban program is not a town-aid or sub-allocation program. It is a program intended to address regional priorities. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) should select proposed projects based on the merit of the project. The proposed projects should have the highest regional priority, not simply local priority, and shall address issues and deficiencies identified in the region's long range transportation plan.

Use of STP-Urban Funds for Pavement Rehabilitation

Under certain circumstances, pavement rehabilitation projects will be considered for funding through the STP-Urban program. However, this can only occur if certain guidelines are followed by the MPO and the outlined criteria are met.

Pavement Rehabilitation Criteria

General

Pavement rehabilitation is considered a roadway improvement that is distinctly different from pavement resurfacing. Resurfacing typically involves installation of a new wearing surface of 1-2 inches (25-50 mm) with minimal pretreatment of the existing surface. Pavement rehabilitation requires more extensive pretreatment, evaluation of the existing pavement structure and a designed overlay.

Criteria

In order for a project to be considered under these guideline, it must address the following requirements:

- **Geometric and Safety Improvements**

No rehabilitation project will be approved unless it is demonstrated that the existing geometric and safety conditions meet the minimum standards specified in the applicable American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards. If the project does not meet the minimum standards, the sponsor shall request the appropriate waivers from The Connecticut Department of Transportation (Department). Waiver requests will be reviewed by the Department and approved on a case by case basis. Waivers are not automatic.

- **Pavement Structure**

Site specific evaluations will determine if a designed overlay with pretreatment of the existing pavement structure, or total replacement of the pavement structure, including subbase, is warranted. The designed pavement structure must meet the minimum life expectancy of 15 years.

To qualify as rehabilitation, a project shall result in substantial structural improvement. The current AASHTO Guide for Design of Pavement Structures will be used to determine the new pavement depth.

- **Drainage**

The adequacy of the existing drainage system shall be demonstrated.

Restrictions on Pavement Rehabilitation

No Reimbursement for Design Costs

Municipalities will not be reimbursed for the cost of designing pavement rehabilitation projects.

No State Match

For pavement rehabilitation projects, municipalities will be required to provide the full non federal share (20 percent) of the cost of right-of-way and construction. No state match will be provided for pavement rehabilitation projects.

15 Year Life Expectancy

The pavement rehabilitation project shall have a 15-year design life expectancy. The pavement design will be reviewed by the Department's Pavement Management Unit.

15 Percent Cap

The MPO will be allowed to allocate a maximum of 15 percent of its annual STP-Urban funds to pavement rehabilitation projects. No carryover from the previous year will be allowed in this computation. This cap is not intended to be a set-aside for pavement rehabilitation projects. This cap applies to municipally owned qualifying roads. This will be monitored through the TIP process by each region. Proposed STP-Urban Place pavement rehabilitation projects will be reviewed by the Department's Project Concept Unit.

Scope Restriction

Projects accepted as pavement rehabilitation projects should be limited to pavement improvement work between curb lines to assure the most effective use of funds. Improvements outside the curb lines, such as sidewalk replacement and curb replacement, are expensive and should not be considered part of a pavement rehabilitation project. Exceptions, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and other safety issues will be considered.

Eligible Roadways

Pavement rehabilitation projects using STP-Urban funds will be primarily restricted to arterial roadways, although the need for some flexibility to accommodate certain collector roads is recognized and will be addressed on a case-by-case basis by the region and the Department.

Town Responsibilities

The town will be responsible for providing inspection and record keeping, as further stipulated in Section IV of the December 6, 1994 "Guidelines and Procedures to Municipalities for Project Development Under 1991 ISTEA STP-Urban Funds".

Use of STP-Urban Funds for Sidewalk Construction

Projects providing for the construction of new sidewalks will also be considered for funding through the STP-Urban program as stand-alone projects if they satisfy generally accepted AASHTO standards and warrants. The new sidewalk must be constructed on a STP eligible roadway and must provide a safety benefit to the community. It can be a new sidewalk where none has existed before or a new segment of walkway constructed to fill in the gaps in an existing sidewalk system. Park benches, ornamental lighting and other enhancement type elements of such projects will not be funded under this program. The design must comply with ADA and all other federal requirements for such projects, and the sidewalks should be constructed to meet AASHTO standards. Replacement of an existing sidewalk due to its age and condition is considered a maintenance activity and is not eligible for funding.

As in the case of pavement rehabilitation projects, there will be no reimbursement for the cost of designing sidewalk construction projects. The municipalities will be required to acquire and provide the full non-federal share (20 percent) of the cost of any right-of-way acquisition, as well as the 20 percent matching share for construction. The town will be responsible for providing inspection and record keeping for the project and the maintenance of the sidewalk will be the responsibility of the town. If the exclusive sidewalk project falls within the state right-of-way, the municipality will enter into an agreement with the state in perpetuity, clearly stating that the municipality is fully responsible for all liability, maintenance, and snow and ice removal related to the sidewalks.

The STP funds for sidewalk projects will fall under the 15 percent cap that is allowed for pavement rehabilitation projects. That is, an MPO may pursue a combination of new sidewalk and pavement rehabilitation projects for up to 15 percent of its annual funding allocation, but not 15 percent for each activity.