

Funding Priorities Tool Summary

Purpose

This memo provides a summary of the process and an overview of the results from the online Funding Priorities Tool. The results helped influence the recommendations of *Moving Dutchess Forward*.

Outreach

The Funding Priorities Tool was developed as a participatory budgeting exercise to gather public input to inform *Moving Dutchess Forward*, especially the recommendations for [Transformative Investments](#). The online tool asked participants to choose how they would distribute \$100 of transportation funding over various project categories. Categories included Road & Bridge Maintenance & Operations; Electric Vehicle Charging Stations; Shared-use Paths & Rail Trails; Train Access Improvements; Walking & Bicycling Improvements; Safety Improvements at High Crash Locations; Complete Streets Corridor Improvements; Bus Stop Improvements; and Bus Service Improvements. For the purposes of this summary, results for Bus Stop and Bus Service Improvements were combined. The tool also allowed participants to submit their own project comments and ideas.

The Funding Priorities Tool was launched on May 3, 2021 and closed on June 7, 2021. The team promoted the tool via a link on the [plan website](#), a social media post, two Constant Contact e-blasts to a contact list of over 500 stakeholders (including 63 media contacts), and promotion of the tool at a DCTC Planning Committee meeting. There were 56 responses in total.

Results

Participants allocated a total of \$5,600 over eight project categories. Table 1 below shows the total amount of funding prioritized for each category as a dollar value.

Project Category	Amount
Road & Bridge Maintenance & Operations	\$1,269
Complete Streets Corridor Improvements	\$897
Bus Service & Bus Stop Improvements	\$854
Walking and Bicycling Improvements	\$729
Safety Improvements at High Crash Locations	\$633
Shared-use Paths & Rail Trails	\$505
Train Access Improvements	\$426
Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	\$287

Table 1 – Total funding in dollars by project category

Overall, participants put the most funding towards Road & Bridge Maintenance & Operations, accounting for more than 20% of total funding. The next highest-funded project categories were Complete Streets Corridor Improvements at 16%, followed by Bus Service & Bus Stop Improvements at 15%. See Figure 1 below for project category funding as a percentage of total funding allocated.

Comments and project ideas for these categories show that people value Complete Streets for their ability to accommodate all modes of transportation and promote economic activity. Participants' ideas for bus service improvements included enhancing the Dial-A-Ride service, increasing transit accessibility, and reducing fares.

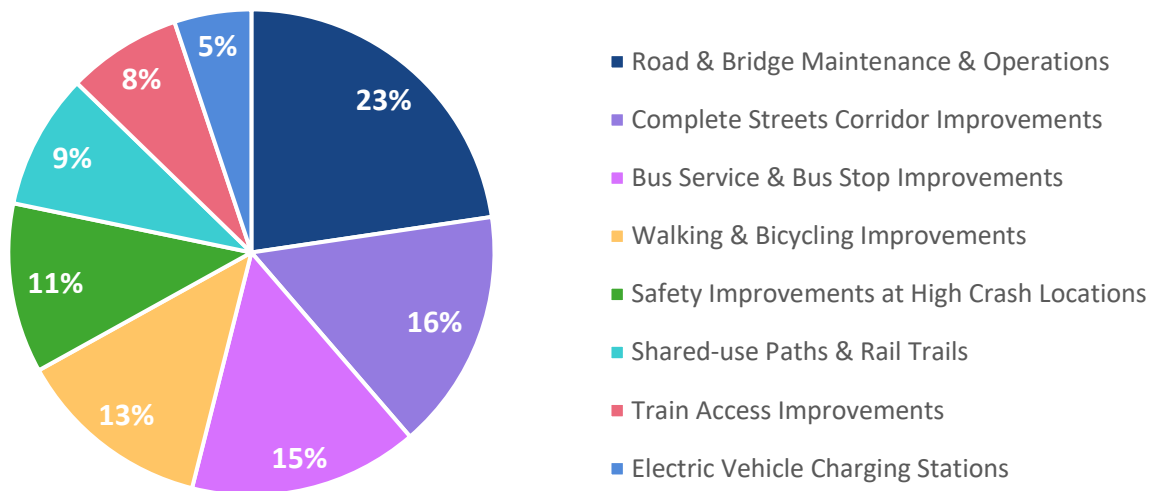


Figure 1 – Project category funding as a percentage of total funding allocated.

Other highly-funded categories included Walking & Bicycling Improvements and Safety Improvements at High Crash Locations. Some participants suggested adding bike lanes on popular routes and using creative strategies to promote active transportation, such as a “car free day.” Also, multiple participants recommended design improvements to the Route 9/44/55 Interchange and the Route 44/55 arterials in Poughkeepsie.

Although Train Access and Shared-use Paths & Trails received less funding from participants, many comments and projects ideas were submitted for these categories. Participants suggested electrifying the Metro-North service, adding trolley or rail service along the Beacon Line, and constructing the Beacon-Hopewell Rail Trail. Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations received the least funding. One participant suggested using non-transportation funding for this category.

Summary

This funding prioritization exercise showed that while participants recognize the importance of road and bridge maintenance and safety improvements, they are also very interested in projects that involve transit and active transportation. The tool proved useful in understanding how the public would prioritize transportation funding, and the results will help inform DCTC’s ongoing consideration of Transformative Investments.