

Southern Windsor County RPC Transportation Project Priorities Methodology

January 2018



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 2020

Prioritized by TAC and ratified by RPC Board

Notes: Project timeline - Candidate > D&E > Front of Book

D&E =Development and Evaluation
 FOB = Front of Book

2018 RPC RANK	VTrans Rank	PROJECT TIMELINE	TOWN	PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	RPC/ TOWN/ VTRANS DISTRICT COMMENTS
---------------	-------------	------------------	------	----------------	---------------------	-------------------------------------

PAVING

1	Unk.	FRONT OF BOOK	LONDONDERRY-CHESTER	STP PS19(10)	Reclamation of VT 11 starting in Londonderry at MM 1.952 and continuing to Chester MM 4.373.	2/1/2018 Chester Town Manager hears complaints constantly from general public about condition. 2/28/2018 TAC thinks this road is very important. Hard to decide between this and VT-131 for 1st.
2	Unknown	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.	2/7/2018 (Town Manager and Road Foreman) - some safety concerns for VT-106 and VT-131 intersection. 2/28/2018 TAC thinks this road is very important. Hard to decide between this and VT-11 for 1st.
3	Unk.	FRONT OF BOOK	SPRINGFIELD	STP PS19(5)	Resurfacing on VT 106 in Springfield from MM 0.058 to MM 3.283 (River St).	2/26/2018 (Meghan at District 2). Leveling projects on either side, so would be good to have new pavement along entire length of VT-106 - hence why above VT-10
4	Unk.	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.	2/1/2018 (Chester Town Manager) - No particular priority between this and the VT-11 project since no comments from public.
5	Unk.	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.	2/1/2018 (Chester Town Manager) - No particular priority between this and the VT-10 project since no comments from public

ROADWAY PROJECTS

1	35 out of 54	FRONT OF BOOK	SPRINGFIELD	STP CULV(47)	REPLACEMENT OF BRIDGE NOS. 48A AND 48B (CULVERTS) ON US5 IN SPRINGFIELD.	
---	--------------	---------------	-------------	--------------	--	--

STATE HIGHWAY BRIDGES

1	4 out of 31	D&E (was Candidate)	CHESTER	BF 025-1(45)	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BR14 ON VT103 IN CHESTER (north of Gassetts), OVER THE WILLIAMS RIVER AND THE GREEN MOUNTAIN RAILROAD.	2/13/2018 (Chester Road Foreman) - Deck has been repeatedly patched for several years
2	11 out of 31	D&E (was Candidate)	CHESTER	BF 025-1(46)	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BR16 ON VT-103 IN CHESTER OVER WILLIAMS RIVER (near Smokeshire).	2/13/2018 (Chester Road Foreman) - Deck has been repeatedly patched for several years

2018 RPC RANK	VTrans Rank	PROJECT TIMELINE	TOWN	PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	RPC/ TOWN/ VTRANS DISTRICT COMMENTS
---------------	-------------	------------------	------	----------------	---------------------	-------------------------------------

SAFETY & TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

1	Unk.	FRONT OF BOOK	SPRINGFIELD	STP 016-2(23)	Project is for improvements to the intersection of US Route 5 & VT Route 11 and US Route 5 & Interstate 91 SB off ramp in the Town of Springfield.	
---	------	---------------	-------------	---------------	--	--

TOWN HIGHWAY BRIDGES

1	27 out of 50	CANDIDATE	SPRINGFIELD	BF 2500()	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BRIDGE NO. 62 (McDs) ON VT11 (River St) IN SPRINGFIELD, OVER THE BLACK RIVER.	2/7/2018 (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	20 out of 50	FRONT OF BOOK	CAVENDISH	BO 1442 (38)	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BR58 ON TH1 (Depot St) IN CAVENDISH, OVER THE BLACK RIVER.	2/14/2018 (Assistant Town Manager) - Bridge closed to traffic since December 2015. Construction planned for 2019 or 2020.
3	5 out of 50	D&E (was Candidate)	ANDOVER	BF 0132(14)	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BR9 ON FAS 0132 (WESTON-ANDOVER RD) OVER THE TROUT BROOK	2/13/2018 (Road Foreman) and 2/9/2018 (Road Commissioner and Town Clerk). 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. Retaining wall adjacent to abutments is collapsing and causing issues.
4	43 out of 50	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.	2/7/2018 (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.
5	33 out of 50	D & E	CHESTER	BO 1442(39)	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BRIDGE NO. 62 ON TH18 (Thompson Rd) IN CHESTER, OVER THE WILLIAMS RIVER.	2/13/2018 (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. Needs to be fixed soon.
6	31 out of 50	D & E	LUDLOW VILLAGE	BO 1443(52)	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BRIDGE NO. 57 ON TH324 (Mill St) IN LUDLOW VILLAGE, OVER THE BLACK RIVER.	1/31/2018 (Town Manager, Road Foreman) Served as pedestrian bridge for a while before Irene damage meant no one could use it. Want to open to highway traffic. Integral neighborhood bypass situation. Historic metal truss. Scoping by VTrans has started.
Remove	26 out of 50	D&E (was Candidate)	NORTH SPRINGFIELD	BO 1442(40)	SCOPING TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES FOR BR82 ON TH-712 (County Rd) IN SPRINGFIELD OVER THE GREAT BROOK	2/7/2018 (Town Manager, Public Works Director and Road Foreman). Town wants this removed. Town completed work fall 2017.

Notes:
 Priorities determined by the SWCTAC at the February 28, 2018 meeting.
 Priorities ratified by the SWCRPC Board at the March 26, 2018 meeting.
 Project prioritization follows guidance from the Legislature and VTrans.
 "PC" - Before 2015 SWCRPC prioritized "Candidate" bridges with the Pre-candidates. From 2015 onwards they have been prioritized with the FOB and D&E projects.

Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission
Prioritization of Pre-Candidate Town Highway Bridge Projects in 2018

Prioritized by TAC and ratified by RPC Board

2018 RPC Rank	VTrans Rank	VTrans Rank including last year RPC rank	Town	Bridge Number	Road Name	Location	Features Intersected	RPC/ Town Comments
1	78	26	Ludlow	Br. 26 (Vail)	Main St (VT-103)	0.1 mi N Jct VT100 South	Jewell Brook	1/31/2018 (Town Manager, Road Foreman). Critical for getting through town. Patching holes on bridge each winter.
2	465	90	Windsor	Br. 55	Main St (US-5)	0.1 MI S JCT. VT.44	Mill Brook	2/7/2018 (Town Manager). 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. The bridge also has historic significance.
3	827	137	Springfield	Br. 79	Park Street	Near Main Street	Black River	2/7/2018 (Town Manager, Public Works Director and Road Foreman). Deck issue. Important connection within town to prevent gridlock
4	533	546	Windsor	Br. 23	Brook Road	At intersection with Hewitt Rd	Mill Brook	2/7/2018 (Town Manager). Vital connection to major thoroughfare for that part of town particularly in poor weather. Alternative routes involve hilly dirt roads.
5	496	509	Chester	Br. 74	Blue Hill Rd	0.1 mi to Jct with VT11	M Br Williams River	2/13/2018 (Road Foreman). Dead end road with 6-7 houses beyond with no alternative route. Major work needed for the deck. Footings replaced after TS Irene damage. Work needed beyond the scope of a Structures grant.
6	548	131	Weathersfield	Br.63	Ascutney Basin Road	0.02 mi to Jct with VT106	N Br Black River	2/7/2018 (Town Manager and Road Foreman). Road doesn't serve many but there is a state forest and several other properties that regularly have logging activities. Cannot determine a weight rating due to damage caused pre-Irene.
7	233	272	Ludlow	Br. 12	Rod and Gun Club Rd	0.01 mi to Jct with Buttermilk Falls Rd	Branch Brook	9/20/2017 (Town Manager), 2/7/2018 (Road Foreman). 38ft span, seems hydraulically adequate but in poor shape. Engineer says it can't be fixed; it needs to be replaced.
8	700	708	Windsor	Br. 27	Johnson Rd	At intersection with County Rd	Mill Brook	2/7/2018 (Town Manager). Dead end road with 4-5 houses
9	686	696	Weathersfield	CB 83	Henry Gould Rd	0.15 mi to Jct with VT131	Brook	2/7/2018 (Town Manager and Road Foreman). Historic covered bridge.

The following towns did not have any bridges for the pre-candidate list this year - Andover (2/13/2018 Road Foreman, 2/9/2018 Road Commissioner and Town Clerk), Baltimore (no bridges in town), Cavendish (2/13/2018 Assistant Town Manager), Reading (2/2/2018 Selectboard Chair), and West Windsor (1/31/2018 Road Foreman and Town Administrator).

Priorities determined by the SWCTAC at the February 28, 2018 meeting.

Priorities ratified by the SWCRPC Board at the March 26, 2018 meeting.

Project prioritization follows guidance from the Legislature and VTrans.