



## Memorandum

**TO:** Director Pamela Boratyn  
The Ohio Department of Transportation  
Transportation Review Advisory Council

**FROM:** Mary Turner, CORPO Senior Planner

**DATE:** October 9, 2024

**SUBJECT:** CORPO TRAC Project Priorities

The Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) process allows RTPOs like CORPO to provide local input by prioritizing the applications for projects that are located within the agency's transportation planning area. CORPO staff completed a technical evaluation of the projects. This memo provides a summary of how the projects in the CORPO region were evaluated and concludes with prioritization of the 2 projects.

### **CORPO Region TRAC Projects**

The 2024 application period closed at the end of May, with two applications submitted from agencies within the Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization's (CORPO) planning area- SR 13 Relocation in Knox County and US 23 & SR 762 Interchange in Pickaway County.

### **CORPO Project Evaluation Process**

The two applications were evaluated to assess alignment with the goals and objectives adopted in the [CORPO 2023-2050 Transportation Plan \(CTP\)](#). To assess alignment with the CTP goals and objectives and provide consistency in CORPO project evaluation, to the extent possible, staff utilized the criteria outlined in the [Policies for Managing Dedicated Funds](#). The goals and criteria are provided in the next section with the evaluation summaries.

### **CORPO Region TRAC Project Evaluation Summary**

The evaluation results described by the related goals are included in the following sections.



## Application Evaluation- Preservation

Goal	Evaluation Criteria
<b>Preserve</b> and maintain existing transportation system in good repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decreases number of bridges structurally deficient or functionally obsolete</li> <li>Increases percent of pavement or bike/pedestrian paths in acceptable condition</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation Summary</b>	The existing pavement condition rating in the downtown Mount Vernon area is good, and while it is recognized that this project will provide a new route and further extend the life of the roads from which traffic is being diverted, the SR 13 project is not a preservation activity and is adding new infrastructure. Because of this, the US 23 and SR 762 Interchange project was scored slightly above the SR 13 project, as it improves at existing intersection.

## Application Evaluation- Safety

Goal	Evaluation Criteria
<b>A safe</b> transportation system for all users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduces risk of serious injury or fatal crashes</li> <li>Promotes Safe Driving Behaviors</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation Summary</b>	The US 23 and SR 762 Interchange project was ranked above the SR 13 project in relation to the safety goal. Though there were crashes in both project areas, the crash frequency, density, and fatal and serious injury crash rate are slightly higher in the vicinity of the US 23 and SR 762 interchange project. The most common crash types at this intersection are rear-end and left turns so the interchange improvement may improve safety.

## Application Evaluation- Accessibility

Goal	Evaluation Criteria
<b>Accessibility</b> and mobility options for all users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improves Mobility for All Modes</li> <li>Expands Multi-Modal Infrastructure</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation Summary</b>	The SR 13 project was ranked above the US 23 and SR 762 Interchange project in this category because the project is intended to reroute automobile and freight traffic to reduce conflict with other modes in the downtown Mount Vernon area. Though the project will not expand bike/pedestrian facilities, it may assist with separation from freight vehicles and vehicles at higher speeds.



## Application Evaluation- Integrated

Goal	Evaluation Criteria
An <b>integrated</b> , connected, coordinated transportation system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Increases Outreach to Advocacy Groups</i></li> <li>• <i>Increases Regional Modal Connectivity</i></li> <li>• <i>Foster Local Community Collaboration</i></li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation Summary</b>	The US 23 / SR 762 project will improve the connection between urban and rural areas, an important objective of the integration goal. The US 23 / SR 762 project is the result of a regional planning effort that will complete an element of the master plan envisioned for the Rickenbacker East-West Connector. Although the SR 13 Relocation Project is also a result of a significant local planning effort, the US 23 / SR 762 project ranked slightly higher under this goal.

## Application Evaluation- Collaborative

Goal	Evaluation Criteria
A transportation system that supports a <b>collaborative</b> and focused approach to achieve economic vitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Improves Strategic Freight Facilities</i></li> <li>• <i>Develops Multi-Purpose Corridors</i></li> <li>• <i>Increases access to employment areas</i></li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation Summary</b>	Both projects are on the priorities list of the <i>Competitive Advantage Projects (CAP)</i> , which is a partnership between MORPC and One Columbus. The US 23 / SR 762 project will connect US 23 to both the Norfolk Southern Intermodal Terminal and the airport, improving freight movement in the region. The US 23 / SR 762 project ranked slightly higher under this goal.

## Application Evaluation- Environmental

Goal	Evaluation Criteria
Preserve and enhance <b>environmental</b> resources and sustainability through the transportation system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Increases Use of Non-Single Occupant Vehicles</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide transportation facilities consistent with local land use, environmental and sustainability plans.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation Summary</b>	Both projects will need to follow NEPA standards, so they were ranked very closely, however, the SR 13 project was ranked slightly higher because of the note that the project will reduce stormwater runoff.



### **Public Comment Period**

A public comment period on TRAC projects in the MORPC/CORPO region was held June 28 through August 16. One public comment pertaining to the two CORPO region projects was received. The public comment expressed appreciation for the SR 13 Relocation project's intent to improve pedestrian mobility and hoped that applicable and suggested Complete Streets policies will be incorporated in the project design. The comment also expressed hope that the US 23 & SR 762 Interchange project is acquiring enough right-of-way to include sufficient space for future pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Finally, the commentor hoped that considerations for future regional passenger rail between Rickenbacker and Columbus and freight rail connectivity from Rickenbacker to Cincinnati will be part of the project.

### **CORPO Feedback**

The two TRAC projects, evaluation process, and priority ranking of the projects were shared in a draft memo that was emailed to all CORPO Committee and subcommittee members at the beginning of September to collect feedback and input on the draft priority rankings. CORPO staff also shared the same information in-person in all seven counties during the CORPO county subcommittee meetings held in the last 2 weeks of September to solicit comments and feedback.

### **Final Ranking of CORPO TRAC Projects**

Based on the goal-by-goal evaluation summarized above, public input, and feedback received from the CORPO Committee and subcommittees, CORPO provides the following priority ranking for the two CORPO-area TRAC applications requesting funding:

Priority 1: US 23 and SR 762 Interchange Improvements

Priority 2: SR 13 Relocation