



2023 Evaluation Criteria for the Minnesota Highway Freight Program

Evaluation Criteria:

The information contained in this document serves as a guide to the scoring processes. Submitted projects will be evaluated based upon freight criteria, cost effectiveness, project readiness criteria.

There are two major categories in the Minnesota Highway Freight Program: **Roadway Projects** and **Intermodal Projects**. Within the **Roadway Projects** category there are three subcategories: **Safety Projects, Freight Mobility Improvements and First/Last Mile Connections**.

The tables below summarize the maximum number of points for each of the criteria in every category. The + sign indicates extra points can be awarded for a particular category or measure. Projects cannot exceed 1,100 points or the maximum points for any category.

Roadway Freight Project Criteria

Freight Criteria	Main Measure	Category: Safety	Category: Freight Mobility	Category: First/Last Mile
Truck Volume	Heavy Commercial Annual Average Daily Traffic (HCAADT)	250	250	250
Safety	Crash rate reduction	350	100	100
Mobility	Truck Travel Time Reliability	100	350	150
Facility Access	Number of Trucks Entering and Exiting Project Area	+25	+25	200
Project Readiness	Various measures	125	125	125
Environmental Justice	Outreach, engagement, benefits, and impacts	50	50	50
Sustainability and Emissions	Freight Efficiencies, Emissions and Sustainability benefits	75	75	75
Cost-Effectiveness	Divide number of points awarded above by amount of requested funds	150	150	150
	Maximum Total Points Possible	1100	1100	1100

Note: Safety and Mobility projects may receive a bonus of 25 points for facility access improvements. Projects cannot exceed 1,100 points or the maximum points for any category.

Detailed Breakdown of Scoring:

Truck Volume (HCAADT)

Truck volume is determined by the Heavy Commercial Annual Average Daily Traffic (HCAADT). The total number of points (250) is the same for each project category.

Truck Volume Ranges for Safety and Freight Congestion/Freight Efficiency Improvement	Percentage	Points
>4,000	100%	250
2,000 to 4,000	75%	190
1,000 to 2,000	50%	125
750 to 1,000	25%	60
<750	0%	0
Truck Volume Ranges for First/Last Mile	Percentage	Points
>1000	100%	250
500 to 1000	75%	190
250 to 500	50%	125
125 to 250	25%	60
<125	0%	0

Safety

The Safety category score is indicated by crash rate reduction for safety, freight mobility improvement and first/last mile projects. The highest increase toward a freight safety improvement with sufficient explanation will receive the maximum points. Safety for truck parking projects are determined by rest area truck parking usage or in the case of a new facility will be based on demand for truck parking indicated by the 2019 Statewide Truck Parking Study. The total number of points depends on project category.

Measures	Safety Points	Freight Mobility Improvement Points	First/Last Mile Points
Crash rate reduction (scaled to top score)	350	100	100
Addresses a sustained crash location (Y/N) OR not sustained crash location, but addresses a safety issue identified in a statewide, MnDOT District or County safety plan (Y/N).	+50	+20	+20

Truck Parking or TPIMS Projects - Usage at Existing Rest Areas	Parking Points
At 70-100% capacity	350
At 50-70% capacity	245
At 30-50% capacity	175
At 20-30% capacity	105
At 0-20% capacity	0

New Truck Parking Site Demand*	Parking Points
Demand/Capacity Ratio >60	350
Demand/Capacity Ratio 40-60	250
Demand/Capacity Ratio 20-40	150
Demand/Capacity Ratio 0-20	0

*Demand/Capacity ratio can be obtained from the Map Figure 35 located on page 55 of the 2019 Statewide Minnesota Truck Parking Study: <https://www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/freight/PDF/truckparking/final-report.pdf>

Weigh Station or Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Improvements**	Weigh Station Points
Project at Class A or B facility, identified in Weight Enforcement Investment Plan	350
Project at Class C facility, identified in Weight Enforcement Investment Plan	250
Project at Class C, D, E or other facility, not identified in Weight Enforcement Investment Plan	150
Project at other location, not identified in plan or study	0

**For more information on Weigh Station classification or identification of project type see Table 1.3 on page 15 of the draft 2018 Weight Enforcement Investment Plan: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/weightplan/pdf/WEIP.pdf>

Mobility

Mobility is determined by the truck travel time reliability for safety and freight mobility projects. Projects will only receive full points if the application demonstrates that the project will substantially improve reliability at the project location or within the project corridor. Other measures are used to determine extra points for each category. The total number of points depends on the project category. An additional 50 points may be awarded to freight mobility projects that address a major freight bottleneck or barrier to freight movement such as in an interchange project. This amount is added to the base total but may not exceed the maximum 350 total within this category.

Mobility Scores for Roadway Projects

Truck Travel Time Reliability (scaled to top score)	Percentage	Safety Project Points for Truck Travel Time Reliability Improvement	Mobility Project Points for Truck Travel Time Reliability Improvement	First/Last Mile Projects
Project substantially improves reliability at project location	100%	100	350	0
Project minimally improves reliability at project location	50%	50	175	0
Project does not address reliability at project location	0%	0	0	0
Other Measures		Freight Safety Points	Freight Mobility Points	First and Last Mile Points
Removes a geometric or temporary (e.g. flooding) barrier to movement of freight, including OSOW loads		+20 May receive as a bonus in the Mobility score	+50 May receive as a bonus in the Mobility score	75
Upgrades a roadway to 10-ton standards		0	0	75

Facility Access

Facility Access is determined by daily trucks entering and exiting a freight facility or industrial facilities. The projects that have the highest number of trucks will receive the maximum points with others scaled down to the lowest. The total number of points depends on the project category. The First and Last Mile Connections category will have the highest possible score for this criterion as it relates to directly to freight access benefits. The Safety and Freight Mobility categories may receive up to an additional 25 weighted points.

Measure	Safety	Freight Mobility	First/Last Mile
Daily trucks entering and exiting a freight facility or industrial area within the project boundaries (scaled to the top score)	+25 May receive as a bonus in the Facility Access score	+25 May receive as a bonus in the Facility Access score	200

Project Readiness

Project readiness is determined by several different measures. The total number of points (125) is the same for each project category.

Environmental Documentation	Percentage	Points
Document in progress; environmental impacts identified	100%	10
Environmental impacts identified	50%	5
Document not started	0%	0

Review of Section 106 Historic Resources	Percentage	Points
No known historic properties eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places are located in the project area, and project is not located on an identified historic bridge OR Historic/archeological review under way; determination of “no historic properties affected” or “no adverse effect” anticipated	100%	10
Historic/archeological review under way; determination of “adverse effect” anticipated	50%	5
Unsure if there are any historic/archaeological resources in the project area.	0%	0

Review of Section 4f/6f Resources	Percentage	Points
No Section 4f/6f resources located in or adjacent to the project OR Section 4f resources present within the project area, but no adverse effects	100%	10
Project impacts to Section 4f/6f resources likely –coordination/documentation has begun	50%	5
Project impacts to Section 4f/6f resources likely – coordination/documentation has not begun	25%	2.5
Unsure if there are any impacts to Section 4f/6f resources in the project area	0%	0

Right-of-Way	Percentage	Points
ROW, permanent or temporary easements not required OR ROW, permanent or temporary easements has/have been acquired	100%	35
ROW, permanent or temporary easements required, offers made	80%	28
ROW, permanent or temporary easements required, appraisals made	50%	15
ROW, permanent or temporary easements required, parcels identified	20%	7
ROW, permanent or temporary easements required, parcels not identified OR ROW, permanent or temporary easements identification has not been complete	0%	0

Railroad Involvement	Percentage	Points
No railroad involvement on project OR Railroad Right-of-Way Agreement is executed	100%	30
Railroad Right-of-Way Agreement required; Agreement has been initiated	80%	24
Railroad Right-of-Way Agreement required; negotiations have begun	40%	12
Railroad Right-of-Way Agreement required; negotiations not begun	0%	0

Construction Documents/Plan	Percentage	Points
Construction plans in progress; at least 30% completion	100%	10
Construction plans have not been started	0%	0

Funding	Percentage	Points
All funding sources are identified and confirmed	100%	30
All funding sources are identified and confirmed, but applicant is promising to “cover the balance” and will likely seek other competitive sources	80%	24
All funding sources are identified, but one is pending	50%	15
All funding sources are identified, but more than one is pending	20%	6
Not all funding sources are identified, a gap would remain if funded through NHFP	0%	0

Environmental Justice and Equity

The score an applicant will receive under the Environmental Justice and Equity criterion will be the sum of scores for each EJ & Equity question. Reviewers will assess how strong of a response applicants provided for each question, determining if they successfully considered environmental justice and equity in their project work. This criterion is worth 50 points total. There are four questions, so each question is worth 12.5 points. The reviewers will assign points out of 12.5 for each question. Each question asks the applicant something different; it is up to the reviewer to use their expertise to determine how well the project answers each question. Any response that provides information regarding the question gets some points.

Suggested guiding questions for scoring responses:

- 30. Did the applicant identify any potential impacts on groups?
- 31. Did the applicant demonstrate how they integrated feedback?
- 32. Did the applicant demonstrate how they took steps to ensure there will be no disproportionate impacts?
- 33. Did the applicant describe the benefits to the communities listed in the question?

Question response strength	Percentage	Points
Excellent response	100%	12.5
Better response, still lacking	64%	8
Poor response	32%	4
No response or did not answer the question	0%	0

Sustainability and Emissions

The score an applicant will receive under the Sustainability and Emissions criterion will be the sum of scores for each Sustainability and Emissions question. Reviewers will assess how strong of a response applicants provided for each question, determining if the project will have environmental sustainability benefits and impact emissions. This criterion is worth 75 points total. There are three questions, so each question is worth 25 points. The reviewers will assign points out of 25 for each question. Each question asks the applicant something different; it is up to the reviewer to use their expertise to determine how well the project answers each question. Any response that provides information regarding the question gets some points.

Suggested guiding questions for scoring responses:

- 34. Does the applicant demonstrate how the project increase freight efficiencies, how impactful are those efficiencies?
- 35. Does the applicant explain how the project impacts emissions, and how much does the project decrease emissions?
- 36. What construction mitigation practices does the project utilize, and how helpful are those practices for sustainability?

Question response strength	Percentage	Points
Excellent response	100%	25
Better response, still lacking	60%	15
Poor response	40%	10
No response or did not answer the question	0%	0

Other Criterion

Cost Effectiveness

Cost effectiveness is determined by dividing the total number of points awarded to a project in a given category (Safety, Mobility, or First/Last Mile) by the amount of requested funds after the funds have been divided by 1,000. The total number of points (150) is the same for each project category.

Intermodal Project Criteria

Criteria	Main Measure	Points
Freight Volume	Amount of increase in freight volumes	300
Freight Benefit	Economic benefit of increased freight moved	300
Project Readiness	Various measures	175
Environmental Justice	Outreach, engagement, benefits, and impacts	50
Sustainability and Emissions	Freight Efficiencies, emissions, and sustainability benefits.	75
Cost-Effectiveness	Divide number of points awarded above by amount of requested funds	200
	Maximum Total Points Possible	1100

Freight Volume

Freight volume is determined by the projected increase in freight cargo that will result from an intermodal improvement. The highest improvements in projected freight volume will receive the maximum points with others scaled to the highest volumes. It is expected that intermodal project submitters will explain with sufficient technical detail projected volume changes and provide external references such as technical documents as needed with the application. These references may exceed the page limit on the application to support the application.

Freight Benefit

The freight benefit scoring criterion will be determined by a submitted benefit/cost ratio included in the details of the submitted application. The score will prioritize projects which identify and show benefit/cost ratios higher than 1.0. Those projects that do have a benefit/cost ratio higher than 1.0 will be scaled according to the highest ratio. Scoring committee members must have enough information to verify the reasonableness of the submitted ratio. If enough information is not

submitted with the application, scoring committee members may identify a mathematical score lower than the maximum indicated below. The score be generally scored as follows:

Benefit/Cost Ratio	Percentage	Points
Benefit/Cost Ratio Higher than 1.0	10-100%	30-300
Benefit/Cost Ratio Less than 1.0	0%	0

Project Readiness

Project readiness is determined by several different measures. The total number of points (175) is the same for each project category.

Environmental Documentation	Percentage	Points
Document in progress; environmental impacts identified	100%	25
Environmental impacts identified	50%	12.5
Document not started	0%	0

Review of Section 106 Historic Resources	Percentage	Points
No known historic properties eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places are located in the project area, and project is not located on an identified historic bridge OR Historic/archeological review under way; determination of “no historic properties affected” or “no adverse effect” anticipated	100%	15
Historic/archeological review under way; determination of “adverse effect” anticipated	50%	7.5
Unsure if there are any historic/archaeological resources in the project area.	0%	0

Review of Section 4f/6f Resources	Percentage	Points
No Section 4f/6f resources located in or adjacent to the project OR Section 4f resources present within the project area, but no adverse effects	100%	15
Project impacts to Section 4f/6f resources likely –coordination/documentation has begun	66%	10
Project impacts to Section 4f/6f resources likely – coordination/documentation has not begun	33%	5
Unsure if there are any impacts to Section 4f/6f resources in the project area	0%	0

Right-of-Way	Percentage	Points
ROW, permanent or temporary easements not required OR ROW, permanent or temporary easements has/have been acquired	100%	30
ROW, permanent or temporary easements required, offers made	80%	24
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ROW, permanent or temporary easements required, parcels identified	20%	6
ROW, permanent or temporary easements required, parcels not identified OR ROW, permanent or temporary easements identification has not been complete	0%	0

Railroad, Port or Airport Involvement	Percentage	Points
Railroad, Port, Airport concur with project and letter of support submitted OR Railroad, Port or Airport Right-of-Way or other Agreement is executed	100%	30
Railroad, Port or Airport Agreement or other agreement required; Agreement has been initiated	80%	24
Railroad, Port or Airport Right-of-Way Agreement or other agreement required; negotiations have begun	40%	12
Railroad, Port or Airport Right-of-Way Agreement or other agreement required; negotiations not begun	0%	0

Construction Documents/Plan	Percentage	Points
Construction plans in progress; at least 60% completion	100%	20
Construction plans in progress; at least 30% completion	50%	10
Construction plans have not been started	0%	0

Funding	Percentage	Points
All funding sources are identified and confirmed	100%	40
All funding sources are identified and confirmed, but applicant is promising to “cover the balance” and will likely seek other competitive sources	80%	32
All funding sources are identified, but one is pending	50%	20
All funding sources are identified, but more than one is pending	20%	8
Not all funding sources are identified, a gap would remain if funded through NHFP	0%	0

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Better response, still lacking	60%	15
Poor response	40%	10
No response or did not answer the question	0%	0

Cost Effectiveness

Cost effectiveness is determined by dividing the number of freight transportation criteria points awarded by the amount of requested funds after the funds have been divided by 1,000. The total number of points (200) is the same for each project category.