



## BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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Stephanie Pollack, MassDOT Secretary and CEO and MPO Chair  
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### *MEMORANDUM*

**DATE:** January 19, 2016  
**TO:** Boston Region MPO  
**FROM:** Sean Pfalzer, TIP Manager  
**RE:** TIP Project Evaluation: Criteria Comparison Using Sample Projects

This memorandum summarizes the results of the comparison of TIP project-evaluation criteria, and highlights some of the differences between ratings based on the previous criteria versus those based on the new (proposed) criteria. (Full evaluation ratings are provided in the table titled *TIP Project Evaluation: Comparison of Previous and New/Proposed Criteria*.) Staff will present these results to the MPO at the upcoming January 21 meeting.

Using the criteria presented at the January 7, 2016 MPO meeting, staff evaluated a sample of 18 TIP projects (advertised between federal fiscal years (FFYs) 2012–15). The resulting project ratings (scores) were compared with the scores obtained from using the previous criteria to evaluate the same projects. Among the 18 projects evaluated, two had no change in rank; 10 projects had a minor change in rank (increase or decrease of two or less points); and six projects had a significant change in rank (increase or decrease of three or more points).

General observations concerning the new criteria, in comparison with the previous criteria, include the following:

*Safety is a prominent factor in project rating.*

- Safety is the goal category with the most points, and reflects the top goal of the MPO; points for safety criteria increased from 15 to 30 possible points.
- Projects that improve safety at Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) clusters, HSIP pedestrian clusters, and HSIP bicycle clusters tended to elevate their project ratings.

*New shared-use paths and rail-trail projects do not score well under System Preservation or Clean Air/Clean Communities goals.*

- Given that the primary objective of new bicycle/pedestrian facilities is to create or connect bicycle/pedestrian networks rather than improve substandard assets in the existing system, they do not score well in the System Preservation goal.
- Under the Clean Air/Clean Communities goal, shared-use paths and rail-trail projects do not score as high as most arterial or intersection improvement projects, which produce significant reductions in vehicle delay, and, thus, reductions in vehicle emissions.

*Clean Air/Clean Communities criteria result in a greater differentiation between projects.*

- Refined scoring for the 'Reduces CO<sub>2</sub>' and 'Reduces other transportation-related emissions (VOC, Nox, CO)' criteria to span from -5 points to +5 points resulted in more gradation in the scoring.

*Transportation Equity has broad eligibility and comprehensiveness when the new criteria are in use.*

- Expanding transportation equity considerations beyond low-income and minority populations—to include limited-English proficiency populations, the elderly, zero-vehicle households, and persons with disabilities—results in more communities earning points within the Transportation Equity goal category.

*Rankings do not appear to be biased based on community type.*

- There are no significant differences among the changes in project rankings by community type. In other words, in three out of four community types, projects both increased and decreased in rank using the new criteria; in the fourth community type – Developing Suburb – one project decreased in rank and none increased in rank.

SP/LD