

DURHAM • CHAPEL HILL • CARRBORO

**DCHC**

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

PLANNING TOMORROW'S TRANSPORTATION

# How Does the Strategic Prioritization of Transportation (SPOT) Process Work?

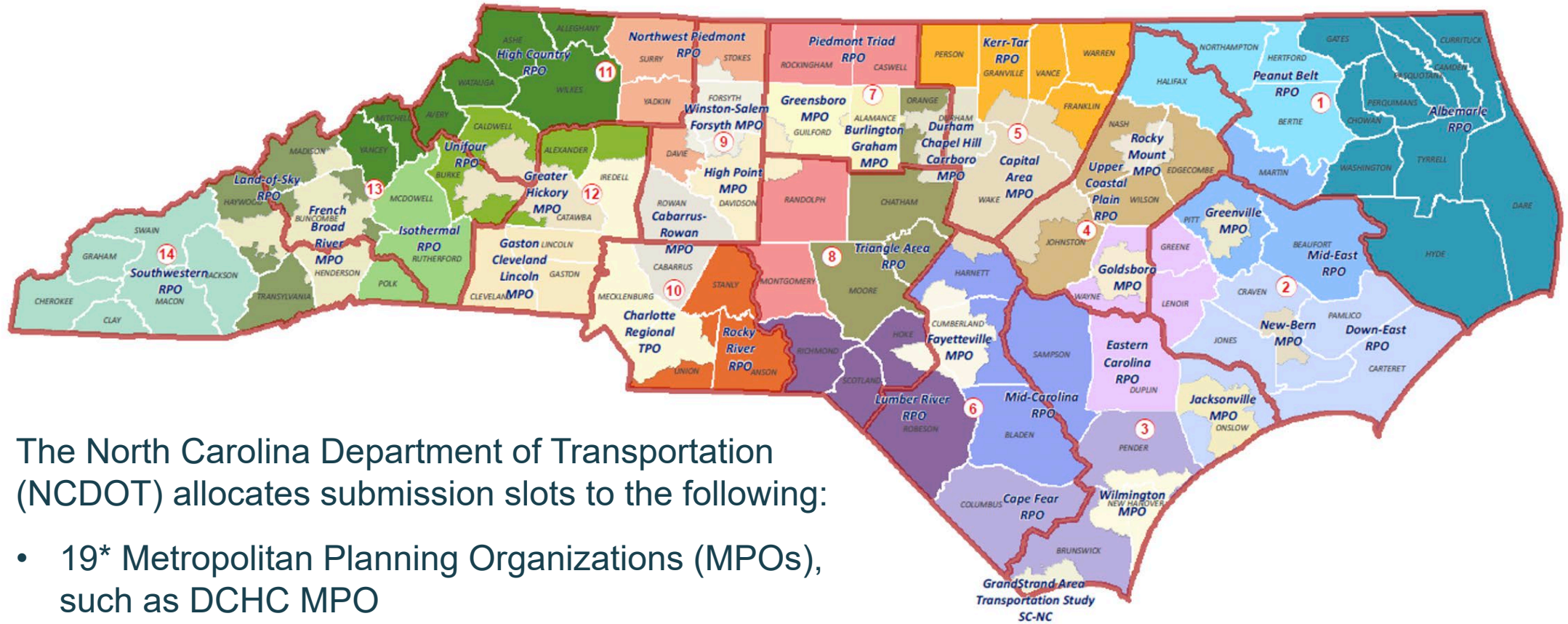
MPO Staff – August 15, 2023

# Who is Eligible to Submit Projects?

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# MPOs, RPOs, and Divisions Are Eligible



The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) allocates submission slots to the following:

- 19\* Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), such as DCHC MPO
- 18 Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs)
- 14 NCDOT Divisions (outlined in red above)

\*Due to new census data and population changes, additional MPOs will be established and compete in the next cycle

# What Projects Are Eligible?

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# Eligible Projects

There are (6) modes of transportation that are eligible for funding in this program. However, there are no aviation or ferry projects within the DCHC MPO boundaries.

Projects are separated into three different categories based on criteria such as the location or overall impact of the project on transportation across the state. As you can see, **Bicycle-Pedestrian projects can only be funded at a Division Needs level.**

Mode	Statewide Mobility	Regional Impact	Division Needs
Highway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interstates (existing &amp; future)</li> <li>National Highway System routes (as of 2013)</li> <li>STRAHNET<sup>1</sup></li> <li>Designated Toll Facilities</li> </ul>	Other US and NC Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Secondary Roads (SR)</li> <li>Federal-Aid Eligible Local Roads</li> </ul>
Aviation	Large Commercial Service Airports	Other Commercial Service Airports not in Statewide	All Airports without Commercial Service (General Aviation)
Bicycle-Pedestrian	N/A	N/A	All projects (\$0 state highway trust funds)
Public Transportation	N/A	Service spanning two or more counties	All other service, including terminals and stations
Ferry	N/A	Vessel or infrastructure expansion	Replacement vessels
Rail	Freight Service on Class-I Railroad Corridors	Rail service spanning two or more counties not in Statewide	All other service, including terminals and stations (no short lines)

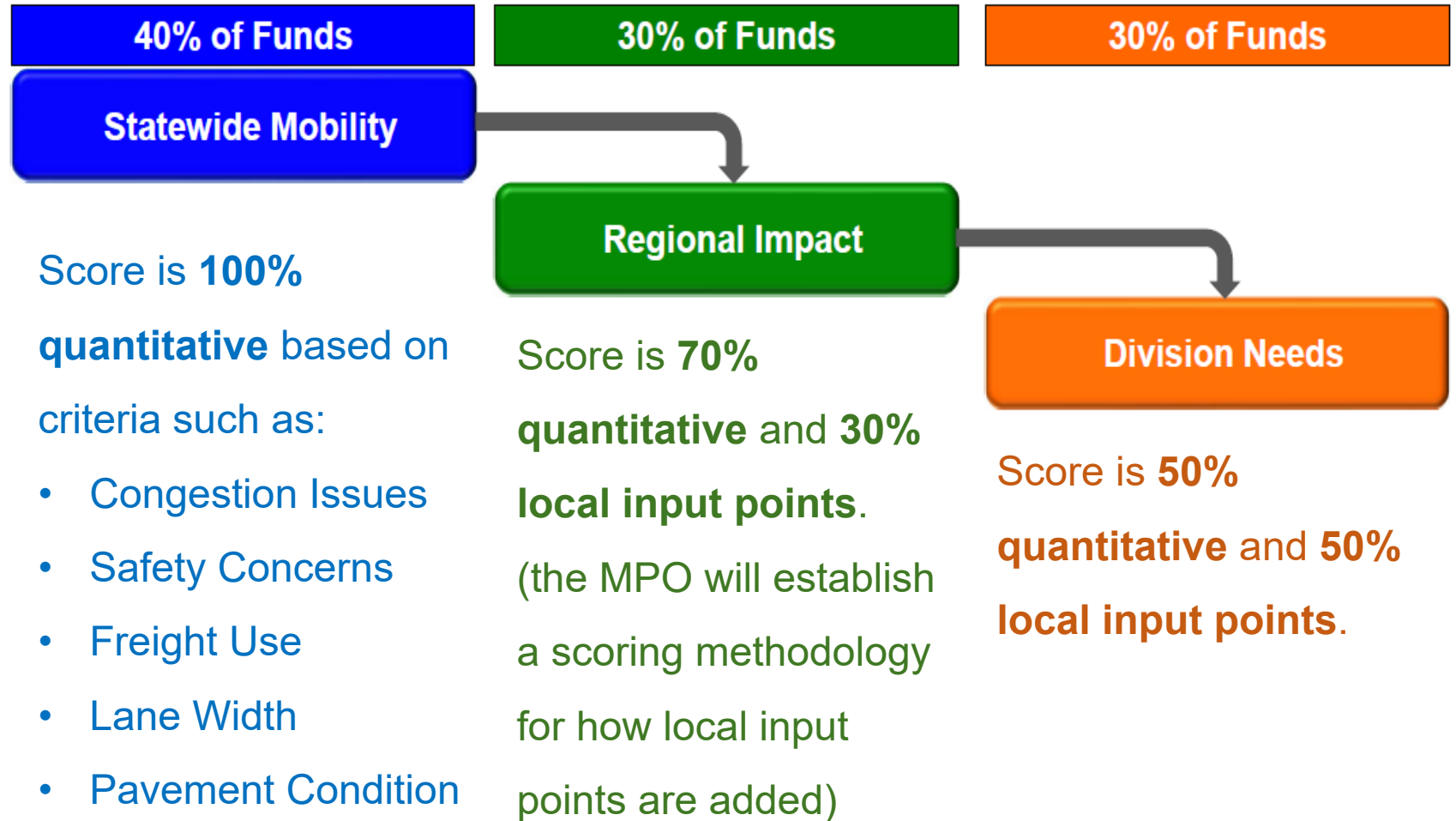
<sup>1</sup> STRAHNET – Strategic Highway Network, system of roads deemed necessary for emergency mobilization and peacetime movement of personnel and equipment to support U.S. military operations

# How Do Different Transportation Modes Get Funded?

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# Projects Are Funded Using A “Cascading” Method

All projects in the Statewide Mobility category are scored and funded first. If projects do not score high enough for the available funding (40% of total SPOT budget) and are not funded in that category, they are scored again in the Regional Impact category for that available funding and so on. Any projects that are only eligible for Division Needs projects compete against all unfunded projects from the Statewide and Regional levels, as well as against other Division projects for only 30% of the total funding available for the SPOT program.





# Funding Is Split Between State Regions & Divisions

**Statewide eligible** projects from across the state compete for the same set of funds.

For **Regional** projects, the available funds are split into 7 buckets based on the population share of the 7 state regions. **DCHC MPO is split between regions C, D, & E.**

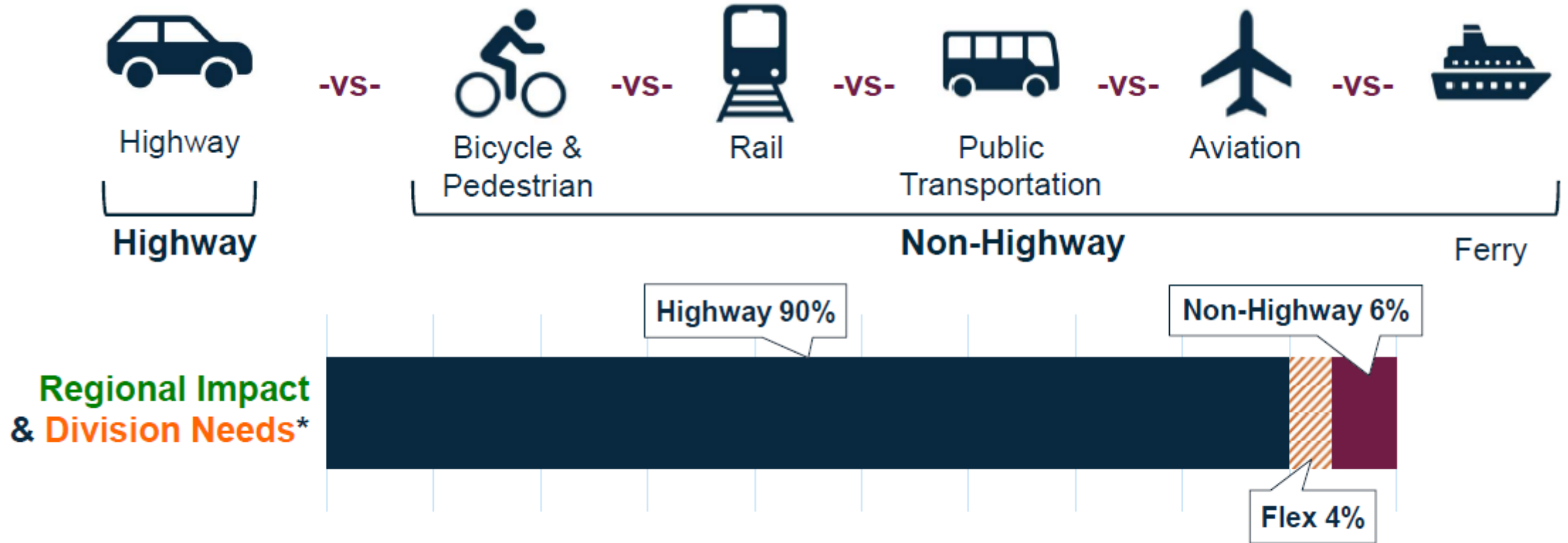
For **Division** projects, the 30% available funding is split between 14 state divisions. **DCHC MPO is split between divisions 5, 7, & 8.**





# SPOT Process Is Aimed at Funding Highway Projects

In addition to funding being split up by 1) Statewide, regional, and division categories, and 2) buckets for the 7 regions and 14 divisions, funds are also split into 3) highway or non-highway categories. That means that of the 60% of total SPOT funds for regional and division projects, only 6% of that is dedicated to non-highway projects.



*\*Statewide Mobility – No modal allocation, competition based only on quantitative scores*

DCHC MPO is allocated the following for SPOT 7:

- 24 project submittals per mode, or 96 total projects
- 2000 local input points (the methodology for this will go through approval winter of 2023)

There are **two** types of projects being scored and competing for funding:

1. New and holding tank projects – New projects have never been submitted in SPOT before while holding tank projects have been submitted but were not funded in the previous round. Both of these count towards the 24 project submittals per mode
2. Carryover projects – These are projects already in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) that are not yet funded.

Takeaway

- Funding is very limited for this round of prioritization. Not only do the DCHC MPOs 96 projects have to compete against a list of projects in the STIP, these projects compete against thousands of other new projects across the state. The last SPOT cycle (P6) was cancelled due to lack of funding and DCHC MPO expects very few projects will be able to get funding for this cycle due to additional balancing still happening due to the financial effects surrounding COVID-19.