

Guiding Principles

COMMENT	RESPONSE
<p>All projects from the long-range regional transportation plan, transportation improvement program, statewide transportation improvement program, and the Atlanta region’s transit vision, Concept 3, should be eligible and should be included on the example investment list.</p> <p>The criteria should explicitly include a call by the Planning Director for the submission to the regional round table, as part of the Unconstrained Example Investment List, all projects on existing transportation plans and all projects submitted by MPOs, regional commissions and local governments in each region.</p>	<p>There is a balance between deliverability, strategy, and support. The Transportation Investment Act is expected to generate less revenue than the total cost of all projects in such plans and programs over the 10 years. The criteria help ensure the limited funds will be invested in strategic projects that have popular support and can be delivered within the 10-year time frame of the regional sales tax.</p> <p>While there will be no formal call for projects, local governments and MPOs will have an opportunity to identify their priorities.</p>
<p>Projects that are not from existing plans or studies but that have public support or local government council or board approval should be eligible and should be included on the example investment list.</p>	<p>Limiting projects to those from existing plans or studies indicates a level of prior public scrutiny and support. Such projects are more likely to be strategic, supported, and deliverable.</p>
<p>Add livability to the guiding principles.</p>	<p>Livability principles are embedded in the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan and ARC’s Plan 2040. Therefore, there will be projects on the list that include livability aspects.</p>
<p>Use the five Plan 2040 objectives ARC has adopted to guide the development of a regional goal and subsequent performance goals.</p>	<p>As stated in the guiding principles, the investment list will be consistent with the policies of the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan and Plan 2040 in the Atlanta Special Tax District.</p>
<p>Add "Maximizing the value of Georgia's existing transportation assets" as a guiding principle.</p>	<p>The performance goals have been identified as the four strategic goals set by the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan, which include "Maximizing the value of Georgia's existing transportation assets."</p>
<p>Regional equity should be a factor in determining the project list.</p>	<p>Regional equity is a key provision of the Transportation Investment Act. Each county has equal representation (i.e., the county commission chair and one mayor from a city within the county) and equal votes on its special district’s Regional Transportation Roundtable. (An exception is made for a county that has more than 90 percent of its population residing in cities. Such a county will have one additional representative.) The Roundtable approves the Final Investment List by majority vote.</p>

Investment Criteria Framework

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
The revised Draft Criteria due November 15 th should include the performance goals called for in the Transportation Investment Act.	The performance goals as adopted in the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan are included in the final recommended criteria.
Performance metrics and public benefit analysis should be made available for public comment at same time as allocation ranges and qualitative screening criteria.	Performance measures and expected public benefits will be provided along with the Unconstrained Example Investment List.
There is a need to preserve the roundtable's flexibility (e.g., by removing priority tiers).	Criteria are required by the Transportation Investment Act, are designed to frame the discussion, and should address deliverability, strategy, and support while retaining flexibility.
Will analysis of performance goals and public benefit be prepared by GDOT alone, or will the Roundtable have input into this as well?	The Transportation Investment Act requires the Planning Director to provide the expected public benefits along with the Draft Constrained Investment List. The Planning Director may solicit input from the Roundtable at his discretion.
A revised framework for the investment criteria should start with (1) evaluating project performance, (2) then establishing project mix (program allocation), and (3) finally checking deliverability.	This has already been done. The Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan evaluated a number of programs (e.g., arterial capacity projects, HOT lanes, employment center transit circulators) as well as a number of program "portfolios" (e.g., mostly transit, mostly roads, a mix of roads and transit) to determine which would perform best at various levels of funding. The best performing portfolio was used as the starting point in the development of the draft investment allocation target ranges.

Allocation Target Ranges

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
<p>We received many comments on the draft investment allocation target ranges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ranges are too restrictive and should be eliminated; • The ranges are too broad; • Increase the minimum range level above zero to ensure funding for each program; • Combine programs; • "Special tax district funds should be prioritized to offset funding limitations in other areas" by funding the transit, safety, non-motorized, etc. as much as possible; • Consider allocation ranges based upon expected benefits of programs • Roadway Capital should have the highest percentage; • Reduce Roadway Capital funding; • Increase Transit Capital funding; • Reduce Transit Capital funding; • Increase Transit O&M funding; • Increase Safety funding; • Decrease Safety funding; • Increase Traffic Operations funding; • Eliminate Non-Motorized funding; • Increase Freight & Logistics funding; • Increase Aviation funding; • Increase Roadway and Bridge Maintenance funding. 	<p>The draft investment criteria are designed to help the roundtables select projects for the Transportation Investment Act funding that can be delivered on time and that advance the state's and district's strategic transportation goals. The Transportation Investment Act requires that the Planning Director propose criteria based on performance, allocation, and execution.</p> <p>The intention of the criteria is to assist the roundtable in carrying on a discussion that is, in part, strategic and outcomes oriented. The roundtable members will have a good feel for the important projects in their respective jurisdictions. Investment allocation target ranges help begin the discussion of how much is appropriate to spend on the various transportation programs (e.g., new roadway capacity, new transit capacity, safety) to produce results throughout the region. The investment allocation target ranges highlight the tradeoffs associated with spending more or less in one program compared to the other programs. These allocation target ranges should be used in the development of the constrained Final Investment Lists from the Draft Unconstrained Investment Lists. (The allocation target ranges were not intended to be used to develop the Draft Unconstrained Investment Lists.)</p> <p>The draft target ranges were based initially on the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan, but constrained by other factors such as deliverability, availability of other fund sources, etc. They are generally quite broad, in recognition of the fact that the roundtables will have many factors to consider when developing the investment lists. They are meant to serve as a starting point for discussion and consideration by the roundtables.</p>

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Add Agricultural Commerce to Freight & Logistics.	This type of amendment may be worthwhile in several special districts. Every special district of the state has its own unique set of needs, and it may be a topic for discussion by the regional roundtables. We believe the Roadway Capital and Freight and Logistics program areas could suffice for projects related to agricultural commerce.
Passenger rail should be a program, even if it cannot be built in the 10 years. The sales tax could still pay for preliminary engineering , etc.	Engineering and construction for passenger rail could be eligible in the Transit Capital program.
Need a program focused on natural disasters, acts of god, emergencies.	A detailed project list must be developed on which the public will vote. It is unclear how projects focused on natural disasters, acts of god, and emergencies could be specified before such events occur, and “lump sum” funds reserved for projects to be identified after the vote are not allowed.
Change Non-Motorized to “Complete Streets” or Bicycle and Pedestrian.	The term “Complete Streets” is still relatively new and has not made its way into common everyday language among the general public. Rather than using this term, the program title has been changed to Bicycle and Pedestrian. The purpose of this change is to clarify to the voting public the types of projects included in this program.
Change Roadway Capital to “Roadway and Bridge Capital.”	New or widened bridges are included in the Roadway Capital program.
Need an additional program for projects of National, Statewide and Cross-regional significance.	National, statewide, and cross-regional projects are eligible within other programs. The Transportation Investment Act requires that funds raised within a special district be spent within the special district, therefore in order to fund projects that cross more than one district, an allocation formula would need to be developed between the districts or other funding sources utilized.
Increase bicycle and pedestrian funding.	The lower end in the investment allocation target range for this program has been increased to one percent (1%) to enable taxpayers that do not drive to benefit from the regional sales tax.
Combine programs to increase flexibility.	The final draft criteria include a change to consolidate Safety and Traffic Operations into a single program. These programs have significant enough overlap to warrant the change.

General Screening Criteria Comments

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
The screening criteria should prioritize public-private partnership (P3) projects or other projects that can leverage other funding sources (CIDs, etc.)	P3 projects are an important part of the transportation solution in the state. However, P3 projects create practical difficulties for Transportation Investment Act funding given the length of time required for negotiations and resolving funding uncertainties. P3 projects are eligible.
A criterion should be established for each program that provides consideration for projects that have no other funding source.	While funding availability is an important consideration for developing the Unconstrained Example Investment List, other factors such as strategic goals, deliverability, public appeal, and performance will be considered as well.
It seems as though Transit Capital projects are being held to a higher standard than Roadway Capital projects.	Several changes have been made to the criteria to address this issue. A new section has been added that applies to all programs equally, including Roadway Capital and Transit Capital. However, these two modes of transportation are inherently different and therefore still require their own unique criteria.
The definition of “regional transit” needs to be reevaluated. The multi-county requirement is too restrictive.	Changes have been made to expand and clarify the definition of regional transit. Regional transit need not cross a county border as long as it possesses at least two of the four key attributes identified in the final recommended criteria.
The criteria should be tailored to each region’s unique needs.	Each region will have its own criteria.
Criteria should focus upon needs, not wants of the region and incorporate LOS, current/projected traffic counts, crash data, industrial & economic growth, etc.	The criteria may be altered by the Regional Transportation Roundtables to better reflect each Special District’s specific needs. Performance measures will be released along with the Unconstrained Example Investment List and may include measures like LOS and crash data.
Economic development criteria should be included in the screening analysis for project selection.	Economic development was a prime consideration in the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan, and the project list will be developed with consideration given to economic development goals.
Screening criteria allocates 75% of funds almost exclusively to “STIP” projects, which essentially are state maintained facilities. Locals (outside of the Atlanta Special District) should not be expected to make due with 25% of funds.	The criteria are not limited to STIP projects. The intention of the criteria is to assist the roundtable in carrying on a discussion that is, in part, strategic and outcomes oriented. The roundtable members will have a good feel for the important projects in their respective

Responses to Draft Criteria Comments
11/8/2010

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
	jurisdictions.
Criteria refer to eligible projects as those “throughout the region.” Does this apply to roads providing connectivity to another region?	Yes. Roads providing connectivity to another region are considered potentially part of those “throughout the region.”
Use a different word than “tiers,” as this is a term used by DCA for tax credit allocations.	This criterion has been rewritten, and this will no longer be an issue.

Roadway Capital Criteria

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
More than just construction phases should be funded with the regional sales tax funds.	The criteria allow for phases other than construction to be funded, however the emphasis should be placed on construction. It is critical that projects are built, and the value of the sales tax is visible to each district’s citizenry during the 10-year life of the regional sales tax.
In the Metro Atlanta special district, the connectivity of the regional road network should be given emphasis (i.e. cross-regional connectivity or inter- and intra-regional connectivity).	Roadway capital projects that are among the most congested regional corridors as determined through ARC’s Congestion Management Process will improve regional connectivity and are eligible per the draft criteria.
Congestion should be the main criterion for roadway capital projects.	Congestion is an important factor; however the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan identifies other important factors, such as reliable trips, access to employment centers, and safety. Project deliverability and funding commitment are also important, and all of these factors should be considered when developing the Final Investment List.
The tiers are too restrictive and should be revised.	The tiers have been replaced by the criterion, applicable to all programs, that project phases funded by Transportation Investment Act funds should be completed within ten years of the start of the regional sales tax. Project phases that are not expected to be completed within the ten-year life of the sales tax should not be included in the Unconstrained Example Investment List.
What constitutes a major activity or employment center?	In the Atlanta special district, major employment and activity centers are Regional Centers and Regional Town Centers as defined in ARC’s PLAN 2040 Regional Development Guide. In all other special districts, major employment and activity centers may be identified at the discretion of the respective roundtables.

Safety and Traffic Operations Criteria

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
The criteria should document reductions in crash frequency or severity based on the Highway Safety Manual.	Reductions in crash frequency and/or severity are important. The specific safety related performance measure(s) will be released along with the Unconstrained Example Investment List.
Intersection improvements should be prioritized in the safety program. Criteria should include analysis of pedestrian crossings on state routes.	Both of these project types are important, and they are both eligible to receive funding under the Safety and Traffic Operations program. The performance measures used to select projects will be released along with the Unconstrained Example Investment List.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Criteria (formerly Non-Motorized Criteria)

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
<p>Not all bicycle and pedestrian plans will result in a list of projects. Therefore, the criterion should be reworded to reflect that projects should be consistent with these plans rather than identified within them.</p> <p>The criterion requiring connectivity to regional activity centers should also be inclusive of projects within said areas.</p>	<p>Both of these suggestions help clarify the intent of the criteria; therefore, they have been included in the final draft.</p>
<p>Eliminate the notation that off-roadway and streetscape projects should be funded by local disbursements.</p>	<p>The notation has been revised; however, there are still distinctions made as to what should be funded with the regional sales tax funds. Mention of off-roadway paths has been eliminated and replaced with “recreational paths.” The purpose of this change is to reflect that off-roadway paths may serve a regional commuting purpose. The distinction between an off-roadway path and a recreational path is based upon the path’s ability to be utilized year-round at all times of the day. For example, a path which is not lit for use at dusk or nighttime would be considered a recreational path.</p> <p>Additionally, the reference to streetscapes has been replaced with the term “landscaping.” As a distinction, streetscape projects may enhance the width of sidewalks, add landscaping, traffic buffers, street furniture, etc. These items as a whole establish an environment which may promote increased pedestrian usage of existing or expanded facilities. Landscaping projects are often a component of a streetscaping project that utilized alone may not promote the usage of the alternative mode facility, if such a facility is present.</p>

Aviation Criteria

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Allow funds to be awarded to both commercial and non-commercial airports.	This criterion has been revised to reflect this comment in recognition of the commercial and non-commercial dual purpose many airports serve across the state.

Roadway and Bridge Maintenance Criteria

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Expand focus beyond regional employment centers.	For purposes of consistency with the criteria in other programs, the criterion has been re-worded to include major activity centers.
Eliminate the prioritization of funds toward state routes or routes connecting regional employment centers.	<p>These funds, should they be approved by special district voters, are intended to be utilized in the advancement of strategic projects that may have the greatest impact on the region. The resurfacing of primarily local routes should be funded by local disbursements of the sales tax or other funding source.</p> <p>Please note, an additional criterion has been added to the program which specifically addresses bridge maintenance and replacement. Because of the cost associated with these types of improvements and their importance to the safety and well-being of motorists, there is not a specific restriction based upon route types which limit eligibility.</p>
Agricultural roadways designated as Tier 1 and Tier 2 facilities by the Department of Community Affairs should be included as being eligible for maintenance funds.	This type of amendment to the criteria may be worthwhile in several special districts. Every special district of the state has its own unique set of needs, and it may be a topic for discussion by the regional roundtables.

Transit Capital Criteria

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
What exactly does transit encompass?	Transit is defined in the Transportation Investment Act as any new or existing bus and rail mass transit system(s), passenger rail, and all activities and structures useful and incident to providing, operating, and maintaining the same.
What items are covered under Transit Capital?	Per the criteria, items covered under Transit capital include “new, systematic replacement, upgrades, refurbishment, and other capital project expenditures.”
What project phases are covered under Transit Capital?	There is an emphasis being placed upon the construction phase or acquisition of capital equipment; however, the criterion now more clearly states that other phases of project delivery are eligible for funding as well.
It seems as though Transit Capital projects are being treated differently and to a higher standard than Roadway Capital projects.	Several changes have been made to the criteria to address this issue. A new section has been added that applies to all programs equally, including Roadway Capital and Transit Capital. However, these two modes of transportation are inherently different and therefore also require their own unique criteria.
The tiers are too restrictive and should be revised.	The tiers have been replaced by the criterion, applicable to all programs, that project phases funded by Transportation Investment Act funds should be completed within ten years of the start of the regional sales tax. Project phases that are not expected to be completed within the ten-year life of the sales tax should not be included in the Unconstrained Example Investment List.

Transit Operations and Maintenance Criteria

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
<p>Precluding expansion in favor of maintenance could eliminate some popular and effective transit projects from moving forward.</p>	<p>This criterion does not prohibit funding new transit service. It states that funds should be allocated to preserving existing service before the operation and maintenance of new service. Therefore, if a regional roundtable were to dedicate enough funds to transit operations and maintenance, it may be possible to fund existing as well as new or expanded transit services.</p>
<p>Eliminate the definition of “core” transit service as a system of service in place as of January 1, 2011;</p> <p>Eliminate reference to funding ineligibility for MARTA services in place as of the same date.</p>	<p>The term “core” has been removed from the final recommended criteria. The definition of existing transit service (i.e., in operation as of January 1, 2011) has been retained. In the case of the Atlanta special district, the definition of regional transit has been expanded to include four key attributes, at least two of which should be satisfied in order for the service to qualify for Transportation Investment Act Transit Operations and Maintenance funds.</p> <p>The limitations on funding MARTA operations are contained in the Transportation Investment Act. However, the draft criteria have been altered so that they reference the Transportation Investment Act rather than use the specific Transportation Investment Act language. If the legislature amends the Transportation Investment Act in the future to remove these limitations, MARTA would be eligible for operations and maintenance funds under the revised criteria.</p>