

### 3.3 Project Evaluation Criteria

Within an environment of severely limited funding and competing demands, and considering a variety of solutions for a broad range of often individualized priorities, development of appropriate project evaluation criteria is crucial to ensuring a fair, balanced, and objective view of the numerous candidate projects that are identified. This plan focuses on project evaluations at two levels:

- Individual Project Rating & Ranking Criteria (Decision Lens)
- System Wide Performance Measures (TDM-Based Scenario Planning)

#### *Individual Project Rating & Ranking Criteria*

Initial candidate project screening and selection, as well as final programming prioritization, is based on an objective rating and ranking process using the Decision Lens software tool. Decision Lens combines quantitative data and qualitative judgments using mathematical theory to establish a relative score for individual projects. That score can be used to help prioritize solutions that will most likely reach the established goals.

*Decision Lens Categories:* Decision Lens ratings and rankings address individual project merits across six different categories (*Exhibit 3.3.1*). These evaluation categories correspond to the 2040 LRTP’s Themes and Goals discussed throughout Chapter 2, which directly correlate with the Federal Planning Factors. A special meeting was conducted by the Erie MPO to compare each of the categories to one another and establish a weighted value (versus a total score of 100%) that summarizes the relative importance of each to the long range transportation planning needs specific to Erie County.

*Decision Lens Criteria:* Within each Decision Lens evaluation category, three to six individual evaluation criteria are also defined to help determine if a project or scenario meets the goals or intent of a specific category, and to what degree (*Exhibit 3.3.2*). The criteria were tailored to match the objectives of the 2040 LRTP, which were developed to address the various issues, concerns, suggestions, and project types that were identified throughout the planning process. Like the evaluation categories, the individual criteria were also weighted based on MPO input to summarize the relative importance of each. Each criteria is accompanied by a customized set of rating possibilities (e.g., Yes or No; Locally or Regionally, etc.) that are subsequently tied to a scoring scale of 0.00-1.00 within the Decision Lens software to obtain the overall weighted score for each candidate project.

*Decision Lens:*

A software tool used for the Erie County 2040 LRTP to rate and rank individual project candidates according to a variety of weighted evaluation categories and criteria. As documented on their website ([www.DecisionLens.com](http://www.DecisionLens.com)),

*“Decision Lens is a powerful decision tool that helps you bring together multiple stakeholders. Groups can*

- Take operating challenges into account.
- Define and prioritize criteria.
- Evaluate alternatives.
- Make decisions.
- Justify those decisions.
- Change course quickly when needed.

*Decision Lens enables you to plan with confidence and execute successfully. Corporations and government organizations use our rational, structured process to make better decisions and achieve their goals.”*



<http://www.decisionlens.com/>



Specific Project Evaluation Category definitions are listed below; corresponding Project Evaluation Criteria and rating scales are defined by *Exhibits 3.3.3*.

**1 - Economic Vitality:** Will the project or scenario support the economic vitality of Erie County, and enable global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency?

**2 - Multimodal Transportation Safety:** Will the project or scenario increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users?

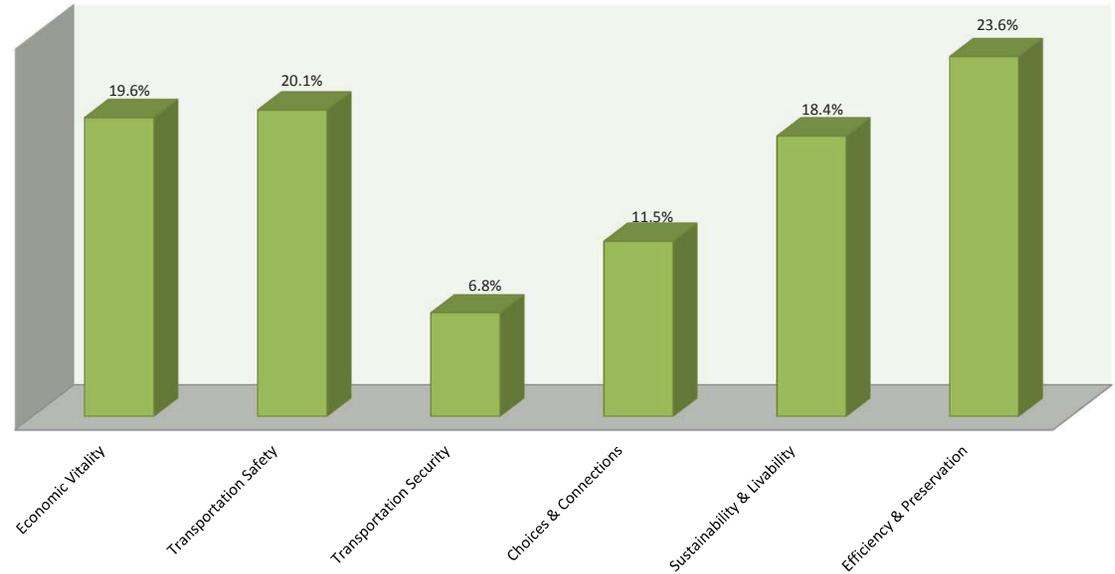
**3 - Multimodal Transportation Security:** Will the project or scenario increase security for transportation system users?

**4 - Multimodal Choices and Connections:** Will the project or scenario increase the accessibility and mobility options for people and freight, and enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system across and between modes?

**5 - System Sustainability and Livability:** Will the project or scenario protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development?

**6 - System Efficiency and Preservation:** Will the project or scenario promote efficient system management and operations, particularly in a way that emphasize preservation of the existing transportation system?

*Exhibit 3.3.1 - Evaluation Category Weightings for Decision Lens*



*Exhibit 3.3.2 - Evaluation Criteria Weightings for Decision Lens*

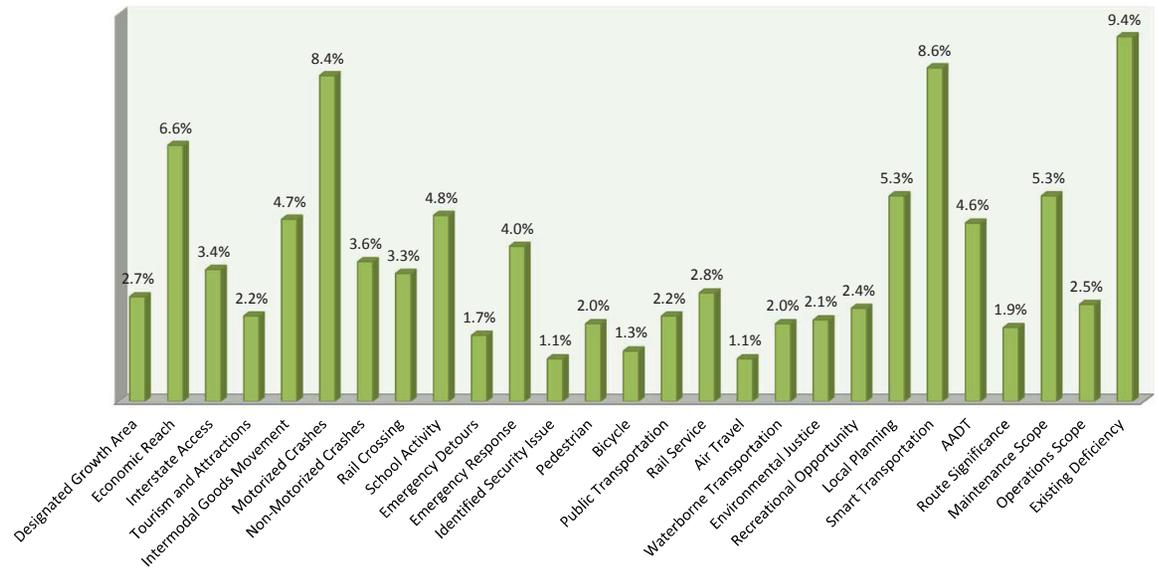


Exhibit 3.3.3 – Project Evaluation Criteria and Rating Scales

Category and Criteria <i>(Description)</i>	Criteria Rating Scale <i>(Lesser Benefit or Priority &lt;-----&gt; Higher Benefit or Priority)</i>				
<b>1 - Economic Vitality (weight: 19.6%)</b>					
<b>1.1 Designated Growth Area</b> (weight: 2.7%) <i>Is the project located in or directly related to a targeted investment area, KOZ, or other planned development?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	1 <i>Yes</i>	-	-	-
<b>1.2 Economic Reach</b> (weight: 6.6%) <i>To what extent will the project support planned developments or provide economic benefits (e.g., job growth / retention)?</i>	0 <i>None</i>	0.25 <i>Locally</i>	0.5 <i>Countywide</i>	1 <i>Regionally</i>	-
<b>1.3 Interstate Access</b> (weight: 3.4%) <i>Does the project improve interstate access directly (e.g., at an interchange) or indirectly (e.g., along a connecting route)?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	0.5 <i>Indirectly</i>	1 <i>Directly</i>	-	-
<b>1.4 Tourism and Attractions</b> (weight: 2.2%) <i>Is the project located near or indirectly related to major attractions, tourist destinations, or similar assets within the county?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	0.5 <i>Indirectly</i>	1 <i>Directly</i>	-	-
<b>1.5 Intermodal Goods Movement</b> (weight: 4.7%) <i>To what extent will the project enhance, expand, or benefit intermodal facilities or opportunities for goods movement?</i>	0 <i>None</i>	0.25 <i>Locally</i>	0.5 <i>Countywide</i>	1 <i>Regionally</i>	-
<b>2 - Multimodal Transportation Safety (weight: 20.1%)</b>					
<b>2.1 Motorized Crashes</b> (weight: 8.4%) <i>What is the motorized crash frequency at or near the project location relative to countywide trends (i.e., by quartile)?</i>	0 <i>N/A</i>	0.125 <i>4<sup>th</sup> Quartile</i>	0.25 <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Quartile</i>	0.5 <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Quartile</i>	1 <i>1<sup>st</sup> Quartile</i>
<b>2.2 Non-Motorized Crashes</b> (weight: 3.6%) <i>What is the non-motorized crash frequency at or near the project location relative to countywide trends (i.e., by quartile)?</i>	0 <i>N/A</i>	0.125 <i>4<sup>th</sup> Quartile</i>	0.25 <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Quartile</i>	0.5 <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Quartile</i>	1 <i>1<sup>st</sup> Quartile</i>
<b>2.3 Highway-Rail Crossing</b> (weight: 3.3%) <i>Will the project help to reduce the hazard potential or otherwise improve safety for a highway-rail crossing?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	1 <i>Yes</i>	-	-	-
<b>2.4 School Activity</b> (weight: 4.8%) <i>Will the project help to improve a school zone or school-related activities (e.g., school crossings, school routes, buses, etc.)?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	0.5 <i>Indirectly</i>	1 <i>Directly</i>	-	-



*Exhibit 3.3.3 – Project Evaluation Criteria and Rating Scales (cont'd)*

Category and Criteria <i>(Description)</i>	Criteria Rating Scale <i>(Lesser Benefit or Priority &lt;-----&gt; Higher Benefit or Priority)</i>				
<b>3 - Multimodal Transportation Security (weight: 6.8%)</b>					
<b>3.1 Emergency Detours</b> (weight: 1.7%) <i>Does the project help to enhance or otherwise benefit an established emergency detour route?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	1 <i>Yes</i>	-	-	-
<b>3.2 Emergency Response</b> (weight: 4.0%) <i>Will the project directly enhance emergency response or otherwise improve emergency access for police, fire, ambulance, etc.?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	0.5 <i>Indirectly</i>	1 <i>Directly</i>	-	-
<b>3.3 Identified Security Issue</b> (weight: 1.1%) <i>Will the project help to address a previously-identified security issue or concern?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	0.5 <i>Indirectly</i>	1 <i>Directly</i>	-	-
<b>4 - Multimodal Choices and Connections (weight: 11.5%)</b>					
<b>4.1 Pedestrian</b> (weight: 2.0%) <i>To what extent will the project enhance pedestrian travel and related connections or opportunities?</i>	0 <i>None</i>	0.5 <i>Locally</i>	1 <i>Countywide</i>	-	-
<b>4.2 Bicycle</b> (weight: 1.3%) <i>To what extent will the project enhance bicycle travel and related connections or opportunities?</i>	0 <i>None</i>	0.5 <i>Locally</i>	1 <i>Countywide</i>	-	-
<b>4.3 Public Transportation</b> (weight: 2.2%) <i>To what extent will the project enhance public transportation and related connections or opportunities (e.g., park &amp; ride, bus shelters)?</i>	0 <i>None</i>	0.5 <i>Locally</i>	1 <i>Countywide</i>	-	-
<b>4.4 Rail Service</b> (weight: 2.8%) <i>Will the project enhance, expand, or benefit passenger or freight-related rail service?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	1 <i>Yes</i>	-	-	-
<b>4.5 Air Travel</b> (weight: 1.1%) <i>Will the project enhance, expand, or benefit passenger or freight-related air travel?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	1 <i>Yes</i>	-	-	-
<b>4.6 Waterborne Transportation</b> (weight: 2.0%) <i>Will the project enhance, expand, or benefit waterborne transportation or related port/dock/ramp access or opportunities?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	1 <i>Yes</i>	-	-	-

Exhibit 3.3.3 – Project Evaluation Criteria and Rating Scales (cont'd)

Category and Criteria (Description)	Criteria Rating Scale (Lesser Benefit or Priority <-----> Higher Benefit or Priority)				
<b>5 - System Sustainability and Livability</b> (weight: 18.4%)					
<b>5.1 Environmental Justice Area</b> (weight: 2.1%) <i>Is the project located near an EJ population and/or will it otherwise provide distinct EJ benefits or enhancements?</i>	0 <i>No Impact</i>	1 <i>Enhancement</i>	-	-	-
<b>5.2 Recreational Opportunity</b> (weight: 2.4%) <i>To what extent might the project add, enhance, or otherwise benefit recreational opportunities for residents or visitors?</i>	0 <i>None</i>	0.25 <i>Locally</i>	0.5 <i>Countywide</i>	1 <i>Regionally</i>	-
<b>5.3 Local Planning</b> (weight: 5.3%) <i>Is the project identified or supported by an existing municipal comprehensive plan or other locally-adopted plan or study?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	1 <i>Yes</i>	-	-	-
<b>5.4 Smart Transportation</b> (weight: 8.6%) <i>Will project-related transportation contexts and land use impacts be consistent with Smart Transportation principles?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	1 <i>Yes</i>	-	-	-
<b>6 - System Efficiency and Preservation</b> (weight: 23.6%)					
<b>6.1 AADT</b> (weight: 4.6%) <i>What is the estimated daily traffic volume at the project location?</i>	0 <i>N/A</i>	0.125 <i>ADT &lt; 5000</i>	0.25 <i>5000-9999</i>	0.5 <i>10000-19999</i>	1 <i>ADT ≥ 20000</i>
<b>6.2 Route Significance</b> (weight: 1.9%) <i>Is the project located along the National Highway System, a Pennsylvania Byway, or other identified route of significance?</i>	0 <i>No</i>	1 <i>Yes</i>	-	-	-
<b>6.3 Maintenance Scope</b> (weight: 5.3%) <i>Will the project address transportation system maintenance at a single or isolated location, along a corridor, or area-wide?</i>	0 <i>None</i>	0.25 <i>Isolated</i>	0.5 <i>Corridor</i>	1 <i>Area-Wide</i>	-
<b>6.4 Operations Scope</b> (weight: 2.5%) <i>Will the project address transportation system operations at a single or isolated location, along a corridor, or area-wide?</i>	0 <i>None</i>	0.25 <i>Isolated</i>	0.5 <i>Corridor</i>	1 <i>Area-Wide</i>	-
<b>6.5 Existing Deficiency</b> (weight: 9.4%) <i>Will the project address one or more deficiencies (e.g., Poor IRI, SD-Bridge, ADA ramps, signal delay, drainage, etc.)?</i>	0 <i>N/A</i>	0.5 <i>One</i>	1 <i>Multiple</i>	-	-



