

FMSIB's Method of Analysis

The Board utilizes both a broad based Board project selection team and a technical scoring team to evaluate road, rail, and waterway proposals. The process involves both a qualitative and quantitative evaluation. The project selection process is detailed in this section.

- 1. Call for Projects issued** – Announcements are sent out to every city, county, WSDOT region, and port in the state. Applications, guidelines, and instructions are available on the FMSIB Web site.
- 2. Six-Year Plan** – Due to the dynamic nature of freight mobility, the Board determined that, to remain nimble and relevant to actual freight movement, adopted projects should be in a six-year window—more than six years and it is difficult to hold partnerships together; less than six years and it is difficult to get through engineering, permitting, right-of-way, and environmental requirements to advance projects.
- 3. Project Selection team assembled** – Board team consist of Board members representing cities, counties, ports, rail, trucking, and maritime. A technical team consisting of a representative from CRAB (County Road Administration Board), WAC (Washington Association of Cities), WPPA (Washington Public Ports Association), WSDOT (Washington State Department of Transportation), BNSF (BNSF Railway Company), UP (Union Pacific Railroad), and WTA (Washington Trucking Associations).
- 4. Project submission deadline** – Project applications are due 4 to 6 weeks after the call for projects is announced.
- 5. Project application** – Copies of all submitted applications are copied and sent to each member of the Board team and the technical team for their review, evaluation and scoring. Teams are given 3 to 5 weeks for their review, depending upon the number of applications to be considered.
- 6. Engineering Review** – An engineering review of all applications is conducted to verify numerical and engineering claims.
- 7. Scoring** – Scores from individual scoring sheets are entered into either the technical matrix or the Board matrix with individual scores. An average is calculated for each question and a composite score is tabulated for each group.
- 8. Evaluation Meeting** – Both teams meet to review the scores and differences on individual questions between the two teams. Adjustments are made if there are any corrections requested by scorers. The teams discuss each application and their score to determine which projects should advance for final consideration. A list of additional questions is developed for each project that will advance.

- 9. Correspondence** – Projects that are selected to advance to final consideration receive an invitation to attend a face-to-face meeting with the selection teams and a list of questions they are asked to answer at the meeting. Projects that are not advanced to final consideration receive a letter explaining that while their project has merit it failed to demonstrate a high value for freight mobility. Projects that wish to appeal the rejection are offered the opportunity to address the Board at the next meeting date.
- 10. Face-to-Face Meeting** – Project sponsors meet in 20- to 30-minute sessions with selection team members and discuss the remaining questions, project beneficiaries, anticipated partnerships, and freight benefit. After each meeting the selection teams discuss whether the project should be added to the FMSIB list, the appropriate share of freight benefit, and the dollar and percentage contribution to be recommended to the full board. (Occasionally, an additional project cost review is requested and an evaluation of project components is undertaken to determine an appropriate freight share of project costs).
- 11. Adoption** – All submitted applications are reviewed during a public meeting and the projects that are recommended to the Board are discussed. Both the recommendation to adopt the projects and the specific recommendation of the appropriate state freight share of the financial partnership are considered. If there are comments and/or appeals to the recommendations, they are heard and considered before the final vote. The Board then votes on the recommendations and the projects are added to the FMSIB list, including the dollar and percentage assigned to each project. Once adopted, projects cannot apply again or have the amount awarded increased, even if costs go up.