



Purpose

The Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Council (HOCTC) will use this project prioritization checklist to evaluate and prioritize transportation projects proposed for inclusion in its Local Bridge Preliminary Engineering Program.

This framework supports the goals of NYSDOT's BridgeNY Program, the HOCTCs Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP): Going Places 2045, advancing Statewide Performance Targets, alignment with Federal Planning factors, as well as achieving recommendations identified in other County, MPO and local planning studies. This checklist seeks to prioritize the goals and policies identified in Going Places 2045 needed to bring positive changes to the built and natural environment with a focus on transportation safety, improved accessibility, reliability, resiliency, and multi-modal connectivity.

General Process

HOCTC 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 a combined four-step process, based on both NYSDOT Bridge evaluation and HOCTC regional priorities, detailed below.

This evaluation will be done by a panel consisting of MPO and NYSDOT representatives, as well as representatives from Herkimer and Oneida Counties.

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.
- 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.
- **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.

Projects must meet the basic eligibility screening before being considered for further prioritization.

Step 1 – Data Driven Initial Assessment

The Local Bridge Priority Index (LBPI), Figure 1, is a data driven metric used to prioritize capital bridge work based on the relative importance of the structure and condition. It is similar to the index used by NYSDOT in recent years; however, it has been modified to more accurately reflect the local bridge system. The LBPI is comprised of four categories including:

- **Capital Need** – Reflects the condition of the bridge and an engineering assessment of whether it needs to be rehabilitated or replaced.
- **Facility Importance** – Includes factors such as detour length, truck and traffic volumes.
- **Restrictions** – Measures economic relative importance of the structure/impacts on commerce.
- **Risk/Resiliency** – Includes factors such as hydraulic vulnerability and structural resiliency.

The individual parameters and scoring weight of each of these categories is shown below in Figure 1.

Evaluation Figure 1

Local Bridge Priority Index (0 to 100)			
Category	Category Points	Individual Parameter	Parameter Values
Capital Need	47.5	General Recommendation	27.5
		Structural Deficiency	5
		Model Recommendation	15
Facility Importance	27.5	AADT	7
		% Trucks	7
		Detour length	13.5
Restrictions	5	Postings	5
Risk/Resiliency	20	Fracture Critical	5
		Material Type	5
		Design Type	5
		Hydraulic Vulnerability	5
Total			100

Step 2- Review of Unique & Qualitative Factors

Projects that score at least a 50 on NYSDOT's LBPI Index will proceed to step 2. The Step 2 review will incorporate engineering judgment and a review of qualitative issues such as user benefits and context not fully captured by the available data in order to make a final prioritization and selection of projects. During this stage, assessment teams will first make independent qualitative assessments of key contributing factors. Reviewers will be asked to assign quantitative values for each factor from within a pre-determined range. This review will be informed by the project request and any other available data such as bridge inspection reports. Each assessment team will conduct a subsequent group meeting to develop a single consensus value for each project. These contributing factors and the consensus value categories are shown

below in Figure 2. These values will make up 70% of the scoring value for the Qualitative factors, with the remaining 30% of this score coming from HOCTC's Prioritization Checklist.

Evaluation Figure 2

Category	Assessment	Description
Delivery Risk	Excellent	Unlikely delivery risk. For example, design complete, 'CAT EX' type project, experienced Sponsor.
	Good	Potential, but not clearly defined risks for key categories. For example, ROW appears adequate, but design changes may require small strip taking. Or, known risks that will pose schedule pressures without certainty of failure. For example, two minor, lower risk ROW acquisitions for abutment expansion.
	Fair	Significant risk of schedule failure. Combination of design timeline with more difficult ROW acquisition, environmental concern, or other risk.
	Neutral	Lack of enough project information to assess.
Infrastructure Need	Excellent	Excellent candidate for infrastructure investment. Excellent match between proposed scope and infrastructure need and timing a good fit with window of opportunity.
	Good	Good candidate for infrastructure investment. Reasonable suitability of scope and timing, but not ideal.
	Fair	Fair candidate for infrastructure investment. Proposed scope does not match infrastructure need well and/or timing is a poor fit with window of opportunity.
	Neutral	Lack of enough project information to assess.
Economic Benefit	Excellent	Structure serves critical-path infrastructure need to manufacturing enterprises, commercial and retail businesses, and popular tourism venues. (Example: "heavy load" Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) supply chain access for raw materials used in principal manufacturing process, rail/overland carrier access to warehousing/distribution complex, major commuter route to professional building/executive office/headquarters,

		major route to popular tourist attractions (Wine Trail, Activities Park, Camping, Cultural Arts Center, etc.)).
	Good	Structure serves adjunct need to manufacturing enterprises, commercial and retail businesses, and tourist attractions. (Examples include light load access for raw materials/supplies used in maintenance, repair and operations for the manufacturing process, alternate commuter route to professional building/executive office/headquarters, maintain/preserve general public access to retail centers, etc.)
	Fair	Structure serves adjunct need to surrounding community/area. (Example: commuter traffic in/out of residential community, retail outlets, recreational areas, etc.
	Neutral	Lack of enough project information to assess.
Overall Consensus Agreement	Excellent	Reasonable consensus that project has merit as-is.
	Good	Generally suited for infrastructure investment; may have some scope or delivery issues.
	Fair	Less suited for proposed infrastructure investment; timing or scope more problematic.
	Neutral	Lack of enough project information to assess.

Step 3: HOCTC Regional Project Prioritization Checklist

Project proposals will be awarded points for each of the elements listed below. Some elements contribute more credits than others due to their significance in advancing HOCTC's strategic goals.

Project designs that achieve the following objectives can receive a total of up to 30 points.

Section 1: Alignment with HOCTC Long Range Transportation Plan: Going Places 2045 Goals and Strategies (up to 16 points, total)

Goal #1: System preservation and investment in the transportation system to make the most sustainable use of existing assets, services and resources. **(up to 1 point)**

Does the project address the following strategies:

- Operate and maintain the transportation network to enhance comfort, convenience, resiliency, safety and security.
- Protect the capital investment infrastructure and contribute to safety and stable traffic flow through state-of-good-repair maintenance.
- Upgrade and strengthen existing transportation routes that are used frequently by heavy vehicles to improve longevity and durability.
- Safeguard the region's transportation system security and safety when integrating emerging transportation technologies.

Goal # 2: Development of a transportation system that is supported by and supports regional land use, housing, economic development, and sustainability policies and plans. **(up to 1 point)**

Does the project address the following strategies?

- Prioritize transportation improvements that are consistent with regional and local land use, housing, economic development, and sustainability plans.
- Aid in the collaboration between municipalities such that transportation improvements are conducted cost-effectively and with minimized impact to users of the transportation network.
- Improve access between housing and commercial areas, industrial sites, and regional employment centers.
- Improve transportation connectivity within rural communities and between rural and urban areas, particularly for disadvantaged populations.

Goal #3: Improved mobility and accessibility opportunities to places of work and to locations where goods and services may be obtained. **(up to 5 points)**

Does the project address the following strategies?

- Ensure sufficient mobility and adequate access to places of work and to locations where goods and services may be obtained.
- Implement Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) strategies and other remedies to improve the efficiency of the transportation network.
- Support multimodal accessibility to the region's tourist facilities, for all travelers including the mobility disadvantaged.
- Enhance existing facilities to provide better bicycle and pedestrian

- integration within the transportation network.
- Maintenance of existing or construction of new sidewalks to improve connectivity of existing network.
 - Use of latest technology advancements, best-practice techniques and innovative material types for the incorporation of multi-modal improvements that are context-sensitive.

Goal #4: Proactively address existing safety deficiencies and strategically integrate safety elements into future projects for all roadway users. **(Up to 5 points)**

Does the project address the following strategies?

- Implement cost-effective improvements that reduce the frequency and severity of crashes along key corridors and intersections.
- Reduce conflicts among transportation modes, including the integration of non-motorized facilities, by evaluating operations and transportation system improvements from a multi-modal lens.

Goal #5: Avoid and/or mitigate negative environmental impacts while protecting the region's transportation infrastructure from environmental threats. **(Up to 4 points)**

Does the project address the following strategies?

- Enhance the resiliency of the region's transportation system by preparing infrastructure for the impacts of increasingly extreme weather events.
- Encourage transportation improvements that are located within the existing right-of-way while balancing accommodations for non-motorized travelers.
- Mitigate impacts on environmentally sensitive areas, natural, historic, and archeological sites, and stormwater flow patterns.

Section 2: Projects' Relevance to Performance Targets (up to 7 points, total)

- **Safety:** Does the project contribute to a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads, utilizing proven safety countermeasures identified in the Oneida and Herkimer Counties Safe Streets for All Safety Action

Plan found here: [HOCTCSS4A](#)

- Condition: Does the project maintain the highway infrastructure in a state of good repair?
- Congestion Reduction: Does the project achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System (NHS) and address local trends?
- System Reliability: Does the project improve the efficiency and/or resiliency of the surface transportation system?
- Freight Movement and Economic Vitality: Does the project improve the national freight network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development?
- Environmental Sustainability: Does the project enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment and address resiliency in areas prone to flooding?

Section 3: Alignment with Federal Planning Factors (up to 3 points, total)

Does the project address the trends identified in Going Places 2045 as it relates to:

- Economic Vitality (Housing & Employment)
- Safety and Security
- Resiliency
- Protecting and Enhancing the Environment
- Travel and Tourism
- Incorporating Complete Streets Design elements for new construction or during maintenance and upgrades to the existing network.

Section 4: Consistency with Local Plans and Studies (up to 4 points, total)

Does the project address one or more Projects identified in Going Places 2045? **(up to 2 points)**

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

Does the project address one or more strategies, systemic or reactive action items identified in the Oneida & Herkimer Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan? **(up to 2 points)**

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

- Requires State and Local collaboration
- Incorporate one or more Projects identified in the municipality's Local Plan?

Step 4: Combined HOCTC and NYSDOT evaluation scale

The evaluation methods in steps 2 and 3 will be considered together out of a combined total of 100 points, with NYSDOT's **Review of Unique & Qualitative Factors** from Step 2 worth a total of 70 points, and HOCTC's **Project Priority Checklist** in Step 3 worth the remaining 30 points. Table 3 below will demonstrate the points breakdown between each scoring method.

Evaluation Table 3

Category	Assessment Range
Delivery Risk	0 to 15
Infrastructure Need	0 to 50
Economic Need	0 to 5
HOCTC Priority Checklist	0 to 30
Total Assessment	100

