

# Southern Windsor County RPC Transportation Project Priorities Methodology

January 2017



The Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission (the RPC) has been evaluating and prioritizing transportation projects in the Region for more than 20 years based on an established evaluation process. This evaluation process was developed by staff with the assistance of the regional Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The intent of the evaluation process is to determine how well projects correspond with the priorities established in the Regional Transportation Plan.

In 2005, the state Transportation Bill (H.523) was passed requiring the Agency of Transportation (VTrans) to develop a project prioritization system to serve as a basis for the annual transportation capital programming process. This legislation included a requirement for VTrans to use RPC priorities as a criterion in the state prioritization system. The RPC modified the previously established regional project evaluation process based on VTrans guidance, and established regional priorities in the summer of 2005 for the FY 2007 capital programming process. The RPC has continued to prioritize projects annually in response to both Legislation and VTrans guidance ever since.

## Criteria for Prioritizing Programmed Transportation Projects

The process used by the RPC includes the following criteria in evaluating programmed transportation projects:

- **Impact on Congestion & Mobility** – The impact on congestion and mobility are indicated by a LOW or HIGH. This determination is based on consideration of the identified problem and if the proposed solution will likely reduce congestion or improve mobility.
- **Alternative Routes** – Alternative routes are indicated by a YES or NO. A YES indicates that an alternative route is available to maintain a flow of traffic in the event the bridge or roadway section is closed or restricted.
- **Importance for Economy** – Importance for the economy is indicated by a LOW or HIGH. HIGH indicates that the bridge or highway segment serves a vital importance in the linkage of the local, regional or state economy. LOW would indicate a lesser importance. Factors considered for this criterion include location relative to the state truck network, National Highway System, regional economic development plans, local zoning bylaws, town plan objectives, etc.
- **Social / Cultural Importance** – The functional importance the highway segment or bridge in the social and cultural life of the surrounding communities is indicated by a YES or NO. YES indicates significant social or cultural importance, which might be based on historical resources, recreational opportunities, access to civic facilities, environmental considerations, etc.
- **Conformance with Local & Regional Plans** – The conformance with local and regional plans is indicated with a YES or NO.
- **Local Support** – Local support was determined through consultation with town managers, selectboards, TAC representatives and the general public.

The following additional criteria are only used to determine priorities if two projects are tied:

- **Sufficiency Ratings** – Roadway and bridge sufficiency ratings have been used by the RPC for years to understand the relative condition of each roadway section or bridge, with particular attention to the worst conditions. The most recent available ratings information from VTrans may be used as needed. For bridges, additional information including condition assessments of the decking, superstructure and substructure were also noted.

- **AADT** – Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) figures may be used as needed to estimate the traffic levels at each location, with particular emphasis on the most heavily traveled areas. The most recent data from VTrans or the RPC are used.
- **High Crash Location** – High Crash Locations (HCL) are indicated by a YES or NO. Particular emphasis is given to areas of significant safety concern. Recent and historic crash data from VTrans were used.

#### Criteria for Prioritizing Town Highway Bridge Pre-Candidate Needs

In autumn of 2009, the RPC was asked by VTrans to help to identify and prioritize “pre-candidate” projects for the Town Highway Bridge Program. Following VTrans guidance, the RPC worked with the TAC, town highway departments and other town officials to develop a list of the top 8 pre-candidate town bridge projects. Criteria used to evaluate Town Highway Bridge “pre-candidate” needs are similar to the above criteria, with a few modifications:

- **Structure Condition** – Based on VTrans’ most recently provided bridge inspection data, including the following sub-criteria:
  - **Deck Rating**
  - **Superstructure Rating**
  - **Substructure Rating**
  - **Culvert Rating**
- **AADT** – See above
- **High Crash Location** – See above
- **Impact on Congestion & Mobility** – See above
- **Alternative Routes** – Based on two sub-criteria:
  - **Alternative Routes** are indicated by a YES or NO. A YES indicates that an alternative route is available to maintain a flow of traffic in the event the bridge or roadway section is closed or restricted.
  - **Detour Length** is indicated in miles, based on data from VTrans.
- **Importance for Economy** – See above
- **Social / Cultural Importance** – See above
- **Conformance with Local & Regional Plans** – See above
- **Local Support** – See above

Town Highway Bridge “pre-candidate” needs are then added to the overall project prioritization list as a separate category.

#### Local and Regional Comments

Comments are also listed with each project on the attached spreadsheet. They consist of additional information gathered to help evaluate projects and/or documenting input collected during the consultative process. RPC staff contacted all town managers or other town representatives to get input into the regional evaluation process, to determine local support and to re-evaluate last years’ priorities.

#### Determining priorities – TAC and RPC Board

The TAC then meets to determine priorities based on the above criteria, goals and policies of the Regional Transportation Plan, and local knowledge. Then, the RPC Board of Commissioners accepts the TAC priorities based on the TAC’s recommendations.

# Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission

## Project Prioritization for FY 2019

Notes: Project prioritization follows guidance from the Legislature and VTrans.  
 Project timeline - Candidate > D&E (Development and Evaluation) > FOB (Front of Book)

2017 RPC RANK	PROJECT TIMELINE	TOWN	PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	RPC/ TOWN COMMENTS
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### PAVING

1	FRONT OF BOOK	LONDONDERRY-CHESTER	STP PS19(10)	Reclamation of VT 11 starting in Londonderry at MM 2.167 and continuing to Chester MM 4.373.	The TAC, RPC Board and several towns have serious concerns about the condition of VT-11. The roadway is in awful condition and needs urgent attention.
2	FRONT OF BOOK	CAVENDISH-WEATHERSFIELD	ER STP 0146(14)	REHABILITATION OF VT131 IN CAVENDISH AND WEATHERSFIELD, BEGINNING AT THE VT103 INTERSECTION AND EXTENDING EASTERLY 8.974 MILES TO THE VT106 INTERSECTION. INCLUDES IMPROVEMENTS TO AREAS THAT SUSTAINED SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE AS A RESULT OF TROPICAL STORM IRENE.	
3	FRONT OF BOOK	CHESTER-SPRINGFIELD	STP 2942()	RESURFACE VT10 IN CHESTER AND SPRINGFIELD, BEGINNING AT THE VT103 INTERSECTION AND EXTENDING EASTERLY 4.373 MILES TO THE VT106 INTERSECTION.	Was previously scheduled for construction in 2015, but was pushed out since the quick paving job in 2013 is doing well. 2/4/2015 Chester Selectboard has some safety concerns - especially the steep curve about 2 miles in.
4	FRONT OF BOOK	SPRINGFIELD	STP PS19(5)	Resurfacing on VT 106 in Springfield from MM 0.058 to MM 3.283 (River St).	2017 request from Police Chief is asking for two way center left turn lane to be considered in future upgrades.
5	New project	WEST WINDSOR		RESURFACE VT-44.	2012 Request from Tom Kenyon.
6	FRONT OF BOOK	CHESTER-SPRINGFIELD	STP PS19(4)	Resurfacing of VT 11 beginning in Chester at MM 5.206 and continuing until Springfield MM 3.528.	

Priority 1 from 2016 Prioritization was due for construction in 2017 but is now due for construction in 2018 (Resurfacing VT-103 between US-5 in Rockingham and US-7 in Clarendon, NH SURF(49))

Project STP 2952(1) - Class 1 Town Highway Pavings in Chester, Springfield, Rockingham and Windsor - was removed from the list to be prioritized because the project was completed in 2016.

Project NH 2975(1) - Reconstruction of three at-grade crossings on the Green Mountain Railroad Corporation rail line - was removed from the list to be prioritized because the project is due for construction in 2017.

### ROADWAY PROJECTS

1	D&E	CAVENDISH-LUDLOW	NH F 025-1(30)	RECONSTRUCTION OF VT 103 IN CAVENDISH AND LUDLOW, BEGINNING 0.896 MILE NORTH OF THE VT131 INTERSECTION AND EXTENDING NORTHERLY 1.131 MILES, INCLUDING THE REPLACEMENT OF BRIDGE NOS. 23 AND 24.	"Smithville Reconstruction". Was slated for deletion in 2011, but VTrans kept the project. Project scope to be reconsidered with VTrans & towns. Project has been moved from Front of Book in 2014 rankings to D&E
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### STATE HIGHWAY BRIDGES

1	CANDIDATE	CHESTER	BF 025-1()	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BR14 ON VT103 IN CHESTER (north of Gassetts), OVER THE WILLIAMS RIVER AND THE GREEN MOUNTAIN RAILROAD.	
2	CANDIDATE	CHESTER	BF 025-1()	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BR16 ON VT-103 IN CHESTER OVER WILLIAMS RIVER (near Smokeshire).	

Notes: Project prioritization follows guidance from the Legislature and VTrans.  
 Project timeline - Candidate > D&E (Development and Evaluation) > FOB (Front of Book)

2017 RPC RANK	PROJECT TIMELINE	TOWN	PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	RPC/ TOWN COMMENTS
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**SAFETY & TRAFFIC OPERATIONS**

No projects to rank this year.

**TOWN HIGHWAY BRIDGES**

1	CANDIDATE	SPRINGFIELD	BF 2500( )	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BRIDGE NO. 62 (McDs) ON VT11 (River St) IN SPRINGFIELD, OVER THE BLACK RIVER.	1/27/2017 (Town Manager, Public Works Director and Road Foreman). Top town priority. Cannot do small fixes anymore. Needs new decking. Very high traffic volume and vital connection for traffic through town.
2	CANDIDATE	NORTH SPRINGFIELD	BO 1442(40)	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BR82 ON TH-712 (County Rd) IN SPRINGFIELD OVER THE GREAT BROOK	1/27/2017 (Town Manager, Public Works Director and Road Foreman). High town priority. Town received bad inspection report in 2016 and need to address the issues fast.
3	FRONT OF BOOK	CAVENDISH	BO 1442 (38)	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BR58 ON TH1 (Depot St) IN CAVENDISH, OVER THE BLACK RIVER.	1/23/2017 (Town Manager) - Bridge was closed to traffic since December 2015. Construction planned for 2019 or 2020.
4	CANDIDATE	ANDOVER	BF 0132(14)	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BR9 ON FAS-0132 (WESTON-ANDOVER RD) OVER THE TROUT BROOK	2/7/2017 (Town Clerk and Road Foreman) Approaches fixed a few years ago but problem recurring (big bumps on both approaches to bridge). Will need replacement in a few years. At the moment they are just doing patches to keep it going.
5	CANDIDATE	NORTH SPRINGFIELD	BO 1442( )	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BRIDGE NO. 56 (Willard) ON TH6 (Main St North Springfield) IN SPRINGFIELD, OVER GREAT BROOK.	1/27/2017 (Town Manager, Public Works Director and Road Foreman). Need for this bridge replacement for ongoing access to the Industrial Park. In 2015 the bridge became posted for 5 tons.
6	D & E	CHESTER	BO 1442( )	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BRIDGE NO. 62 ON TH18 (Thompson Rd) IN CHESTER, OVER THE WILLIAMS RIVER.	1/23/2017 (Town Manager and Road Foreman). Beyond the Town's ability to fix - particularly with issues of proximity to VT-103 (within 10ft of the fog line). May need to relocate bridge. Serves 2 homes and a dairy farm. Scoping started in 2015
7	D & E	LUDLOW VILLAGE	BO 1443( )	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BRIDGE NO. 57 ON TH324 (Mill St) IN LUDLOW VILLAGE, OVER THE BLACK RIVER.	1/24/2017 (Town Manager and Road Foreman). Town wants to keep the bridge on the list, but low priority. Currently closed to traffic. Served as pedestrian bridge until damaged by Irene so now no one can use the bridge. Historic metal truss. Want to replace bridge with a pedestrian bridge, but since historic, need to restore.

Priority 1 from 2016 Prioritization is due for construction summer 2017 (Ludlow Bridge 25 (Walker) on VT-103/ Main St, BRF 025-1(42))

Notes: Project priorities determined by the SWCTAC at the February 22, 2017 meeting.  
 Project priorities confirmed and approved by the SWCRPC Board at the March 27, 2017 meeting.  
 Project prioritization follows guidance from the Legislature and VTrans.  
 "PC" - In previous years SWCRPC has prioritized "Candidate" bridges with the Pre-candidates. From 2015 onwards they will be prioritized with the FOB and D&E projects since they have funding for starting scoping.  
 \* Alternative routes for state highways that maintain a flow of traffic are possible via other state highways but can involve significant detour lengths of 10 to 50 miles.  
 Starting 2014, no longer rank Bike & Pedestrian Facilities, Park & Ride Lots

**Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission  
Prioritization of Pre-Candidate Town Highway Bridge Projects in 2017**

2017 RPC Rank	Town	Bridge Number	Road Name	Location	Features Intersected	RPC/ Town Comments
1	Ludlow	Br. 26 (Vail)	Main St (VT-103)	0.1 mi N Jct VT100 South	Jewell Brook	1/24/2017 (Town Manager and Road Foreman). Critical for getting through town. Patching holes on bridge each winter.
2	Windsor	Br. 55	Main St (US-5)	0.1 MI S JCT. VT.44	Mill Brook	1/23/2017 (Town Manager and Road Foreman). The bridge was given a cursory inspection after Irene. While it was not determined that repairs were required as a result of the storm the retaining wall, apparently owned by the American Precision Museum just upstream (and attached to the bridge) suffered considerable damage. The end result is that the bridge is in marginally worse condition, the retaining wall is in poor condition.
3	Springfield	Br. 79	Park Street	Near Main Street	Black River	1/27/2017 (Town Manager, Public Works Director and Road Foreman). Deck issue. Important connection within town.
4	Weathersfield	Br.63	Ascutney Basin Road	0.02 mi to Jct with VT106	North Branch Black River	1/23/2017 (Town Manager and Road Foreman). Road doesn't serve many. One lane covered bridge on the other end. Bridge is okay for now. Damage from Irene (beam chipped) but engineers not worried. Low priority.
5	Windsor	Br. 24	Brook Road	0.3 mi to Jct with TH16	Mill Brook	1/23/2017 (Town Manager) - Bad alignment. Bridge deck needs a lot of work. Spaldded down to the rebare. Rusting out. Problems getting worse

The following towns did not have any bridges for the pre-candidate list this year - Andover (1/23/2017 Town Clerk and Road Foreman), Baltimore (no bridges in town), Cavendish (1/23/2017 Town Manager), Chester (1/23/2017 Town Manager and Road Foreman), Reading (1/27/2017 Selectboard Chair and Road Foreman), and West Windsor (2/11/2016 Road Foreman and Town

Two bridges were removed from the previous year - Andover Bridge 9 became a candidate and Ludlow Bridge 17 (Pleasant St Ext) is having major maintenance work in 2017

Note Priorities determined by the SWCTAC at the February 22, 2017 meeting.

Priorities confirmed and approved by the SWCRPC Board at the March 28, 2017 meeting.

Project prioritization follows guidance from the Legislature and VTrans.

In previous years SWCRPC has prioritized "Candidate" bridges with the Pre-candidates. From 2015 onwards they will be prioritized with the FOB and D&E projects since they have funding for starting scoping.