

About the Evaluation Plan

- Designed to be straightforward and transparent
- Designed to answer the following questions:
 - Which projects have the greatest potential to be funded (compete for federal grants) and implemented?
 - Which projects are the most forward thinking and make the best use of today's technology?
 - Which projects best serve our region today while supporting tomorrow's growth?

Preparing for Step One

The effort started with the more than 80 premium transit projects identified in county and regional Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs). Project limits (or end points) are defined by their descriptions from the LRTPs; however, no mode or technology (bus, rail, etc.) is identified for the corridors. Where corridors are defined in more than one plan, but are separated by County lines, these were combined into one consistent corridor.

Step One: Where are the top performing corridors?

Using the premium transit corridors identified during past planning efforts, which best serve key regional mobility needs?

Once the long list of projects is identified, Step One evaluation criteria will be applied to identify the top 5 corridors to take forward into Step Two. Step One will evaluate the following:

- **Regional Connections:** Corridor's ability to serve key regional activity centers and regional travel needs
- **Economic Development:** Corridor's ability to provide access to jobs and redevelopment areas
- **Community and Environment:** Corridor's ability to connect to community amenities or resources

The top five performing corridors within each criterion will receive a point. The five corridors scoring the highest across all criteria (cumulative total points) will advance to the next step.

Moving from Step One to Step Two: Sensitivity Testing

Which technologies or transit modes best serve the top 5 corridors?

Step One will result in approximately five corridors with no mode or technology defined. Sensitivity testing will apply the optimal operating scenario to each corridor to better understand what the most optimistic ridership could be given limited restrictions on elements such as frequency, station spacing, fares, parking availability at stations, or travel speed. The result will make it possible to understand what technology could be supported on the corridor given the optimal conditions. Conducting the sensitivity test will include analysis of the following:

- Potential ridership demand along the corridor
- Passenger trip lengths
- Travel times
- Right-of-way needs

Up to three transit modes will be identified for each of the five corridors based on that mode's ability to effectively serve the needs of the corridor. Up to fifteen projects will be advanced to Step Two for evaluation.

Step Two: What are the best projects?

Which are the 3 best projects?

Once the best transit modes are matched with the corridors, Step Two will evaluate the following:

- **Feasibility, Community, and Environment:** Projects with the least number of high cost elements and with the fewest significant impacts to the community or natural resources

- **Mobility:** Projects that have the best mobility improvements using the FTA Mobility Improvements Criteria rating
 - Number of transit trips using the project
 - Number of trips by transit dependent people using the project
- **Cost Effectiveness:** Projects that have the greatest cost effectiveness using the FTA Cost Effectiveness Criteria rating or meet project justification warrants
 - Annualized capital costs (current year) of the project
 - Annual operating and maintenance (O&M) costs of the project
- **Land Use:** Projects that rank highest using the FTA Land Use Criteria rating
 - Station area population densities
 - Employment served by the project
 - Legally binding affordability restricted housing within ½ mile of station areas (as compared to the county totals through which the project travels)
- **Return on Investment:** Projects' cost compared to the monetized benefits of the project or the net value return on investment

The top three performing projects within each criterion will receive a point. The three projects which score the highest across all criteria (cumulative total points), will advance to the next step.

Moving from Step Two to Step Three: Value Engineering

How can the projects be value engineered to improve competitiveness?

Once the top projects are identified, the team will consider changes that may positively affect cost, delivery, and performance. Value engineering the projects may adjust:

- Design of project infrastructure (guideway, facilities, site work, systems, right of way, and vehicles)
- Design, quantity, and location of stations

Refinements to the top three projects as a result of value engineering will advance to the next step.

Step Three: How and when will the projects be built?

Which project is the most competitive for funding today?

The top 3 projects resulting from the Value Engineering effort will be ordered for implementation based on their ability to compete for federal funds and available and committed local funding. Step Three will evaluate the following:

- **Best Overall FTA Project Rating:** Best anticipated overall FTA Project Justification Rating for mobility improvements, environmental benefits, congestion relief, cost-effectiveness, economic development, and land use (project justification based on available data)
- **Available local financial commitment (non-federal share):** Share of project costs and effort needed to secure local commitment, including recommendations based on a wide range of funding options/mechanisms

The top three projects will be ordered in priority for implementation based on the results of Step Three.

Preparing the Final Implementation Plan

The top three projects in implementation order is the basis for the Implementation Plan. This implementation plan will lay out the actions needed to advance each project and will include anticipated target dates (in years) for each action. This draft Implementation Plan will then be brought out to the public and stakeholders to obtain regional consensus. Based on the responses received, the Implementation Plan may be refined and finalized.