

Dutchess County Transportation Council – Project Selection Framework

1. Purpose

The Dutchess County Transportation Council (DCTC) will use this project selection framework to evaluate and prioritize transportation projects proposed for inclusion in its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – the five-year capital program of federally funded projects in Dutchess County.

This framework supports the goals of the DCTC’s long-range transportation plan – [Moving Dutchess Forward](#) – as well as recommendations identified in other planning studies completed by the DCTC. This framework seeks to directly address the trends, barriers, best practices, and investments outlined in [Moving Dutchess Forward](#), with a focus on improving transportation safety, reliability, access to basic needs, and equity. This framework will help ensure that available federal transportation funds are used to carry out the plan.

2. General Process

DCTC staff will first screen all applications for basic eligibility, based on the items listed below. Applications that pass the basic eligibility screening will then be evaluated based on the Project Selection Framework outlined below. This evaluation will be done by DCTC staff in consultation with the Planning Committee. If deemed appropriate, the DCTC may form a TIP subcommittee to assist in this evaluation. Project sponsors shall abstain from evaluating proposals submitted by the municipality or agency they represent. The DCTC may also use the Project Selection Framework to re-prioritize existing TIP projects.

3. Basic Eligibility Screening

- Federal aid eligibility: The project is eligible for the funding type(s) available.
- Local match: The local funding match has been identified and meets the funding program requirements.
- Professional Engineer Review: The application includes a letter from a NYS licensed professional engineer certifying that they have reviewed and approve of the project plans, cost estimate, and overall application.
- Local support: The application includes a local Resolution endorsing the project, identifying the local funding match source, and confirming that any cost overruns are the responsibility of the applicant. The relevant elected official or agency leader has signed the application, and the application documents support for the project from the broader community.
- Constructability/feasibility: The project is constructible or otherwise feasible within the timeframe and funding available, including acquisition of any required right-of-way.
- Application completeness & clarity: The application is complete, and the proposed project has a clear purpose, scope, and project area.
- Cost estimate: The cost estimate is reasonable, sufficiently detailed, and includes a contingency to account for unexpected costs.
- Schedule: The proposed schedule for all phases of the project is clear and reasonable.

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- Sponsor capacity: The project sponsor has demonstrated its capacity to complete the proposed project on schedule and on budget, such that it is likely to be implemented. Project sponsors with previous federal-aid awards have demonstrated their history of completing projects in a timely manner, while first-time sponsors have demonstrated their understanding of the federal-aid process.
- Maintenance: The application outlines a plan for and identifies the entity/ies responsible for ongoing maintenance of the project once completed.

4. Project Selection Framework

Project proposals will be awarded credits for each of the elements listed below. Some elements contribute more credits than others due to their significance in advancing the DCTC's strategic goals. Proposals will be ranked by total credits, and these rankings will guide, but not wholly determine, which projects receive priority for federal funding in the TIP.

Goal 1: Prepare a transportation system that can anticipate and adapt to changes in the population, economy, technology, climate, and travel behavior (see [Learn](#) section).

Does the project address the **trends** identified in the plan? (up to 5 credits)

- Maintains existing infrastructure, including roads, bridges, transit systems, sidewalks, and trails.
- Reduces or removes unneeded transportation capacity, especially excess lane capacity, and reconfigures it for other forms of travel.
- Expands transportation choices for older adults or those without access to a vehicle.
- Expands transportation choices that will help reduce costs for low- and moderate-income households, especially in locations with high shares of renters or new homeowners or in [cost burdened communities](#).
- Supports Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure, such as charging stations, that will increase EV use, both to expand transportation choices and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Supports a mixed-use, multi-modal community, including areas with infill development and multi-unit housing.
- Expands options for access to jobs, including off-peak trips to key employment centers, or access for workers in key sectors such as tourism and agriculture.
- Improves access in a city, town or village center, including by managing traffic and/or parking.
- Improves safety or reliability on freight corridors or improves access for local deliveries.
- Improves the resiliency of the transportation system to climate change or implements a recommendation from a climate vulnerability assessment.

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Goal 2: Provide safe and convenient access for all people to housing, jobs, goods, services, and recreational amenities, regardless of age, ability, race, income, or mode of transportation (see [Assess](#) section).

Does the project reduce Barriers to **Safe Access**? (up to 5 credits)

- Improves safety at one or more high-crash intersections, segments, or corridors on state, county, or local roads. This includes high crash locations for vehicles, walkers and bicyclists (see [map](#)).
- Implements a safety-related recommendation from a DCTC Safety Assessment or other DCTC planning study.
- Promotes a systemwide approach to address a transportation safety issue such as roadway departures or speeding.

Does the project reduce Barriers to Reliable **Bus Access**? (up to 5 credits)

- Increases the number of residents with frequent bus service.
- Expands bus service coverage without sacrificing service quality in high-demand areas.
- Provides an alternative to fixed-route bus service in a low-density area.
- Improves bus service to basic needs destinations such as housing, jobs, goods and services, schools and colleges, and parks and rail trails.

Does the project reduce Barriers to Reliable **Train Access**? (up to 5 credits)

- Improves safe and reliable access to train stations (both Metro-North and Amtrak) for people driving, walking, bicycling, or riding the bus. This could include improved sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, bus access, vehicle parking, or bicycle parking (particularly secure long-term parking).

Does the project reduce Barriers to Reliable **Walking and Bicycling Access**? (up to 5 credits)

- Uses a Complete Streets approach to improve access for all forms of travel and people of all ages and abilities.
- Supports the implementation of a state, county, or local ADA transition plan.
- Creates [“all ages & abilities” bicycle facilities](#), particularly in centers.
- Provides secure long-term bicycle parking options at train stations, ferry stations, transit hubs, park & ride lots, and other destinations.
- Supports a municipal policy to construct and maintain sidewalks [as shared public infrastructure](#).
- Implements a walking or bicycling-related recommendation from a DCTC Pedestrian Plan or other DCTC planning study.

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Does the project reduce **Traffic Congestion** (a Barrier to Reliable Access)? (up to 5 credits)

- Improves travel time reliability or reduces delay at [high-congestion locations](#) or other congested locations identified by the DCTC or another study. This could include by providing a reliable alternative to driving, such as transit, walking or bicycling, on or adjacent to a congested location.

Does the project reduce Barriers to **Basic Needs**? (up to 10 credits)

- Improves access to basic needs in a [cost burdened community](#):
 - Improves transportation safety and/or reliability, regardless of the form of travel.
 - Improves transit services to meet local needs.
 - Improves transportation infrastructure, especially for walking, bicycling, or transit.
- Improves access to housing, particularly mixed-income housing, via walking, bicycling, or transit connections.
- Improves access to jobs:
 - Improves transportation safety and/or reliability near job centers and clusters, both for workers and businesses.
 - Provides transit services that better serve workers and employers, whether by local bus, regional bus, commuter rail, or specialized services such as microtransit or employer sponsored shuttles.
 - Improves walking and bicycling access to jobs, especially between higher-density residential centers and nearby job centers and clusters.
- Provides safe, reliable sidewalk, bicycle, or transit access to health care, grocery stores, community facilities, schools, colleges, parks, or rail trails.

Does the project improve safety, reliability, and access in identified focus areas (Barriers to Transportation **Equity**)? (up to 10 credits)

- Improves safety, reliability, and access in [identified focus equity areas](#) or places with high shares of focus populations:
 - In the City of Poughkeepsie on Route 9, the Route 44/55 arterials, Main Street, or other high crash or congested streets.
 - In the Village of Wappingers Falls on Routes 9 and 9D.
 - In the Town of Fishkill on I-84 and Route 9D (reliability) and in Beacon on Main Street (safety).
 - In the Harlem Valley by expanding transit access and walking and bicycling access in centers on or near Route 22.
- Implements a project or program that removes barriers and expands access for a focus area and/or population.
- Implements a project or program developed in partnership with a community-based organization that works in an identified focus area or with focus populations.

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- Protects vulnerable populations and communities from bearing disproportionate impacts from the project, or remedies impacts from previous projects.
- Includes culturally sensitive practices, policies or programs.

Goal 3: Promote smart transportation and land use policies and practices to remove barriers to access and support economic opportunity, environmental preservation, and improved quality of life (see [Advocate](#) section).

Does the project address the Actions recommended in *Moving Dutchess Forward*? (up to 10 credits)

- Incorporates one or more Local Actions identified in the plan (for local municipalities).
- Incorporates one or more County Actions identified in the plan (for County agencies).

Goal 4: Make transformative investments in our regional transportation system while maintaining fiscal constraint and leveraging private investment (see [Invest](#) section).

Does the project support the [transformative investments](#) recommended in the plan?

- Represents one or more of the Transformative Packages identified in the plan. (up to 5 credits)
- Represents one or more of the Transformative Projects identified in the plan. (up to 20 credits)
- Leverages private investment. (up to 5 credits)