

**SAFETEA-LU TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS PROGRAM
INFORMATION ON PROPOSAL EVALUATION METHODOLOGY
FOR POTENTIAL CAPITAL DISTRICT SPONSORS AND APPLICANTS**

The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) is the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Albany-Schenectady-Troy metropolitan area. Among the functions of MPOs are the analysis and prioritization of proposals for use of federal transportation funds coming into their areas. The CDTC has a similar function in the Transportation Enhancements Program (TEP): CDTC will analyze TEP proposals from within the four counties it serves -- Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga (except the Town of Moreau) and Schenectady -- and identify a prioritized list of proposals to transmit to NYSDOT for consideration by the statewide Transportation Enhancements Advisory Committee (TEAC).

This document presents details on CDTC's evaluation criteria, which **differ somewhat from those presented in the NYSDOT *TEP Guidebook***. This methodology is similar to that successfully used for previous rounds of the Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP). This approach allows for:

- A “level playing field” between more localized and more regionally geared projects which makes it possible for a project to score well on most or all of the criteria without necessarily being a larger-scale, tourism-oriented proposal.
- Cost-effectiveness to be considered in the evaluation process by grouping the projects by cost categories.

SAFETEA-LU Round 2 Evaluation Approach

The evaluation criteria will remain the same as in Round 1 including:

- The “Past Experience” criterion added in the last round of the TEP that considers past sponsors’ ability to implement a funded enhancement-type project in a timely manner will remain. This criterion will have two possible point values, zero and five.
- After projects are reviewed, they will be grouped by cost category to ensure consideration of cost-effectiveness in the evaluation. It is expected that this approach will provide for a more transparent process.

Evaluation Approach and Proposal Development

While the CDTC evaluations will be more rigorous than those based strictly on the *Guidebook*, **Applicants and sponsors will *not* be compelled to do any more work in preparing proposals than those using the *Guidebook* alone. However, potential applicants and sponsors would be well-advised to consider their concepts in the context of the CDTC point-scoring basis to get a sense of how to design their proposals so as to make them as competitive as possible.**

REMINDER

This evaluation methodology will be applied to proposals in **Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga (except the Town of Moreau) and Schenectady Counties**. If you are considering a proposal for a location within NYSDOT Region 1 but outside these four counties, your proposal will not be evaluated by CDTC -- **this document does not apply to you** -- and your proposal will be evaluated by either (depending on location) Region 1 and/or the Adirondack/Glens Falls Transportation Council.

Evaluation Criteria and Maximum Point Values

Following is the list of evaluation criteria as approved by the CDTC Planning Committee at its XXXX, 2008 meeting. Presented for each criterion is a basic definition, based on the TEP *Guidebook's* discussions. CDTC's evaluation will include a maximum point score for each of the criterion which is listed next to the descriptions. Some criteria are numbered with "1" or "2" suffixes, representing cases in which the CDTC staff felt that a criterion set forth in the *Guidebook* was more appropriately applied as two separate criteria.

Benefit Criterion Group

<u>Max. Points</u>	<u>Criterion/Description</u>
10	Transportation Benefit 1: Enhancement of Access/Patronage <i>The extent to which the project would provide for increased or improved access to activity centers (business, school, recreation, shopping, etc.). The focus should be on the enhanced mobility of persons or on significant improvement to the quality of the trip experience.</i>
10	Transportation Benefit 2: Enhancement of Transportation System <i>The extent to which the project would build, extend or connect local and regional transportation system, fill deficiencies in the system, has multi-modal aspects, and facilitates non-motorized and/or inter-modal travel. Additional consideration will be given to those projects that are located on CDTC's Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Network.</i>
15	Local Benefit and Community Enhancement <i>The extent to which the project identifies potential user groups, addresses direct user benefits and how the project increases the availability, awareness or protection of historic, community, visual or natural resources. Access should be considered in general terms as well as for those with disabilities. Projects are expected to be compliant with current ADA requirements. Additional consideration will be given to those projects located in designated Environmental Justice areas.</i>
10	Safety Benefits <i>The extent to which the project would enhance safety, particularly the safety of cyclists or pedestrians. Can also consider the benefit to all travelers attendant to remedying a known hazardous condition such as a poor line of sight or narrow roadway.</i>

- 10 **Enhancement of Regional & Local Environment 1 (Environmental Benefit)**
The extent to which the project would preserve or positively influence natural, cultural or historic resources, scenic quality, air or water quality, wildlife habitat or migration.
- Note that "environmental benefits" can be very localized in nature and still qualify, e.g., a trail project which includes cleaning up a debris-filled pond or waterfront area.*
- 10 **Enhancement of Regional & Local Environment 2 (Economic Benefit)**
The extent to which the project would improve the quality of life through job creation, increased tourism, economic development, balanced distribution of funds and other socio-economic factors. Should be considered in the context of what is possible in these areas for an Enhancements-level project.

Support Criterion Group

<u>Max. Points</u>	<u>Criterion/Description</u>
10	Relationship To/Support for Other Plans, Projects <i>The extent to which the project would implement recommendations in completed Linkage Plans or other regional, federal, state or local planning efforts.</i>
5	Size of Local Matching Share <i>A 20% minimum match is required, and the ability to provide a match in excess of 20% benefits the overall program as it allows federal funds to be used for additional enhancement projects. The CDTC approach employs a graduated scale, giving more points the further local matches go beyond 20%.</i>
5	Level of Community, Regional Support: Letters of Support, Resolutions, Endorsements <i>The inclusion of letter(s) of support from elected officials; endorsement actions from local governments (resolutions, etc.); letters of support/endorsement actions from interest groups (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, advocacy groups, neighborhood associations, etc.)</i>
5	Past Experience <i>The success in which sponsors of past enhancement-type projects were able to implement their projects in a timely manner.</i>
	<p><i>Note: This criterion will have only two possible point values, zero and five. Past project sponsors that were not successful in implementing their projects in a timely manner will receive a score of zero. Those that have been successful in implementing past enhancement-type projects or those that are new sponsors will receive a score of five.</i></p>

Innovation Criterion Group

<u>Max. Points</u>	<u>Criterion/Description</u>
5	Innovation/Creativity <i>The innovativeness of the project, its uniqueness to the area, or its potential to serve as a model for similar enhancement projects for some other reason.</i>
5	Mix of Activities <i>Whether the project encompasses two or more eligible transportation enhancement activities.</i>

Additional Information on the Evaluation Approach

Following are some other aspects of the evaluation approach which may be worth bearing in mind as you consider preparing a TEP proposal.

1. The evaluation team will present its findings and preliminary scores to the Planning Committee **by ranked score, Enhancements project category, and cost categories** (see the TEP Guidebook for descriptions of the 12 project categories), to facilitate Committee consideration of prioritized candidate lists reflecting a wider range of project types.
2. CDTC will not be providing individual letters of support, but rather will include in its transmittal letter to NYSDOT accompanying its prioritized list of TEP proposals statements of (a) its commitment to adding any proposals selected for TEP funding to its Transportation Improvement Program and (b) the consistencies of the submitted proposals with regional plans and policies.

For More Information

Wilson Moore, NYSDOT Region 1's TEP Coordinator, is the first point of contact on matters of project eligibility, program rules and other operational matters attendant to the TEP. He can be reached at 518-388-0433 or at WMoore@dot.state.ny.us.

The CDTC staff would be happy to discuss the evaluation approach being applied to CDTC-area proposals. The CDTC staff contact is Jason Purvis. Jason can be reached at 518-458-2161 or jpurvis@cdtcmo.org.