



EDWARD J. COLLINS, JR. CENTER FOR PUBLIC MANAGEMENT
JOHN W. MCCORMACK GRADUATE SCHOOL OF POLICY AND GLOBAL STUDIES
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Sean Cronin
Senior Deputy Commissioner
Division of Local Services
100 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114

January 6, 2020

Dear Mr. Cronin:

With the support of a grant from the Community Compact Best Practices Program, the Town of Swampscott received training and templates from the Collins Center to support the Town's implementation of the Center's capital project scoring methodology.

In November 2019, Collins Center staff held two training sessions, one for municipal staff and the other for the Town's Capital Improvement Committee. The sessions included a review of the substance of the scoring methodology as well as a discussion of the logistics of implementing the methodology in Swampscott. After the training sessions, the Collins Center staff shared a users' guide, sample capital request form, and a capital needs assessment template spreadsheet that includes the scoring tools. These materials are appended.

The Collins Center staff will remain available to the Town staff and committee members throughout the remainder of fiscal year 2020 to answer questions and troubleshoot any issues related to capital project scoring.

I would like to thank the Community Compact Cabinet for providing funding for this project through the Best Practices Program. This funding allowed the Town of Swampscott to improve the objectivity and transparency of its capital planning process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Ward'.

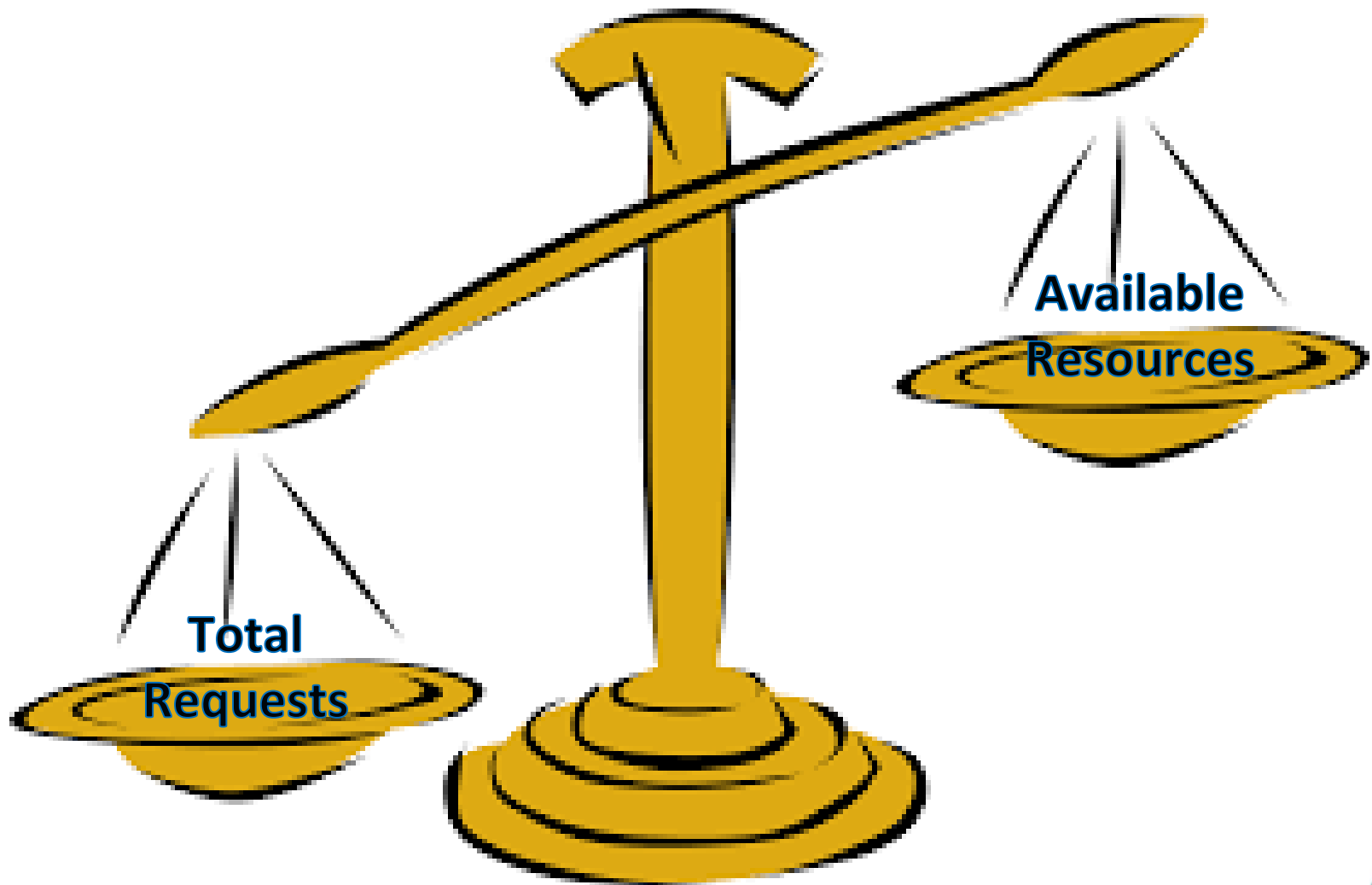
Michael Ward
Director
Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management
McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies
UMass Boston

Capital Project Scoring Methodology Users' Guide for the Town of Swampscott

November 25, 2019

EDWARD J. COLLINS, JR. CENTER FOR PUBLIC MANAGEMENT
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Why Should Projects be Scored?



How Should Projects Be Scored?

- ▶ Evaluating and judging projects relative to each other is difficult
- ▶ Typically, the majority of projects have significant merits, as well as local champions
- ▶ According to Section 17 of the Town's General Bylaws, the Capital Improvement Committee:

“shall consider the relative need, impact, timing and cost of these expenditures and the effect each will have on the financial position of the Town”

Collins Center Methodology – Areas of Consideration

- 1. Does the project further the Town's adherence to laws, regulations, and best practices?**
- 2. Does the project align with established plans, goals, and priorities of the Town?**
- 3. What is the public impact of the project?**
- 4. What is the financial impact of the project?**
- 5. What is the operational impact of the project?**

Points Summary

Criterion	Point Range
State/Federal mandate, legal obligation, or imminent threat	FLAG
Material improvement to health, safety, or legal liability	10
Advancement of plans, goals, and priorities	20
Department priority	10 or 20
Material improvement or expansion of service, or prevention of disruptions of service	20
Wide distribution of benefit	10
Positive impact on underserved community or unmet community need	10
Economic benefits	5
Environmental benefits	5
Impact on operating budget	10 or 20
Availability and likelihood of external funding	5 to 30
Risk and impact of failure	25
Enhancement of operational effectiveness or efficiency	25
Total	200

Does the project further adherence to laws, regulations, & best practices?

Guiding Questions

- **Is the project mandated by the State or Federal government?**
- **Does the Town have a legal obligation to complete the project?**
- **Is there an imminent threat that the project addresses?**

Examples

- **Upgrades to a wastewater treatment facility, repairs to a structurally-deficient bridge or dam, or environmental measures subject to an EPA/DEP order**

Points

- **FLAG (receives top priority consideration)**

Does the project further adherence to laws, regulations, & best practices?

Guiding Questions

- ▶ **Does the project materially improve a condition that poses a potential threat to public health or safety?**
- ▶ **Does the project materially reduce legal liability, including serious deficiencies related to staff working conditions?**

Examples

- ▶ **Measures to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), repaving a road in significant disrepair, projects to enhance climate resilience, or replacement of vehicles with non-functioning safety features**

Points

- ▶ **10 points**

Does the project align with plans, goals, & priorities?

Guiding Questions

- ▶ **Does the project advance the Town's adopted plans or goals in any area: public safety, education, economic development, culture/recreation, financial, etc.?**

Examples

- ▶ **Goals, objectives, or action steps in a Master Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan, Economic Development Plan, Neighborhood Revitalization Plan, Housing Plan, School Improvement Plan, Facilities Needs Assessment, Hazard Mitigation Plan, policy document, chief executive goal statement, etc.**

Points

- ▶ **20 points**

Does the project align with plans, goals, & priorities?

Guiding Questions

- ▶ How does the department perceive the priority of the project on a scale from 1 (highest priority) to 5 (lowest priority)?

Points

Priority	Points
1	20
2	10
3	0
4	0
5	0

What is the public impact of the project?

Guiding Questions

- ▶ **Does the project noticeably enhance customer service? Alternatively, does the project prevent negative impacts to service (i.e. threats to service continuity)?**
- ▶ **Does the project expand services or extend existing services to new customers?**

Examples

- ▶ **Reconstructing a road, replacing playground equipment, and extending sewer service; Prevention of closed facilities or repeated water/sewer breaks resulting in disruption of daily life; Also, critical projects that allow the municipality to maintain recreation areas and roads to community standards such as snow and ice response vehicles, road graders, etc.**

Points

- ▶ **20 points**

What is the public impact of the project?

Guiding Questions

- ▶ **Does the project positively and directly impact all or a substantial portion of the community?**
- ▶ **Note: Projects in this category should be those that are utilized or “seen” by the population itself.**

Examples

- ▶ **Downtown park revitalization that is utilized by many residents, intersection reconstruction for a major roadway, or new trash toters for all residents**

Points

- ▶ **10 points**

What is the public impact of the project?

Guiding Questions

- ▶ **Does the project positively impact a traditionally underserved segment of the community or meet an unmet need for the broader community?**

Examples

- ▶ **Creation of a neighborhood playground/recreation facilities in an underserved area, construction of a branch library or purchase of a mobile library unit, or projects sited within an environmental justice community**

Points

- ▶ **10 points**

What is the public impact of the project?

Guiding Questions

- **Does the project provide economic benefits to the Town, such as adding to the tax base, promoting development, creating jobs, or revitalizing neighborhoods?**

Examples

- **Extension of utility service to new areas, beautification efforts in commercial districts, or hazardous site clean-up (for redevelopment)**

Points

- **5 points**

What is the public impact of the project?

Guiding Questions

- ▶ **Does the project provide environmental benefits, such as enhancements to water quality, air quality, or ecological connectedness?**

Examples

- ▶ **Dam removal for river restoration, urban shade tree planting program, or acquisition of land for watershed protection**

Points

- ▶ **5 points**

What is the financial impact of the project?

Guiding Questions

- ▶ **What is the project's impact on the operating budget? Does the project raise revenue or reduce operating costs?**

Examples

- ▶ **New parking meters that would raise revenue, replacing older windows with energy efficient windows, or replacing a vehicle where significant repair costs are anticipated**
- ▶ **Note: Requires a subjective estimation of the significance of impact**

Points

- ▶ **20 points for significant positive impact; or**
- ▶ **10 points for any positive impact**

What is the financial impact of the project?

Guiding Questions

- ▶ What is the availability and likelihood of external funding for the project?

Examples

- ▶ Projects potentially funded with State/Federal grants, State earmarks, Community Preservation Act funds, private donations/grants, “Friends of...” fundraising, etc.
- ▶ Note: Requires a somewhat subjective assessment of the likelihood of receiving the funding

Points

Percentage of Project Cost Paid for by Outside Funding	<u>Likelihood of Funding</u>		
	Approved or Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Only a Possibility
At least 2/3 of Cost	30 points	15	0
1/3 – 2/3 of Cost	20	10	0
Up to 1/3 of Cost	10	5	0

What is the operational impact of the project?

Guiding Questions

- ▶ **What is the risk and impact of potential asset failure or failure to complete the project?**
- ▶ **If the asset is likely to fail: Are there acceptable back-up options? Would failure be significantly disruptive?**

Examples

- ▶ **Roof failure that would lead to a school closing, failure of a plow where the municipality has no back-up plows, or risk of repeated water breaks**

Points

- ▶ **25 points**

What is the operational impact of the project?

Guiding Questions

- ▶ **Would the project enhance operational effectiveness?**
- ▶ **Would the project make staff for efficient?**

Examples

- ▶ **Correcting issues where staff are slowed down by non-functional systems or asset downtime; Newer technology that substantially improves work performance or efficiency.**
- ▶ **Tablets that allow staff to complete reports in the field in real time or new equipment that replaces under-performing equipment; For example, a quint versus a pumper truck**

Points

- ▶ **25 points**

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Practical Considerations

- ▶ **Changes to form and data collection process**
- ▶ **Changes to timing and communication with departments**
- ▶ **Sample form/questions and scoring sheet**
- ▶ **Each member of the CIC independently scores and then differences are discussed**
- ▶ **Methodology can be customized and revisited periodically**
- ▶ **Remember: Scores are an important tool, but not the only consideration when deciding about inclusion in the CIP**

Other Questions or Comments?

Capital Project Request Form

Please fill out a new form for each proposed project.

1. Please provide your name and preferred contact method.

Name

Email Address

Phone Number

2. Department

3. Proposed Project Name

4. Project Location (Street, Building, Floor, etc.)

5. Priority - High Priority = 1 - Low Priority = 5

This is not a ranking of projects. You may have more than one project with the same priority. This is also not an indication of urgency. High priority projects may be scheduled for later years.

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4

☐ 5

6. Project Description (1-3 sentences): Describe name/make/model of item to be purchased and what, if anything, is being replaced. Describe extent of work to be done on facilities projects. Indicate if project will require consulting or design work.

7. Project Justification: Describe why the project is necessary. Justification may include the condition of the existing asset, financial savings, number of people impacted, environmental sustainability, public safety, expanded learning or recreational opportunities, or ADA compliance, to name a few.

8. Does the project serve an under-served population (including environmental justice populations) or meet an unmet need in the community? For example, expansion of transportation services for seniors or a neighborhood's first playground.

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please provide an explanation.

9. Should the project be combined or coincide with another project?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, which project(s)?

10. Please indicate the project costs by year.

FY2021

FY2022

FY2023

FY2024

FY2025

11. Is there a grant or alternative funding source available for this project? How likely is it that a grant will be received?

- ☐ Very likely to get grant, or it's already been received
- ☐ Somewhat likely to get grant
- ☐ Small chance to get grant
- ☐ I have no idea

Please specify grant name and program type (State, Federal, Private, etc.) and provide any additional details you know about the grant (for example, max award, matching requirements, etc.)

12. Will the project have an impact on the operating budget? An example would be avoiding repair costs by replacing an old vehicle. Another example is paying a driver for a new transport van.

- ☐ Yes, the project will impact the operating budget
- ☐ No, the project will not impact the operating budget
- ☐ I don't know

If yes, please explain the impact on the operating budget, indicating whether the project will save more or cost money.

13. If you have any documentation related to this project, such as price quotes, specs, or photos, please upload. Max 4 uploads.

Choose File

No file chosen

14. If you have any documentation related to this project, such as price quotes, specs, or photos, please upload.

Choose File

No file chosen

15. If you have any documentation related to this project, such as price quotes, specs, or photos, please upload.

Choose File

No file chosen

16. If you have any documentation related to this project, such as price quotes, specs, or photos, please upload.

Choose File

No file chosen

Thank you. Please contact Sarah Concannon at sarah.concannon@umb.edu or (978) 328-3372 with questions or concerns.

17. Questions or Comments: