FHWA National PEL Framework

Technical Assistance for Kentucky Transportation Commission, Arizona DOT, and Texas DOT, February 2023 – August 2023

Background

The following provides a report of Technical Assistance activities provided to Kentucky, Texas, and Arizona between February 2023 and August 2023 for the FHWA National Planning and Environment Linkage (PEL) Framework contract. Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) is an important initiative for FHWA to improve interagency collaboration, data accessibility, and documentation of planning products so that its relevant and useful in NEPA. State-to-state collaboration, and the sharing of ideas and notable practices, is an important way to advance PEL processes within each state. FHWA has begun providing technical assistance to states to further their PEL programs and expects to continue to offer such assistance over the coming years.

Description of Assistance Provided

Renaissance collaborated with FHWA to identify opportunities for state technical assistance based on the information shared during previously held individual state workshops and a Peer Exchange among six state DOTs. Renaissance prepared a draft workplan for providing technical assistance to Texas and Kentucky in February, and Arizona shortly after in March of 2023. Renaissance worked with each state to determine the individual technical assistance needs which are detailed below.

Kentucky

The team worked with Kentucky Transportation Commission staff to assess two PEL scopes of work and submitted documentation on opportunities to integrate the National PEL Framework to Kentucky in May of 2023. A total of three calls were held between February and May of 2023 including an introductory call and two follow up technical assistance calls to discuss the PEL study scopes and opportunities for improvement in line with the National PEL Framework.

The Renaissance team reviewed the scope of work for the I-65 Interchange and Connector PEL Study and extracted all text related to the three main pillars of the National PEL Framework. During our coordination call on March 27, 2023, these topics were discussed with the KYTC team, and the takeaways were compiled in another document included in this document.

Texas

The team worked with Texas DOT staff to identify opportunity areas and conducted a series of four meetings from February to August 2023 with TxDOT Central Office and District planning representatives. Prior to these calls, Renaissance investigated current TxDOT planning and environmental processes and prepared materials to explain the substance of the FHWA National PEL Framework in general terms so TxDOT could consider how they might enhance decision making to better achieve TxDOT objectives. Renaissance also presented information explaining how systems-oriented transportation planning studies can provide relevant products and decisions useful for the NEPA process. During the calls, participants identified areas to strengthen their PEL practices to become more programmatic rather than project based, focusing on data management and access, documentation, and collaboration and integration. These opportunities were provided to participants in a summary document which is included in this document. In June 2023, Renaissance also attended a workshop to discuss and provide input on the development of TxDOT's PEL Handbook.

Arizona

The team worked with Arizona to explore opportunities to expand and improve their data organization and analysis in accordance with the National PEL Framework. A total of four calls were held between March and August 2023 including an introductory call, two follow up technical assistance calls, and a final peer exchange workshop between ADOT and FDOT. During these calls, Renaissance explained the substance of the FHWA PEL Framework in the context of the core pillar 2 (Data Organization and Analysis - Incorporation of Reliable Data in Analysis). Renaissance then coordinated and held a virtual peer engagement session between FHWA, Arizona DOT, Florida DOT and University of Florida GeoPlan Center. During this exchange, the two states were asked to develop presentations and information that conveys their experience, challenges, and lesson learned for organizing a data library and clearinghouse. The discussion from this exchange is included in this document.

Applying the National PEL Framework to Kentucky Transportation Commission (KYTC) PEL Study Scopes

May 17, 2023

Considerations for future PEL scopes, and for implementation of PEL studies

Background: The *US 60 Ohio River Crossing PEL Study* and the *I-64 Interchange and Connector PEL Study* are KYTC's first PEL studies. The recent *I-64 Interchange and Connector Study* offers opportunities to set the tone for continued advancement of KYTC's PEL program and for implementation to be aligned with the National PEL Framework. The scope of work sets the stage for the effort that KYTC has already put into implementing their PEL practices. It contains elements that align with the National PEL Framework and its core pillars of collaboration, inclusion of data, and documentation.

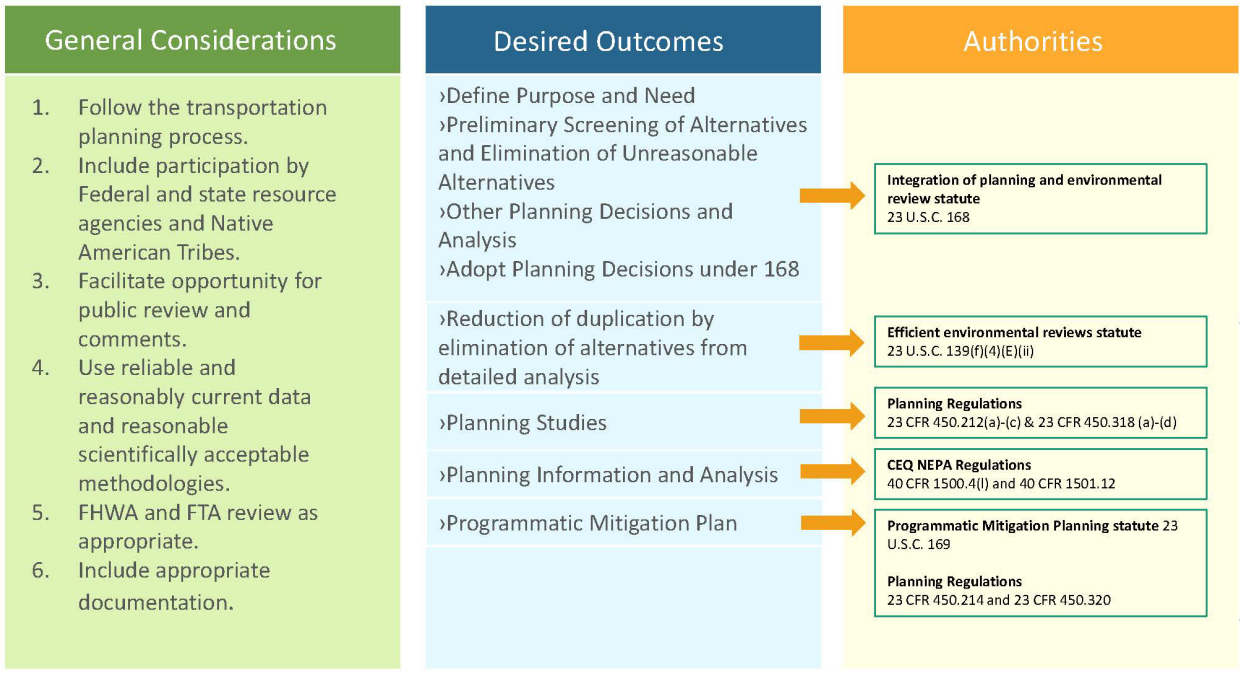
During our collaborations, we discussed the importance of clearly distinguishing the PEL study analyses with those supporting subsequent NEPA studies both in terms of the level of detail and expected outcomes. This can help to achieve alignment between the analyses supporting the PEL study and NEPA evaluation, such that the NEPA study builds on the PEL study outcomes and minimizes duplication of effort. The I-64 Interchange and Connector PEL work scope articulates the analyses that will be conducted, as well as how stakeholders will be engaged and how their input will shape the planning analysis and decisions.

Future PEL scopes could be strengthened by describing how the outcomes of the PEL studies will inform the subsequent NEPA phase, as well as how stakeholder engagement will continue from PEL study through NEPA environmental review.

Defining the appropriate level of analysis for the PEL study is important to optimize PEL benefits and efficiencies. The analysis should be adequate to develop planning products and decisions that inform a subsequent NEPA study, such as developing a clear understanding of Purpose and Need by the public and resource agency stakeholders and conducting an environmental screening to eliminate unreasonable alternatives from further study in NEPA. Continued collaboration among the DOT planning and environment staff is equally important.

Figure 1 below summarizes various considerations, outcomes and associated PEL authorities. The differences in desired outcomes illustrate the flexibility in applying PEL and convey the different authorities that are applicable for different scenarios. Becoming familiar with the PEL authorities can help to strengthen work scopes to align with the PEL conditions and requirements applicable to the planning and environmental review processes, respectively.

Figure 1. Planning and Environment Linkages Authorities



The following considerations emerged out of our discussion with KYTC staff for inclusion in future PEL study scopes and for potential integration into the current studies.

Documentation of processes and planning products to support subsequent NEPA activities

Given that KYTC has initiated its first two PEL Studies, there has not been an established method/requirements for documentation. For the specific planning products from these studies (e.g. purpose and need; alternatives evaluation and elimination of unreasonable alternatives) to be adopted or incorporated by reference within NEPA at a later point, there must be clear and sufficient documentation that is accessible to those who will later need them. The planning analysis should be thorough and objective, and the rationale for decision-making should be well documented.

The *I-64 Interchange and Connector* PEL Scope outlines various types of decisions and processes to be documented. The following considerations could strengthen documentation in future PEL study scopes:

- Consider including language in the scope that clearly requires documentation of study outcomes in a way that will inform the future NEPA scope and process.
- Consider methods to ensure the documentation of planning products are made easily available to NEPA practitioners after the PEL study is complete.

For example, a beneficial expected outcome of a PEL study is that it will clearly articulate the project context and purpose and need for the project. The preparation of an initial purpose and need statement that is developed in collaboration with and understood by project stakeholders can build trust among partner agencies, reduce exhaustive discussions about the project purpose and need during NEPA, and result in time and cost efficiencies.

Another expected benefit of a PEL study is that it will eliminate unreasonable alternatives (with good documentation of the process and rationale for elimination) prior to a subsequent NEPA study. Characterizing the analytical process and stakeholder engagement, particularly with environmental resource agencies, to identify and eliminate unreasonable alternatives from further consideration in NEPA can result in efficiencies and cost savings.

A challenge expressed by KYTC included communicating the value of having thorough documentation in planning. Taking time to communicate the importance and value of good documentation to project managers, as well as providing tools and a methodology for supportive and accessible documentation, can help address this issue. KYTC already employs project tracking software where project development agreements or commitments are communicated and tracked. KYTC should consider exploring the opportunity for PEL documentation to be included within this software platform so that it is accessible in NEPA. Currently, there are varying levels of documentation employed by project managers. Providing standardized templates to support documentation and training on their use could also help to address this challenge.

Some resources and notable practices for documentation of planning analyses in advance of NEPA from other states, namely Florida and North Carolina, are described and linked below.

North Carolina Interagency Coordination Protocol Documentation Guidance and Tools

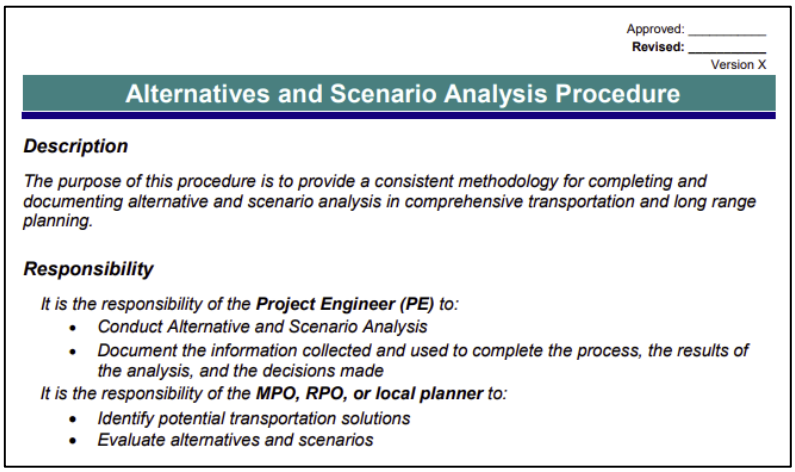
North Carolina DOT established a coordination protocol with the Institute for Transportation Research and Education to support long range transportation planning in collaboration with important process partners. The Protocol includes guidance on saving information to the comprehensive transportation plan protocol and on collecting documentation from agencies as they provide information on plans and primary data. This guidance is referenced throughout the six protocols and the procedure to update the protocol.

North Carolina Problem Statement

In North Carolina, Problem Statements are developed with the goal of being used as a starting point for NEPA or SEPA. They therefore are also intended to save time in preparing or agreeing to the purpose and need statement during project development. Detailed Procedure and Guidance documents are linked as resources with specifics included on necessary documentation.

North Carolina Alternatives and Scenario Analysis

North Carolina has created a procedure that provides a consistent methodology for completing and documenting alternative and scenario analysis in comprehensive transportation and long-range planning. Alternatives and scenario analysis can vary greatly depending on available staff and funding resources, so a consistent procedure for analysis and documentation can ensure that results are useful in long range planning and for future project development. An Alternatives and Scenario Analysis Procedure template and Flowchart are included as linked resources.



Approved: _____
Revised: _____
Version X

Alternatives and Scenario Analysis Procedure

Description

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a consistent methodology for completing and documenting alternative and scenario analysis in comprehensive transportation and long range planning.

Responsibility

*It is the responsibility of the **Project Engineer (PE)** to:*

- *Conduct Alternative and Scenario Analysis*
- *Document the information collected and used to complete the process, the results of the analysis, and the decisions made*

*It is the responsibility of the **MPO, RPO, or local planner** to:*

- *Identify potential transportation solutions*
- *Evaluate alternatives and scenarios*

Environmental Screening Tool Overview (fdot.gov) and Efficient Transportation Decision Making (fla-etat.org – Document Library)

Florida's Environmental Screening Tool (EST) stores project diaries of project analyses, commitments and decisions that have been made from early project screenings. The information is packaged as a Planning or Programming Summary Report that is used as a reference in support of the NEPA scope and study. Planning products, including the project description, project purpose and need statement, participating and cooperating agencies, alternatives evaluation, and agency comments and commitments are housed within the EST. These documents can be searched for within the above linked Document Library.

Interagency and Intra-agency engagement

The following are considerations to strengthen inter- and intra-agency engagement in future PEL study scopes:

- Consider using scope language that is clear on the intent of engagement with the public and stakeholders (e.g. why are they meeting, how will they collaborate, and what are the expected outcomes).
- Consider using scope language that makes clear how engagement will support development of planning products, such as purpose and need statements and the identification and reduction of alternatives.
- Consider scope language that clarifies how project information will be provided to stakeholders, including resource agencies, so they understand the project and can comment in a meaningful way. This includes information about:

- Project context;
- Project purpose and need;
- How initial alternatives were defined;
- Process/method for resource agencies to provide commentary.

Another challenge expressed by KYTC involved methods to ensure engagement of environmental resource agencies within their PEL initiatives. In Florida and North Carolina, the DOT has funded positions with partner resource agencies to participate in their PEL programs. Agency operating agreements have been developed that specify the agency roles and responsibilities for participation in their PEL programs. KYTC has funded positions within the Army Corps of Engineers and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Consideration should be given to funding other partner agency positions (either full-time or part-time as warranted) with clear agency roles and responsibilities in support of KYTC's PEL program.

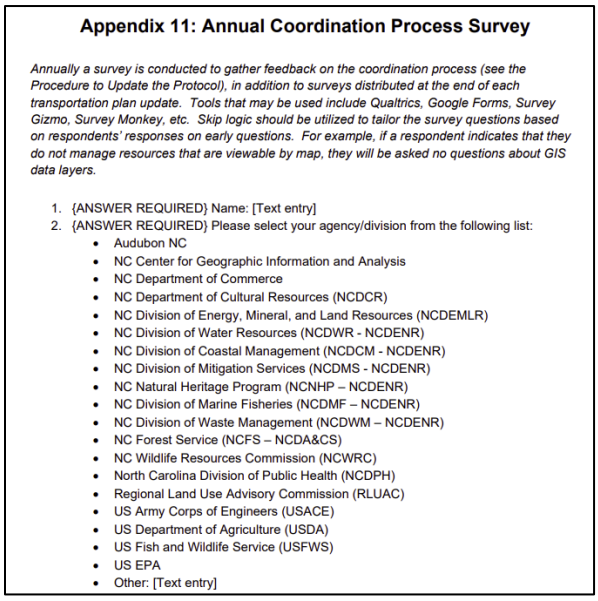
KYTC also mentioned the challenge of coordinating with resource agencies. It is common that contacts lists are upwards of 80 people, so establishing the appropriate singular points of contact for certain topics is important. Clearly communicating the type of engagement desired and the reason for the engagement can help to define the appropriate contacts. Operating agreements can also help to establish points of contact and specific expectations for collaboration and engagement. In addition, setting specific touch points with the designated agency representatives throughout the life of a PEL study, for example, can help to limit the overinclusion of supporting agency staff. In Florida, for example, there is a primary point of contact with each environmental resource agency, and their responsibility is to coordinate among agency colleagues to ensure coordinated input for project reviews and correspondence.

Notable Practices for Engagement

Interagency Coordination Protocol for North Carolina's Transportation Process

North Carolina DOT established a coordination protocol with the Institute for Transportation Research and Education to support long range transportation planning in collaboration with important process partners. These partners include MPOs, Rural Planning Organizations, FHWA, FTA, environmental resource agencies, local governments, land use agencies, and other entities participating in long range transportation plan development. The protocol includes background information on how it was developed which includes a variety of different outreach and engagement efforts. The protocol describes how to initiate contact, coordinate between agencies on data and goals, validate priorities, coordinate on projects, and submit final plans. It also includes a survey that is sent to resource agencies at the completion of transportation planning processes to provide feedback on the quality of coordination. The protocol also includes example email templates for communication at different stages in the transportation planning process, and the Annual Coordination Process Survey to gather feedback on

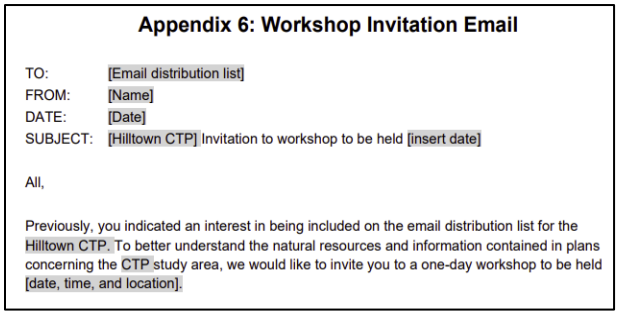
coordination processes pertaining to different resources. The figures below show example tools included in the protocol to coordinate between agencies.



Appendix 11: Annual Coordination Process Survey

Annually a survey is conducted to gather feedback on the coordination process (see the Procedure to Update the Protocol), in addition to surveys distributed at the end of each transportation plan update. Tools that may be used include Qualtrics, Google Forms, Survey Gizmo, Survey Monkey, etc. Skip logic should be utilized to tailor the survey questions based on respondents' responses on early questions. For example, if a respondent indicates that they do not manage resources that are viewable by map, they will be asked no questions about GIS data layers.

1. {ANSWER REQUIRED} Name: [Text entry]
2. {ANSWER REQUIRED} Please select your agency/division from the following list:
   - Audubon NC
   - NC Center for Geographic Information and Analysis
   - NC Department of Commerce
   - NC Department of Cultural Resources (NCDCR)
   - NC Division of Energy, Mineral, and Land Resources (NCDEMLR)
   - NC Division of Water Resources (NCDWR - NCDENR)
   - NC Division of Coastal Management (NCDCM - NCDENR)
   - NC Division of Mitigation Services (NCDMS - NCDENR)
   - NC Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP – NCDENR)
   - NC Division of Marine Fisheries (NCDMF – NCDENR)
   - NC Division of Waste Management (NCDWM – NCDENR)
   - NC Forest Service (NCFS – NCDA&CS)
   - NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC)
   - North Carolina Division of Public Health (NCDPH)
   - Regional Land Use Advisory Commission (RLUAC)
   - US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
   - US Department of Agriculture (USDA)
   - US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
   - US EPA
   - Other: [Text entry]



Appendix 6: Workshop Invitation Email

TO: [Email distribution list]
FROM: [Name]
DATE: [Date]
SUBJECT: [Hilltown CTP] Invitation to workshop to be held [insert date]

All,

Previously, you indicated an interest in being included on the email distribution list for the Hilltown CTP. To better understand the natural resources and information contained in plans concerning the CTP study area, we would like to invite you to a one-day workshop to be held [date, time, and location].

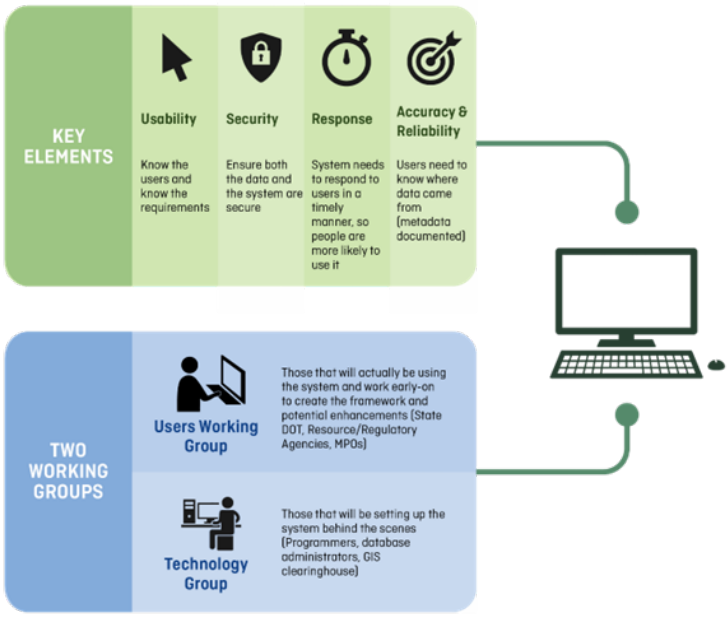
Data Management and Access

KYTC described how interaction with data is done largely on a project-by-project basis rather than through a data clearinghouse. Investing in the creation of a data clearinghouse could provide time savings for the data gathering and analysis phase that is currently conducted for each individual project. The platform that KYTC already uses for project development, ArcGIS hub, could be used as a starting point for a data clearinghouse that supports all planning and project development.

Creating a State GIS Databases to Support PEL

A working group consisting of both users and technology experts is an effective way to organize a data clearinghouse and management structure that fulfills the needs of end users. **Figure 2** shows the key considerations and elements that are pertinent to a successful data organization and management structure and the efficiency of using and viewing the data from the systems planning level to NEPA.

Figure 2. Considerations for Creating a Statewide GIS Database to Support PEL



Data Organization and Accessibility

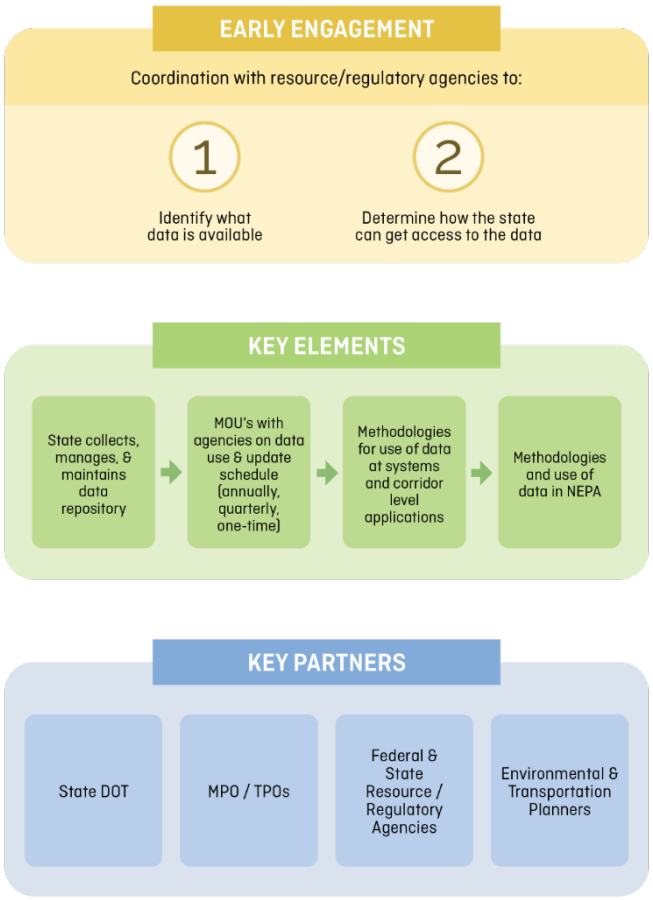
One of the initial considerations in establishing a data clearinghouse is the location and infrastructure requirements for the data repository. It is often best to build upon established data repositories that state or regional agencies may have in place for various planning and research initiatives. Universities and colleges, with GIS staff, can also be a great resource to serve as a data clearinghouse.

Data accessibility is a key consideration. Different data access privileges can be established for different user groups. Data access privileges can range from those serving in database management roles with authority to update and manage data to access privileges that only allow for download and use of data sets. The different access privileges ideally are determined based on the needs and roles of individuals and agencies using the data. Establishing these privileges can help nurture trust among transportation and resource/regulatory agencies, which is essential for obtaining consent from agencies to share data.

Data Management

States looking to establish or refine their data repository will ideally first inventory what data sets they have available and what data are desired or needed to support systems- and corridor-level evaluations. Additionally, it is important to understand how these data sets can be accessed. When establishing a data repository there are several items to consider including data currency and reliability and consistent data formats and mapping standards. To ensure that current and reliable data are accessible, requirements for collecting, maintaining, and updating data must be specified. Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) / Agency Operating Agreements (AOA) between the data clearinghouse entity and the agencies who maintain their own datasets will stipulate the frequency of data updates, metadata requirements, and the format of data. This is a proven method for ensuring access to current, reliable, and usable data. **Figure 3** shows key considerations for a coordinated data management framework.

Figure 3. Data Management Considerations



Notable Practices

University of Florida GeoPlan Center Digital Library

In 1998 the University of Florida GeoPlan Center established a free, web-based digital library of approximately 500 spatial data layers pertaining to Florida. This is known as the Florida Geographic Data Library (FGDL). The FGDL serves as the data clearinghouse for transportation project evaluations supporting Florida's ETDM Process. Data is maintained by the GeoPlan Center, who ensures consistent formatting and access to reliable data. Operating Agreements with Federal and state resource agencies stipulate the reporting and data updating requirements.

Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) Data Catalog

The Regional Data Catalog is a repository of open data managed by DRCOG to support communities in making informed, data-driven decisions in areas including mobility, land use, and changing demographics. The data is regional in scale and is developed and compiled from local governments, data companies, land use and travel models, and data acquisition projects.

Kentucky PEL Scope Analysis

May 12, 2023

Document Purpose:

The Renaissance team reviewed the scope of work for the I-65 Interchange and Connector PEL Study and extracted all text related to the three main pillars of the National PEL Framework. The color coding is explained below, and there are comments for consideration throughout. During our coordination call on March 27, 2023, these topics were discussed with the KYTC team, and the takeaways are compiled in a separate document.

Color legend: Narrative pulled from scope related to documentation, data, and engagement.

- Documentation
- Data
- Engagement

Overarching Questions:

- What PEL authorities are being used to ensure that the planning analysis and decisions can be used in NEPA? Consider referencing the applicable PEL authorities in future PEL scopes.
- Are the scope items highlighted in green being documented in a way such that they're supportive of and useful in NEPA? What have you learned from this in the past? Have there been challenges? How are planning products resulting from the PEL study stored and made available to NEPA practitioners in the next phase?
- For the data, are resource agencies involved in the analysis and selection of relevant data? Does KY have a data clearinghouse for natural, cultural, sociocultural environmental data or is it organized for each project? Is the Kentucky State Clearinghouse a platform to receive input from environmental resource agencies?
- How are these studies distinguished from the analysis in the subsequent NEPA study? Does the scope anticipate clear documentation of how the study outcomes will inform the NEPA scope and process? Consider the level of detail of the analyses and minimize analyses that will be required in the NEPA phase.
- Is it expected that these studies will eliminate unreasonable alternatives (with good documentation of process and rationale for eliminating alternatives) prior to the NEPA study?
- Is there clear intent of engagement with public and stakeholders – why are we meeting with you and what are the expected outcomes? How will engagement refine and document alternatives to be evaluated to minimize redo in NEPA?
- How will project information be provided to stakeholders, resource agencies so they understand the project and can comment in a meaningful way? (e.g. project context, purpose and need, how initial alternatives were defined, process/method for resource agencies to understand alternatives and provide commentary).
- Is there a process for identifying the potential permits/commitments that may be needed?

I-64 Interchange and Connector Scope of Work

- The purpose of this project would be to reduce congestion on the existing roadway network, to enhance mobility within and adjacent to the study area, and to improve connectivity to I-64 in the study area (which extends into Shelby County) as shown in **Figure 1**.
- Qk4 will develop a purpose and need statement during the planning study process to identify mobility and connectivity project issues, goals, and needs within the study area. This statement will be developed in accordance with the KYTC and FHWA guidance.
- Qk4 will assemble and prepare GIS data and aerial mapping for use in project displays and presentations. Background data for the preparation of a project base map will be gathered from available digital orthophotos, KYTC, LOJIC, or other GIS maps. The base map will serve as the starting point for maps used throughout the project.
    - Lane, shoulder and median widths
    - Horizontal curves and vertical grades
    - Bridge geometrics and deficiencies
    - Speed limits
    - Truck Routes
    - Functional Classification and Roadway System Designation
    - Bicycle/pedestrian accommodations and/or available ADA plans
    - Driveways/access points Transit
    - Railroad Crossings
    - Existing ITS/Wayfinding signs
    - Emergency Services facilities such as Fire and Police Stations
- Qk4—and their subconsultants ICF, Corn Island Archaeology, and AECOM—will compile and present environmental data that may affect the design, development, and implementation of any proposed improvements. The types of data collected will include community resources, potential hazardous materials, and noise sensitive receptors. Other features such as aquatic resources (e.g., floodplains, wetlands,
  and sinkholes) shall be identified based on available data. The effort will consist of collecting the electronic databases, data files, and published data to produce a planning level footprint of red flag issues in GIS format. Findings will be incorporated into the draft and final report and materials for project team meeting(s). All red flag elements will be noted in the study as "…to be considered/further evaluated in the next phase of plan development."
- ICF will review and compile available GIS data for key
  resources, including National Wetland Inventory (NWI) mapping, US Geological Survey streams and wells, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplains, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey classifications, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) threatened/endangered species and critical habitats in the vicinity, etc.
- Qk4 and AECOM will prepare a summary of socioeconomic data to be incorporated into the study the consultant team will develop a Resource Agency Coordination Plan,
  including a contact list, coordination activities, and implementation schedule. Updates to the plan will be made throughout the study. Additional information is included in the Public Involvement Plan, appended to this scope of work.
  A spreadsheet documenting appropriate contact persons
  and contact information (e.g., email, phone, mailing address, etc.) will be compiled and updated for the duration of the study effort.

- Using criteria such as how a concept addresses given needs, its performance, costs, and impacts, a screening process will be completed to identify options to eliminate and options to advance for public input and possible future phasing. As part of this step, both qualitative and quantitative data will be compiled to assess the operations/benefits of implementing each concept.
- Costs, transportation benefits (safety, mobility, and capacity impacts),environmental impacts, and community support/opposition will be analyzed to support project team decision-making regarding which Tier 2 concept(s) should advance to preliminary design. Results will be summarized in a matrix for use in project team prioritization decisions.
- Project location maps, existing conditions and safety issues, impacts, relevant summary of public comments on the options, and cost estimate information will be included as appropriate for easy reference.
- Meetings and coordination outlined:
    - Local elected officials (2 meetings)
    - Community advisory group (4 meetings)
    - 2 public meetings
    - Public website/survey
- Formal document will include a final report and executive summary as well as the following documented in appendices:
    - Crash History
    - Traffic Forecast Report
    - Archeological Site Information (confidential, provided via email only)
    - Socioeconomic Study
    - KYTC Geotechnical Overview
    - PEL-related Summary
- As key messages are finalized and updated, the project team can produce fact sheets to provide a quick overview of the project. The fact sheet, if used, could include the project scope, timeline, supporting graphics, website and social media details, and contact information for the project team. Fact sheets could be an effective resource for sharing project information with stakeholders via e-mail messaging or at public events. The fact sheets could also be available for download on the project website.
- For this study, the main groups to engage with include residents, businesses, governmental agencies, elected officials, and community organizations in and around Jefferson and Shelby counties, and local and regional governments, such as Spencer County, as transportation decisions related to this project will directly affect them.
- The study area has experienced notably rapid residential growth over the last few years, a trend that is projected to continue. Therefore, engagement with local land use and transportation planners will be important.
- Input will be incorporated from:
    - Public stakeholders (residents, businesses, community organizations)
    - Local government agencies, including local and regional transportation/transit agencies whose facilities and routes may be impacted by the project
    - Resource agencies, including federal and state agencies responsible for environmental and historical resources, air quality, endangered species, etc.

- Resources Agencies (RA) – RAs will include state, and federal agencies, each of which can provide valuable insight on resources and issues with the study area. These resources include, but are not

limited to, floodplains, wetlands, endangered species, historic and archaeological sites, parks, air quality, wildlife habitat, etc. There are also transportation needs that must be fulfilled and socioeconomic impacts that require consideration. KYTC will use the Kentucky State Clearinghouse submit the Draft report for agency comment. In addition, an opportunity for a virtual meeting will be provided as an effort to encourage input. The coordination will be discussed in the PEL document to ensure the comments are relayed to the FHWA and carried forward into future phases. To produce informed environmental decisions, agencies with special expertise or jurisdiction by law are included in the study process. Resource agency involvement begins early in the study to identify important issues related to the proposed action and continues throughout the study, ensuring meaningful and timely input from the various agencies. These agencies will receive early coordination letters. Individual meetings will occur as needed. Typical resource agencies include:

- US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- National Park Service (NPS)
- US Department of Housing & Urban Development (USHUD)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet
- Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Kentucky Geological Survey
- Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection

		Months																	
	NTP March 2023	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Spt	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Spt
ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES																			
Public Involvement Plan Development and Approval																			
Project Team Meetings[1]					1				2			3					4		
FHWA coordination					1							2					3		
LEO Meeting - North						1							2						
Public Meeting - North						1							2						
LEO Meeting - South						1							2						
Public Meeting - South						1							2						
Community Advisory Group*			1				2								3			4	
Story Map																			
Survey																			
DS Project Webpage																			
Social Media																			
VM Boards at in-person public mtg site - 1 wk ahead																			
PARALLEL ENGINEERING ACTIVITIES																			
Inventory Existing Conditions and Needs																			
Develop/Analyze 12-15 Corridor Concepts																			
Identify and Refine To Preferred Corridor Concept with 3 Alternates																			
Prepare Final Report Recommendations																			Final Rpt.
		Existing Conditions & Needs Inventory					Developing Concepts								Refinement				

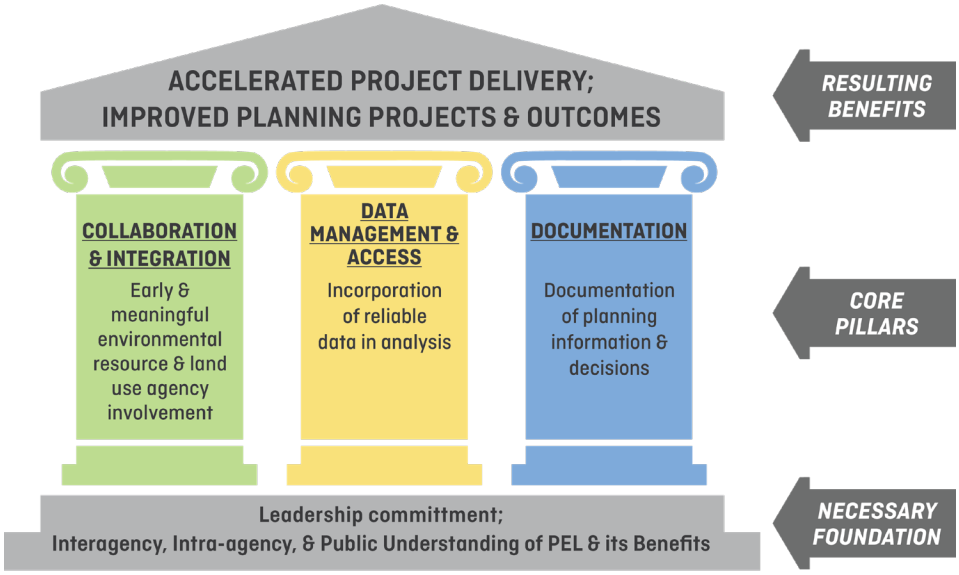
1 - Project Team Meetings include 5 total, the 4 above and 1

Applying the National PEL Framework to Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Planning and Project Development

August 2023

In June through August 2023, staff from TxDOT met with FHWA's contractors to explore ways to improve their PEL practices in line with the National PEL Framework. The collaborations occurred over a series of four calls and working sessions. During the last two calls, TxDOT Central Office staff invited representatives from TxDOT District Offices to share insights into current practices and needs at different levels of project planning and implementation. This memorandum describes the primary opportunities identified to improve PEL practices as a result of these discussions.

Figure 1. National PEL Framework



Data Management and Access

- **Opportunity:** Identify an entity to develop and maintain a data clearinghouse that provides access to current and reliable transportation, environmental, economic, and sociodemographic data for agencies involved in planning and environmental review.
  Benefits: This will enable consistent use of reliable data and enhance confidence in data and analysis supporting planning and environmental review. It can also reduce costs involved in redundant data search and analysis.

- **Opportunity:** Develop analysis standards used for prioritizing and evaluating investments. Currently, some MPOs have better data and standards than TxDOT so collaboration and data sharing can help to support data driven investment decisions.
  Benefits: This can enhance project prioritization and provide for more informed and defensible decision making based on reliable data. The standards for determining investments can be modeled to align with the region's goals, objectives, and performance measures.

Documentation

- **Opportunity:** Establish a practice for documenting project Purpose and Need for candidate projects included in the MPO and State Long Range Transportation Plans. The initial project Purpose and Need developed during plan development can be refined in environmental review (NEPA). There is opportunity and a need to improve coordination between MPOs, TxDOT Districts, and TxDOT Central Office. MPO's do not typically develop Purpose and Need statements for projects included in their Long Range Transportation Plans. The recent practice developed in TxDOT's Houston District could be improved and expanded to more districts.
    - Example: TxDOT Houston District has initiated a *Call for Needs* that compliments their quantitative data. The *Call for Needs* engages local jurisdictions (Cities, Counties, etc.) as well as key stakeholders (Ports, etc.) and TxDOT District Area Offices to solicit input on pain points and areas of concern on the State system. Houston District provides an excel spreadsheet that solicits facilities, limits, the problem experienced, and potential solution as expressed by locals. Houston District then spatially compares the Needs with the current data, plans and programs. It has created criteria to prioritize the list of needs. In some cases, the data and qualitative feedback identifies a clear Purpose and Need is identified (e.g., safety or capacity need) and thus, a project may be identified for commencement of environmental review and engineering phases. The identified "need" is the basis for the project. In other cases, the data and qualitative feedback identifies a clear problem, but a solution is not clear. Thus, additional study may be required including a PEL, corridor, or feasibility study. The excel list is then brought to the MPO with the associated "disposition" (project, study, etc.) for inclusion into the long-range plan, which positions the "needs" (projects) for future funding. Thus, if a corridor is selected for a PEL study, or for NEPA, this purpose and needs documentation provides the basis for a planning process to help inform PEL studies or to support NEPA documentation.

  Benefits: Having a more integrated planning to project development process will allow for NEPA practitioners (such as TxDOT planning and environmental review staff and environmental resource agencies) to better understand the project Purpose and Need including the logic for the project, how it was determined, and the public engagement initiatives and outcomes conducted in early planning.
    - Example: Communities are demanding more information, especially once the NEPA process has commenced. To streamline the response to these requests and improve the planning to implementation process, sharing information like that collected through Houston District's excel file could better inform the project Purpose and Need at the NEPA stage. Those involved at the NEPA stage would be better informed about the Purpose and Need and better equipped to conduct analytical and engagement requirements of NEPA.

Collaboration and Integration

- **Opportunity:** Currently, there is inconsistency in TxDOT project management and development which results in different levels of coordination between the MPO, DOT District and Central Office. There is opportunity for planners to improve coordination and information sharing between MPO systems planning and DOT corridor planning. This information would include

planning products such as the project Purpose and Need, alternatives analysis, and public engagement outcomes.

Benefits: Improved coordination between MPO systems planning and DOT corridor planning/environmental review (NEPA) can help to streamline processes and reduce duplication of effort, saving time and money.

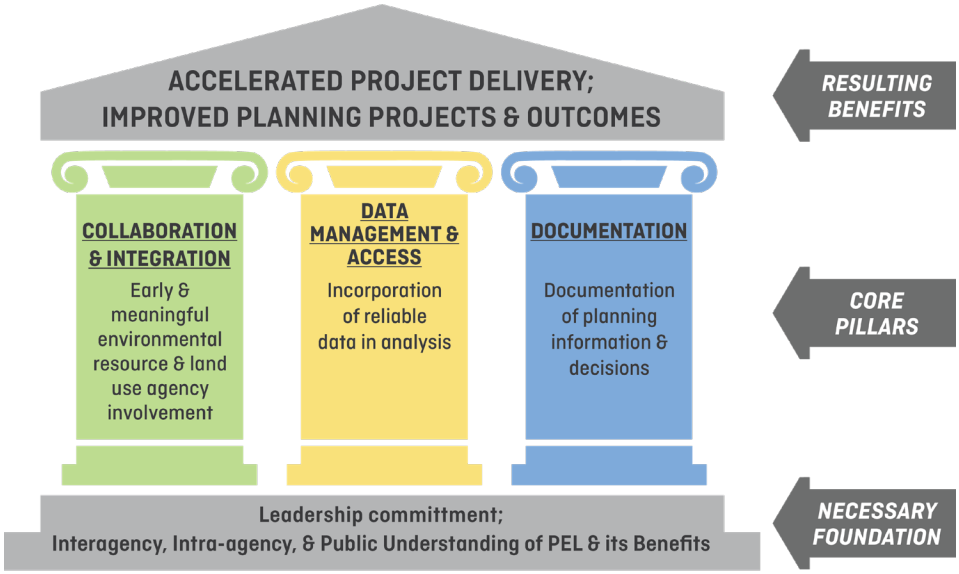
Applying the National PEL Framework to Arizona Department of Transportation Planning and Project Development

August 2023

In March through August 2023, staff from Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) met with FHWA's contractors to explore ways to improve their Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) practices in line with the National PEL Framework. A total of four calls were held between March and August 2023 including an introductory call, two follow-up technical assistance calls, and a final peer exchange workshop between ADOT and Florida DOT. The team worked with Arizona to explore opportunities to expand and improve their data organization and analysis supporting their PEL program and in accordance with the National PEL Framework. During this collaboration, Arizona expressed interest in learning more about the Florida Geographic Data Library (FGDL) and Environmental Screening Tool (EST) supporting Florida DOT's Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Process - Florida's process for implementing PEL. FHWA's contractor explained the substance of the FHWA PEL Framework in the context of *Core Pillar 2 - Data Management and Access* (see Figure 1).

The team then coordinated and held a virtual peer exchange session between FHWA, Arizona DOT, Florida DOT and University of Florida GeoPlan Center. In preparation for the peer exchange, the two states developed presentations and information that conveys their experience, challenges, and lesson learned for organizing a data library and analysis tool supporting their PEL programs. The materials that were shared in preparation for this exchange and the presentation and discussion from the exchange are included in this document.

Figure 1. National PEL Framework



ADOT first developed a set of questions to learn more about the FGDL and EST supporting Florida's ETDM Process. Florida DOT responded to these questions (shown below) which were shared with ADOT

in advance of the peer exchange. The responses were supplemented with links to additional resources listed below.

1. Additional information on ETDM - Office of Environmental Management - Home (fdot.gov)
2. Public Access ETDM Site -https://etdmpub.fla-etat.org/est/
3. Training materials - https://www.fdot.gov/environment/etdm.shtm

ADOT questions shared in advance of peer exchange:

1. What was the initial intent and purpose for the development of the Environmental Screening Tool?
2. Who owns it, maintains it, how often is data refreshed?
3. How responsive are external agencies to provide updates?
4. Are there formal agreements with external parties?
5. How do you manage (internal/external, public) access – cover all roles and responsibilities within the process?
    a. How do the updates and information get input into the system? Is it users inputting data themselves OR do they hand the updates needed to a technical team?
    b. What role do GIS teams at FDOT play within the workflow (i.e., providing data or consuming the data that is created in the tool)?
6. How did you get buy-in internally within DOT to apply this tool on projects?
    a. Specifically cover IT, GIS, and executive stakeholders
7. How did you get buy-in from external stakeholders (COGs/MPOs/environmental resource agencies) on developing and utilizing the tool?
8. How do you make users aware of this tool? (i.e., is it on the FDOT website, what support documents do you have, do you send out notices for updates, do you offer training, etc.?)
9. Given the tools maturity what would you do differently if you started today?
    a. Especially relating to the technical side, use of new Esri tools etc
10. Has the end user evolved over the years?
11. Is the data related to an LRS (or other common GIS network)?
12. How does the PEL data connect to other databases and/or flow into other systems for next steps?
13. What is the level of effort required to maintain (now that it is established)? How many FTEs, support people etc?
14. How does the automatic email updates/dispute process work? How does it determine who needs to be contacted?
15. How do the analysis tools work and what reports do they generate? (looking to discuss what geoprocessing the website does)
16. Where is the environmental data sourced from, where is it stored, what plans do you have to keep the data current long term?

ADOT-FDOT Peer Exchange

The peer exchange was held virtually on August 14, 2023. The agenda, presentation, and meeting participants are included in the Appendix.

In advance of the peer exchange, review of FDOT responses about the EST and FGDL and further collaboration with ADOT resulted in the emergence of focus areas for more in-depth discussion at the peer exchange. The four focus areas derived from the initial set of ADOT questions are provided below with key themes and outcomes from the peer exchange. An additional important outcome of the exchange was in establishing a working relationship between the two states for continued dialogue and knowledge exchange.

1. How does data **flow between the agencies and FGDL** and what are the agency roles? Is there a flow chart or documentation that illustrates this?

   FDOT has prepared flow diagrams characterizing different aspects of the ETDM process that are included within the ETDM Manual. In 2001 a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was created and signed by 23 Federal and state agencies, who committed to participate in Florida's ETDM Process. The agencies recognized the value and cost efficiencies from early and continual collaboration in the planning and project development process.

   The MOU is supported by specific agency operating agreements that specify the agency's role and responsibilities in the process. These include providing agency data at least annually, participating in project reviews and weighing in on the resources they are responsible for managing, among other responsibilities. Agency participation is primarily funded through USC139 J, which are federal planning funds.

   Summary and Lessons Learned

   - Partner agency participation in Florida's ETDM Process is funded through USC 139-J.
   - Memorandum of Understanding was critical for agency commitment to participate in the ETDM Process.
   - Users of the EST continually identify new needs and enhancements, and the EST is routinely updated to respond to these needs and improve the user experience.
   - Be flexible, requirements as defined by agency partners and practitioners are continually changing.
   - Involve users/practitioners in the development of the database and analysis tool.
   - Form a workgroup (of practitioners) to improve and prioritize enhancements to the tool.
   - Management of accounts for users of the EST is important.

   FDOT and GeoPlan Center engage with ETDM practitioners through a standing working EST group to identify new needs and potential enhancements to the EST. The working group most often convenes when developing larger enhancements to the tool.

2. What are FDOT and GeoPlan Center's **biggest lessons learned** in developing the EST and FGDL, and are there things they would do differently? What are the high-level recommendations for

another state trying to implement this – would you set up sharing agreements first, for example?

Early on, the FGDL was split into public and private databases, which made updates to the databases more difficult down the road. They are in the process of changing that to make it possible for edits and updates to happen more quickly.

There are probably less than 100 users a day on the secure site. The public site experiences around 1000 viewers a month, so they haven't run into capacity issues since the early days. The University of Florida has a robust ability to handle the business domain while GeoPlan Center focuses on systems database management. Reviewing all the data layers on occasion is a suggested practice to see what is still being used and what is no longer needed.

Summary and Lessons Learned

- Daily active users of the FGDL are less than 100 per day on the secure site. The public site experiences about 1000 viewers per month.
- Separation of the business domain and the application development side has proved effective.
- Periodic review of data layers that are used often and those that aren't used is helpful in managing the data sets on the FGDL.

3. **How would you start development** of a database and analysis tool, such as the EST, with limited staff resources?

   ADOT has data sharing agreements directly with some of the other state resource agencies already as well as Liaison Funding Agreements under USC 139(J) with some federal agencies, but how is sensitive data shared?

FDOT had a lot of conversations on why it is important to share certain sensitive data. This included explanations about the benefit for planning to understand the resources at risk instead of putting applications in blindly which may be in the way of important resources.

FDOT suggested starting with a clear understanding of the requirements for the state. For example, data needs to be tracked for the life of project which is 5+ years may influence how data is managed. FGDL has current and archived data. **(FDOT and FGDL are happy to discuss in detail with ADOT in future collaboration).**

Summary and Lessons Learned

- A Memorandum of Understanding and commitment from partner agencies is most important, as well as a clear understanding of the benefits from continuing agency.
- FGDL has about 400 data layers – only about 5 are restricted/sensitive.
- In developing a data clearinghouse, start with a clear understanding of the requirements for the state.
- You need to be able to track data for the life of project plus five years. This may influence how data is managed. FGDL has current and archived data.

4. For Arizona, it is critical **that data be linked to the linear referencing system**, so that the data can go straight from planning to design. How does Florida manage this?

   ADOT is trying to implement digital delivery. There is no formal handoff between roadway design (done in CADD with no georeferencing), and planning so they have to re-add that intelligence to the data. ADOT would like for the data tool they develop to help the digital delivery data lifecycle in terms of data handoff.

Within the ETDM Process, a Summary Report is generated that documents agency coordination and commitments at the planning phase. This includes the agencies' acceptance of project Purpose and Need, project comments including the degree of effect, among other project coordination. SWEPT is an environmental tracker that FDOT uses to store all documents to support future design and construction phases, but they don't have a great way of georeferencing the impacts. They are still working on how data and information can be better utilized in the future.

Summary and Lessons Learned

- ADOT is trying to implement digital delivery.
- A Project Summary Report is generated within FDOT's ETDM Process that is used to document all agency coordination, commitments, and findings in the planning phase. This documentation is accessible and supports the NEPA phase.
- FDOT has developed SWEPT - an environmental tracker that stores all documents to support future design and construction phases.

Appendix

Peer Exchange Agenda

1. Introductions (5 minutes)
2. Peer Exchange context (5 minutes)
3. ADOT assets and challenges with data management/analysis (5-10 minutes)
4. Florida ETDM Process (10 minutes)
    a. Environmental Screening Tool
    b. Florida Geographic Data Library
5. Facilitated discussion based on ADOT desired focus areas (50 minutes)
6. Path Forward (5 minutes)

Participants:

- FHWA Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty - Cheng Yan
- Renaissance Planning – Frank Kalpakis, Ysela Llort, Becca Buthe
- ADOT - Sara Thompson, Carlos Lopez, Chris Gade, Steve Olmstead, Tazeen Dewan
- FDOT & Consultants - Jonathon Bennett, Stephanie Clemons, Katasha Cornwell, Mike Konikoff, Lex Thomas

FHWA National PEL Framework

Technical Assistance Appendix

Kentucky Transportation Commission, Arizona DOT, and Texas DOT

February 2023 – August 2023

National PEL Framework Kentucky Technical Assistance

3/27/23

Agenda

- Clarify questions about the PEL scopes
- Share initial thoughts on the scopes/ potential areas for improved alignment with PEL core pillars
- Next steps

PEL and NEPA Evaluation Alignment

- How are these studies distinguished from the analysis in the subsequent NEPA study?
  - Level of detail
  - Expected outcomes
- Is it expected that these studies will remove unreasonable alternatives (with good documentation of process and logic for removing alternatives) prior to the NEPA study?
- Is there a process for identifying the potential permits/commitments that may be needed?

Interagency and Intra-agency Collaboration

- Is there clear intent of engagement with public and stakeholders (e.g. why are we meeting, how we will collaborate, and expected outcomes)?
- How will engagement support purpose and need and alternatives to be evaluated to minimize redo in NEPA?
- How will project information be provided to stakeholders, resource agencies so they understand the project and can comment in a meaningful way?
  - project context, purpose and need
  - how initial alternatives were defined
  - process/method for resource agencies to provide commentary

Documentation

- Does the scope anticipate clear documentation of how the study outcomes will inform the NEPA scope and process?
- Are the anticipated planning products documented in a way such that they're supportive of and useful in NEPA? What have you learned from this in the past? Have there been challenges?
- How are planning products resulting from the PEL study stored and made available to NEPA practitioners in the next phase?

Data

- Are resource agencies involved in the analysis and selection of relevant data?
- Does KY have a data clearinghouse for natural, cultural, sociocultural environmental data or is it organized for each project?
- Is the Kentucky State Clearinghouse a platform to receive input from environmental resource agencies?

Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

JARED W. PERDUE, P.E.
SECRETARY

July 25, 2023

Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)
Headquarters
1655 West Jackson Street, MD 111F
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Subject: Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) Collaboration with ADOT

Dear ADOT,

The following questions were provided to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Office of Environmental Management (OEM) from with a request for collaboration on PEL with Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) on FDOT's Efficient Transportation and Decision Making (ETDM) process. The responses provided are high-level and intended to give an initial discussion point for the meeting set for August 14, 2023, at 3pm via teams. Additional information regarding FDOT's process can be found within the responses below and on FDOT's OEM website: https://www.fdot.gov/environment.

What was the initial intent and purpose of the tool?

- Response: The ETDM process combined with the Environmental Screening Tool (EST) is Florida's answer to environmental streamlining. The process is how Florida accomplishes early and continuous agency participation for major transportation project planning. As support of environmental streamlining objectives identified in the U.S.C. section 139 and 168 and subsequent amendments/acts.

Who owns and maintains it?

- Response: EST is owned by the FDOT, it is maintained through a collaboration of FDOT staff, consultant contracts and state university agreements.

How often is data refreshed?

- Response: Data is provided by participating agencies at agreed upon update and revision schedules. Each participating agency is ensuring that the EST contains their agencies most recent data for meaningful involvement.

How responsive are external agencies to provide updates?

- Response: Participating Agencies in the ETDM process have an obligation to respond due to agreements signed by their agencies.

Are there formal agreements with external parties?

- Response: Yes, there are different levels of agreements with agencies, depending on if the agency can complete the review with or without funding.

How do you manage (internal/external, public) access – cover all roles and responsibilities within the process?

- Response: Public access has its own site https://etdmpub.fla-etat.org/est/, this site restricts the users view of data that is not public record (e.g. archeologic sites). The public site gives access to make comments and sign up for interested projects. Internal and external access is setup and maintained by the FDOT staff and consultants that manage the programs. There are various roles assigned depending on external, internal, or agency staff needs.

How do the updates and information get input into the system?

- Response: Depending on the users assigned role, they can have access to enter/update projects or make comments on project entered.

What role do GIS teams at FDOT play within the workflow, i.e., providing data or consuming the data that is created in the tool.

- Response: Both, by providing department-maintained data sets and project shapefile data, and by consuming the GIS analysis results.

How did you get buy-in internally within DOT to apply this tool on projects?

- Response: Showed there was a time and effort reduction on collaborating early with agencies in addition to FDOT Secretary approved procedure.

How did you get buy-in from external stakeholders (COGs/MPOs/environmental resource agencies) on developing and utilizing the tool?

- Response: There was in interagency team comprised of representatives from local, state, and federal agencies, that partnered with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and FDOT in developing the ETDM Process. There are annual feedback reports in addition to statewide meetings where improvements and training can be offered.

How do you make users aware of this tool? (IE is it on the FDOT website, what support documents do you have, do you send out notices for updates, do you offer training, etc.)

- Response: There are quarterly meetings with FDOT staff/consultant, email notification to user group on new enhancements are sent out, trainings are scheduled to go over new features, retained training available through the FDOT training website/YouTube, and other contact methods including dedicated website https://www.fdot.gov/environment/etdm.shtm.

Given the tools maturity what would you do differently if you started today?

- Response: Our program is in constant state of improvement and adding ease of user accessibility.

Especially relating to the technical side, use of new Esri tools etc.

- Response: The EST GIS analysis and mapper use a mix of ESRI ArcGIS Server platform, Oracle Spatial, and open-source Configurable Map Viewer (CMV).

Has the end user evolved over the years?

- Response: The end users started off more FDOT district staff, as staffing needs and consultant utilization has increased, more consultants have access via contracts to aid in reviews.

Is the data related to an LRS (Linear Referencing System) (or other common GIS network)?

- Response: Project data can be related to FDOT's standard LRS but is not required. The location of some data sets are derived using the FDOT LRS.

How does the PEL data connect to other databases and/or flow into other systems for next steps?

- Response: FDOT has multiple systems linked and are constantly working to improve the communication between systems.

What is the level of effort required to maintain (now that it is established)? How many FTEs, support people etc.?

- Response: EST Technical Support FTEs: 1 Help Desk, 5 Software Developers, 1 System Admin, 1 Database Administrator, 1 GIS Manager, 1 GIS Analyst, 1 Business Analyst, 1 Project Manager. Does not include environmental staff in districts and central office.

How does the automatic email updates/dispute process work? How does it determine who needs to be contacted?

- Response: Agency users have assigned regions and roles that determine who is notified about project updates and disputes. Emails are automated via application code and database procedures.

How do the analysis tools work and what reports do they generate? (looking to discuss what geoprocessing the website does)

- Response: Users request analysis reports that are generated by custom geoprocessing routines on dedicated GIS servers. Results are stored in a database and output to standardized PDF reports.

Where is the environmental data sourced from, where is it stored, what plans do you have to keep the data current long term?

- Response: The GIS data is cataloged by the Florida Geographic Data Library (FGDL), in most cases stored by FGDL, and is sourced from local, state, and federal agencies as well as crowdsourced databases. Agency operating agreements include provisions to keep the data current.

We look forward to further discussion.
Regards,

Jonathon A. Bennett
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National PEL Framework
Arizona Technical Assistance

JUNE 2023

Opportunities

- Strong existing relationships with the counties and planning organizations that could be leveraged to create a stronger database resource for PEL.
- Existing data hubs (AZGeo and Suncloud). Could expand existing databases or tools to include additional environmental and corridor study data.

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- Existing data hubs (AZGeo and Suncloud). Could expand existing databases or tools to include additional environmental and corridor study data.

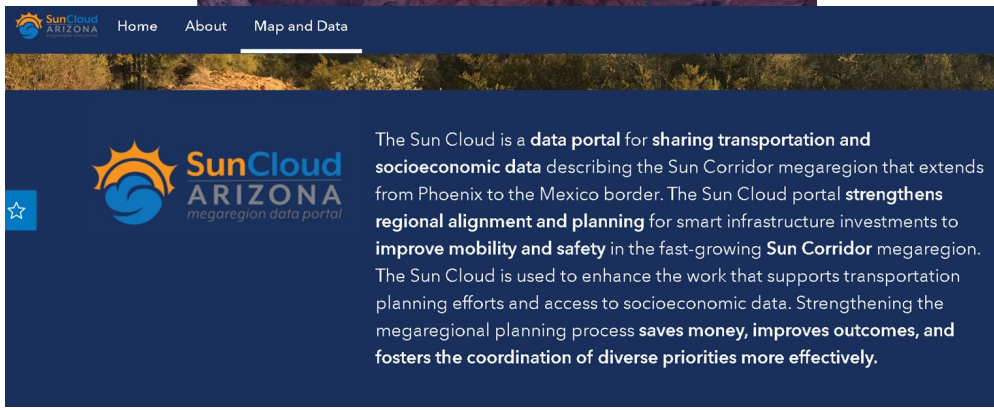
Existing Data Resources in Arizona

AZ Geo - Managed by state land department for the public in AZ & a place for state/local agencies to store and share data

- Bimonthly AZGeo Advisory Committee Meeting: discuss communications, events, Outreach and Technical Group activities, AZGeo data management
- 60+ data layers published by ADOT - Data only, no project integration or analysis

SunCloud – Regional data portal managed by a few counties (Maricopa County Association of Governments as lead)

- Socioeconomic and transportation data
- Explorer tool analyzes needs and provides scores for safety, mobility, asset condition, environmental and economic development. Individual and combined needs score provided.
- Opportunity – expand with environmental data



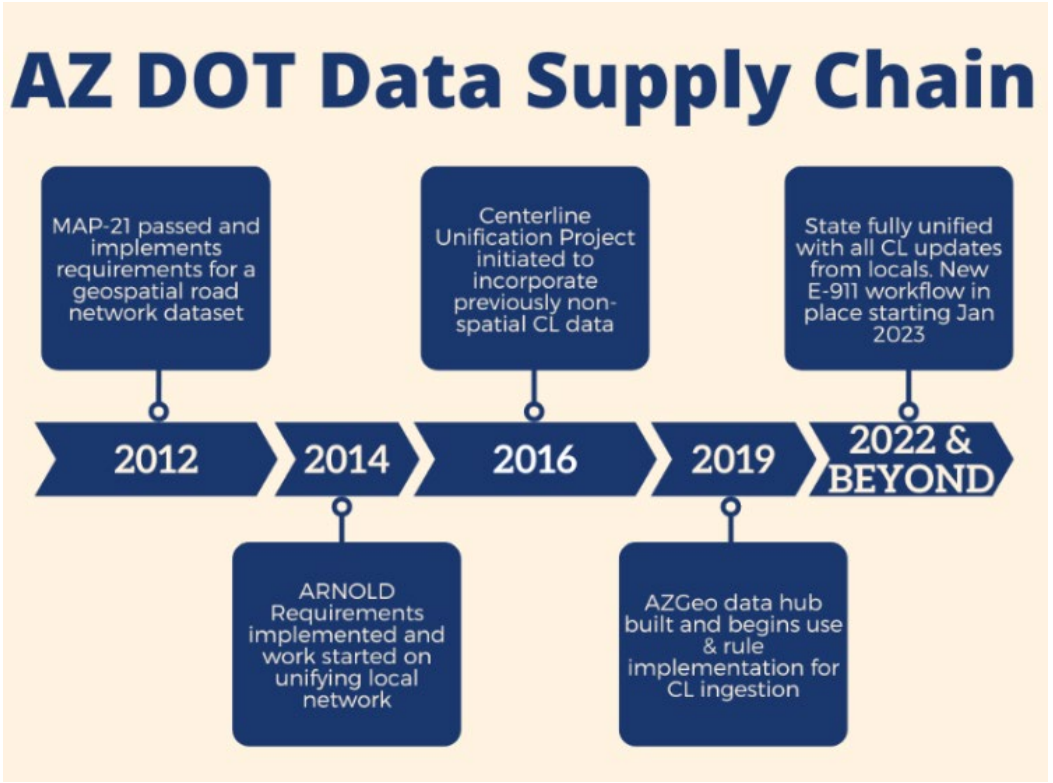
Data Resources Cont.

ADOT's Linear Referencing System

- ADOT's Linear Referencing System (LRS) network unifies the local GIS data to the state's LRS network
- 100+ roadway characteristics are stored

Roads and Highways Layers

1. **ATIS Routes**
2. **Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)**
3. Annual Average Daily Traffic Certified Public Master (AADT_CPMMaster)
4. Annual Average Daily Traffic Directional (AADT_Directional)
5. **Annual Average Daily Traffic Combination Unit (AADT_SingleUnit)**
7. **Access Control**
8. **Administrative (HPMS Specific Access Control)**
9. **ADOT Inventory**
10. **Alternate Route Name**
11. **Auxiliary Lane**
12. **Base**
13. **Bicycle Lane**
14. **Capacity**
20. **Curb and Gutter**
21. **Curve**
22. Demarcation Points
23. **Directional Distribution Factor (D-Factor)**
24. **Dual Owner**
25. **Engineering Curve**
26. **Engineering Grade**
27. **Engineering Station (Point)**
28. **Facility Type**
29. **Faulting**

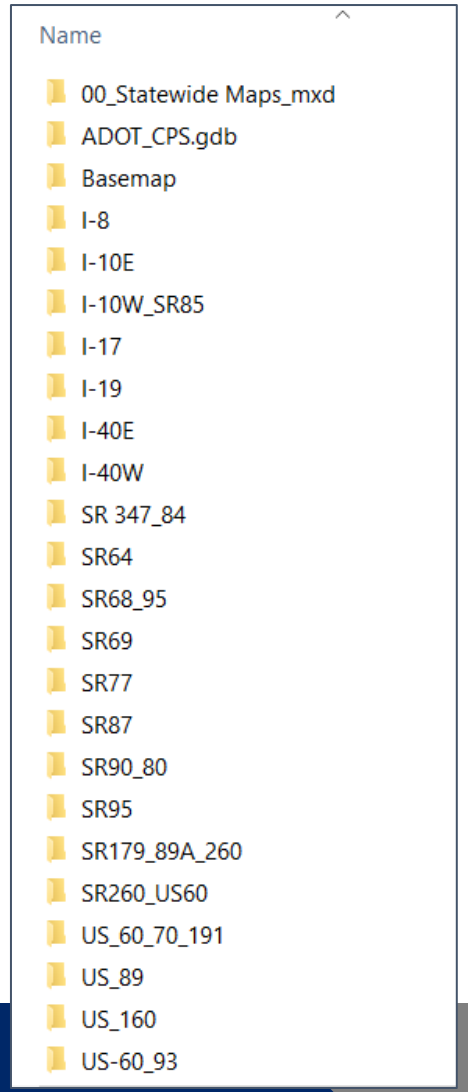


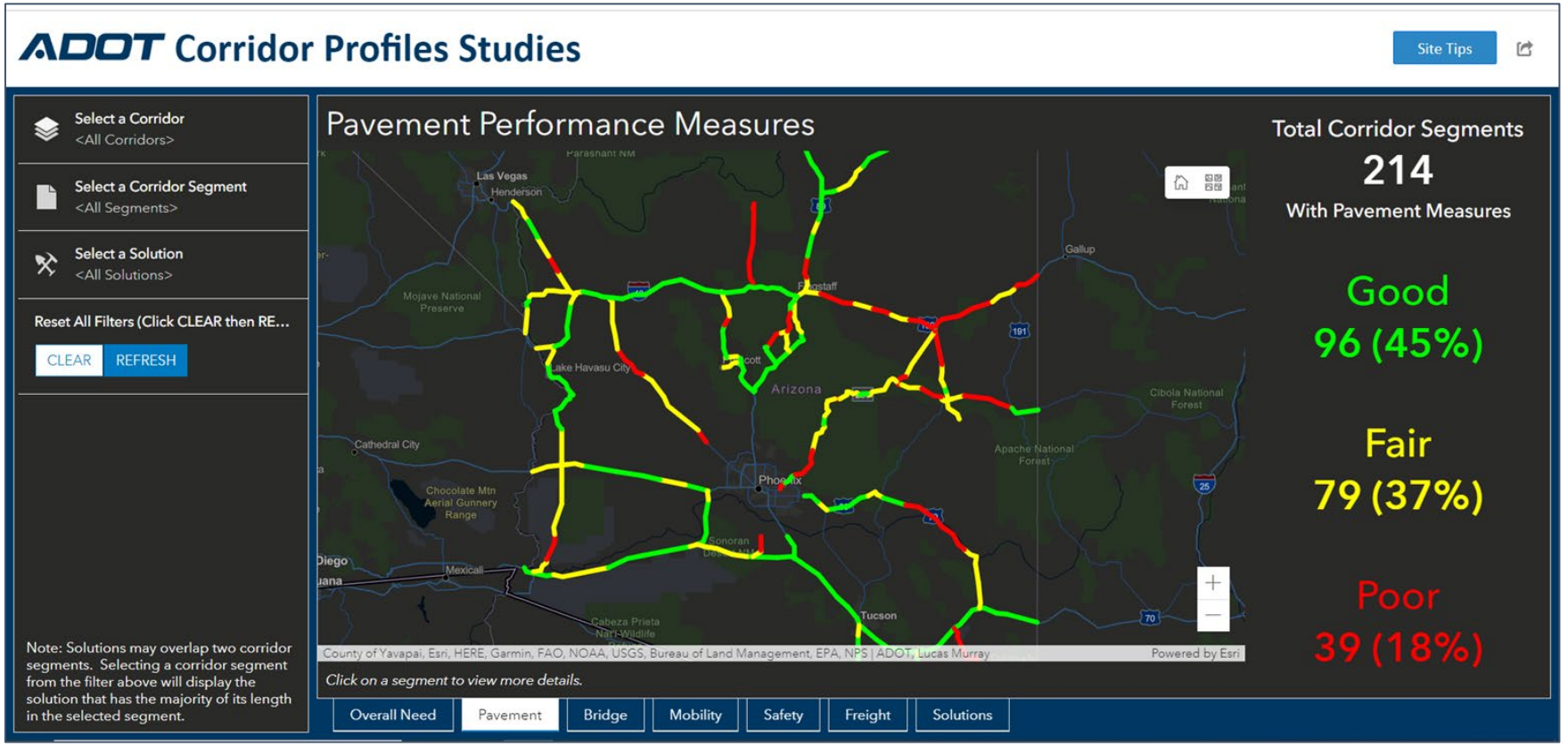
https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a2534b5010e14323a8f013368517b8a6

ADOT project specific dashboards

- Challenges
  - Lack of supply chain for GIS between Geospatial Section and other groups
  - GIS Knowledge and access is limited
  - Pending ArcGIS Pro transition
  - Resources
- Corridor profile study digitized - created visual to support corridor profile studies

Corridor Performance Dashboard





- Disorganized data, unrelated to LRS
- Parts of data were not in GIS, required geocoding
- Consultant produced static maps
- Creation of dashboard to provide better experience viewing study data
- Framework created to update for all future studies

https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/df879baa99fb499a9b4429b6af75ff33?org=azgeo

National PEL Framework

ADOT/FDOT Peer Exchange

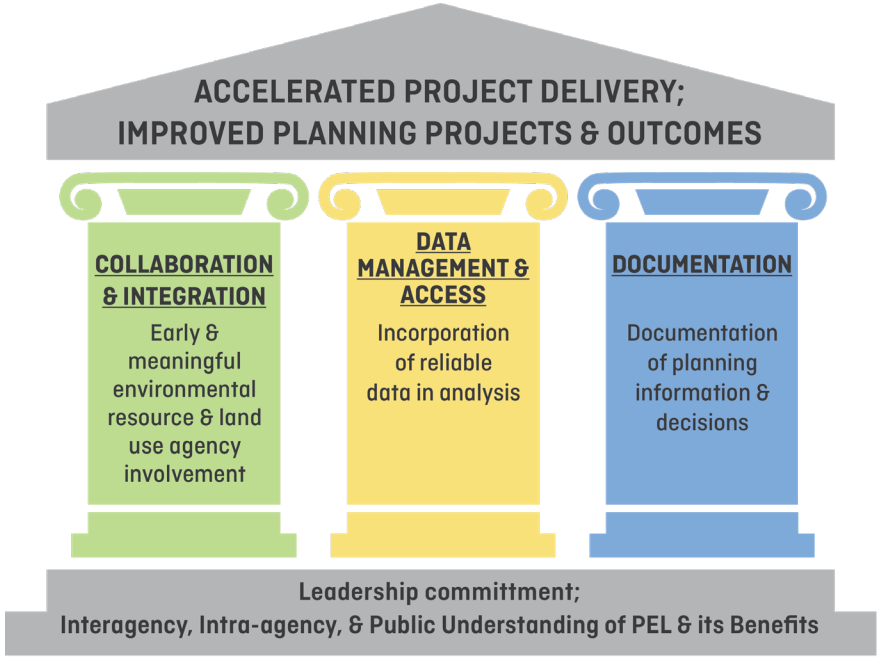
August 14, 2023

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions *(5 minutes)*
- Peer Exchange context *(5 minutes)*
- ADOT assets and challenges with data management/analysis *(5-10 minutes)*
- Florida ETDM Process *(10 minutes)*
  - Environmental Screening Tool
  - Florida Geographic Data Library
- Facilitated discussion based on ADOT desired focus areas *(50 minutes)*
- Path Forward *(5 minutes)*

Peer Exchange Context

- FHWA drafted National PEL Framework
  - Guidance for states to implement PEL approaches
  - Developed through Florida ETDM Process lens
- Collaborated with seven states to develop Framework
  - AZ, UT, OR, CO, NC, MN
  - FDOT participated in AZ, UT, OR collaborations
  - Workshop in CO to review and refine Framework
  - Attended by seven states



Peer Exchange Context

- FHWA providing technical assistance to three states
  - AZ, KY, TX
  - Expected to continue technical assistance to these and other states
- ADOT exploring development of accessible database to support PEL program
- Interested in learning about Florida's EST and FGDL

Peer Exchange Preparations

- ADOT prepared a series of questions (20) about the EST and FGDL
- FDOT provided responses to the questions and helpful resources
- ADOT identified desired areas of focus for the Peer Exchange

Peer Exchange Focus Areas

- How does the **data flow between the agencies and FGDL** and what are the agency roles? Is there a flow chart or documentation that illustrates this?

- What are FDOT and GeoPlan Center's **biggest lessons learned** in developing the EST and FGDL, and things they would do differently? What are the high-level recommendations for another state trying to implement this – would you set up sharing agreements/recommendations first for example?

- **How would you start development** of a database and analysis tool, such as the EST, with limited staff resources?

- For Arizona, it is critical **that data be linked to the linear referencing system**, so that the data can go straight from planning to design. How does Florida manage this?

Peer Exchange Focus Areas

- How does the data flow between the agencies and FGDL and what are the agency roles? Is there a flow chart or documentation that illustrates this?
  - Funded through USC 139-J
  - MOUs critical for agency commitment
  - Users continually identify new needs – EST continually updated to respond to needs

Peer Exchange Focus Areas

- What are FDOT and GeoPlan Center's biggest lessons learned in developing the EST and FGDL, and things they would do differently? What are the high-level recommendations for another state trying to implement this – would you set up sharing agreements/ recommendations first for example?
  - EST under constant improvement for the user
  - Be flexible, requirements are continually changing
  - Involve users/practitioners in the development
  - Workgroup (of practitioners) to improve and prioritize enhancements to tool
  - Management of accounts for users of the EST
  - Daily active users –less than 100 – Public site about 1000 per month
  - Separation of business vs. application development side

Peer Exchange Focus Areas

- How would you start development of a database and analysis tool, such as the EST, with limited staff resources?
  - How did you get buy-in from agencies to share their data?
  - MOU – commitment from partner agencies – clear understanding of the benefits from collaboration
  - Use about 400 data layers – only about 5 are restricted/sensitive
  - You need to be able to track data for the life of project plus five years – influences how you manage data – FGDL has current and archived data
  - Start with clear understanding of the requirements for the state

Peer Exchange Focus Areas

- For Arizona, it is critical that data be linked to the linear referencing system, so that the data can go straight from planning to design. How does Florida manage this?
  - ADOT trying to implement digital delivery
  - Summary report used to document all coordination and findings of planning phase – it supports NEPA study
  - SWEPT – environmental tracker that stores all documents to support future design and construction phases

National PEL Framework

ADOT/FDOT Peer Exchange

August 14, 2023

National PEL Framework Texas Technical Assistance

4/28/23

Agenda

1. TA Scope

I. Systems oriented transportation planning deep dive

I. Explore how systems oriented transportation planning can provide relevant products and decisions useful for the NEPA process

II. Identify example PEL approaches that illustrate useful strategies or ideas

III. Provide considerations for how the three pillars from the National Framework can be incorporated in the Guidebook

Objectives

- Confirm understanding of planning process
- Identify opportunities to integrate PEL core pillars in systems and corridor level planning
  - Resource agency engagement at both levels
  - Engagement with other stakeholders at these levels
  - Intra agency coordination
  - Enhanced access to data analysis and documentation
- Document opportunities for TxDOT to further PEL practices

Integrating PEL Approaches

- Corridor
  - Provide opportunities to hone it and make it better
  - Clear intent of studies
  - Provide clarity on when they are conducted & why
- Systems level
  - How do we have these discussions?
  - Who do we meet with?
  - How do we get commitment?

Application of the PEL Framework for Transportation Decision Making

Systems Planning
[Statewide, Regional, or Metropolitan Plan]

Regional Context. **Environmental conditions and trends; preservation strategy**; economic conditions and trends; growth strategy, sociocultural characteristics and equity goals; existing/future transportation conditions.

Regional Vision spatially depicted. Developed cooperatively with community, stakeholders, land use planners, and environmental resource agencies.

Needs Assessment. Responsive to vision, goals, and performance measures. Initial **Purpose & Need** developed for candidate transportation projects.

Indirect & Cumulative Screening using trends and forecasted conditions.

Programmatic Mitigation Planning. Avoidance and minimization is prioritized, and mitigation needs are identified as warranted.

Preliminary Alternatives Screening to remove unreasonable alternatives and support cost estimating.

Fiscally Constrained Plan. Identifies transportation project investments supportive of community-based vision and goals. Clear **Project Descriptions** and **Purpose & Need**.

Corridor Planning
[Feasibility, Corridor, Subarea Studies]

Corridor Context. Environmental, economic, land use, sociocultural, and transportation conditions.

Corridor Function. Describes the corridor's primary function such as commuter, freight, local access, placemaking, etc.

Corridor Vision. Developed cooperatively with community, stakeholders, land use planners, and environmental resource agencies.

Refined Purpose & Need Statement.

Alternatives Evaluation. Identify a range of alternatives, conduct environmental screening, and eliminate unreasonable alternatives from detailed evaluation in NEPA. Support decisions with clear and concise documentation.

Mitigation Needs Identified. Avoidance and minimization is prioritized, and mitigation needs are identified as warranted.

Participating and Cooperating Agencies. Defined based on potential effects to natural, cultural and community resources.

Informed NEPA Scope. Customized to the anticipated level of evaluation needed to identify effects to natural, cultural, and community resources. Tailored engagement strategy with community and agency stakeholders.

NEPA

NEPA Study. An efficient study that builds on corridor analysis and planning decisions.

Refined Purpose and Need Statement.

Class of Action. Defined based on potential effects to natural, cultural and community resources, and potential for public controversy.

In-depth **Alternatives Evaluation**. Builds on alternatives screening and evaluation conducted in systems and/or corridor planning.

Preferred Alternative determined.

NEPA Study Completion.

Red Text indicates planning products that are supportive of NEPA.

Blue text indicates planning decisions that are supportive of NEPA.

Data and analysis for each planning product supporting NEPA are well documented.

Modal elements for candidate projects are defined in Systems and Corridor Planning.

Planning and Environment Linkages
Coordinated Systems Planning ang Project Development

4 to 5 years before NEPA

2 years before NEPA

1 year before NEPA

Commence NEPA

LRTP

Regional Vision

- ***Environmental framework***
- ***Economic construct***
- ***Growth strategy/land use context***
- ***Socio-demographic character***
- ***Transportation system***

- ***LRTP candidate projects***
  - ***Purpose and Need***
  - ***Project context***

Feasibility/Planning Corridor Study

- ***Corridor vision***
- ***Corridor context***
- ***Refined Purpose and Need***
- ***Alternatives evaluation***
  - ***Fatal flaw analysis***
  - ***Environmental issues (natural, cultural, community resources)***
  - ***Elimination of unreasonable alternatives***
- ***Identification of potential permits***
- ***NEPA supportive documentation***

- ***Informed NEPA scope***
- ***Cooperating and participating agencies***
- ***Project delivery method***
- ***Degree of design overlap***
- ***Consultant procurement and project management strategy***

NEPA

- ***Purpose and Need***
- ***Class of Action***
- ***Alternatives evaluation***
- ***Required analyses***
- ***Environmental documentation***
- ***Location Design Concept Approval***

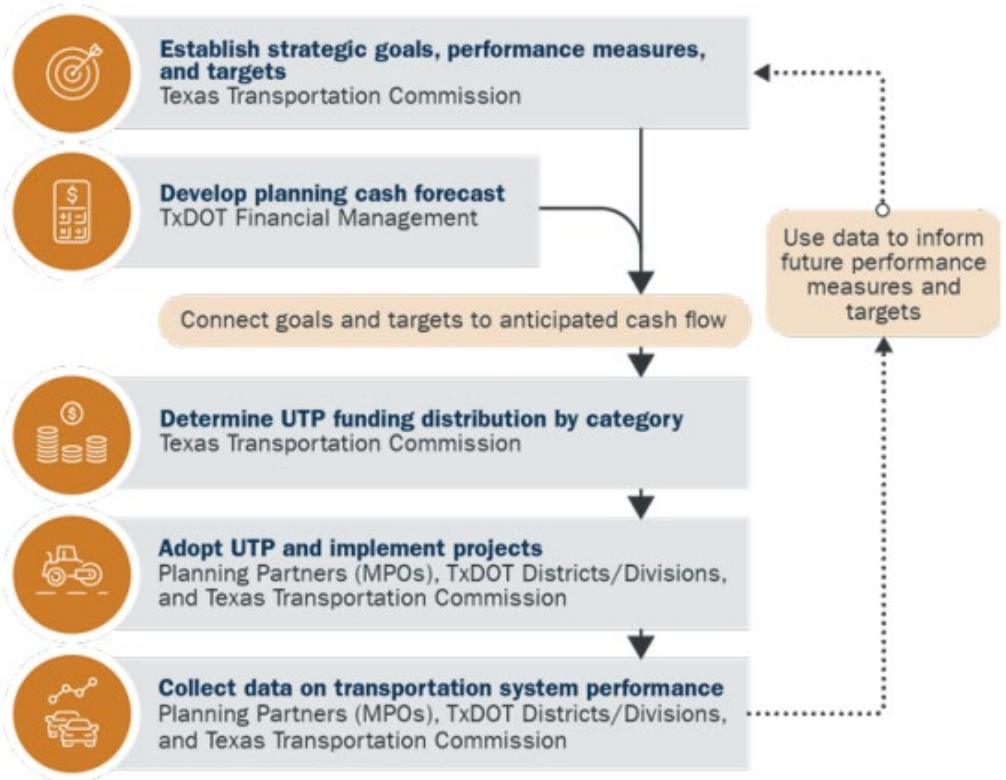
How do we get resource agencies to meaningfully participate in the development of this plan?

Understanding the UTP

1. Understanding how the 10 year plan (UTP) is developed and who is involved in the collaboration process
    a. Process for Districts to identify the projects in the plan
    b. How is the decision made to conduct a PEL Study?
    c. When and how is it determined that a NEPA study will be programmed for funding?
2. How are resource agencies engaged if at all?

Project Selection in 10 Year UTP

FIGURE 2
THE UTP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



- **Project determination:**
  - **Top down:** The Texas Transportation Commission distributes the available UTP funding into 12 categories. Commission sets broad investment levels for the UTP for statewide performance measures and targets.
  - **Bottom up:** Individual transportation projects are selected using performance-based measures based on local transportation needs
- TxDOT matches selected projects with available funding in the 12 UTP categories.

Outcome of UTP

- Projects with intent to begin construction phase in next 10 years & timeline for funding. ~7000 projects
- The funding levels in the UTP are based on a forecast of **potential** transportation revenue that may be available over the next 10 years.
- Authorized development activities may include preliminary design, environmental analysis, right of way acquisition, and final engineering.

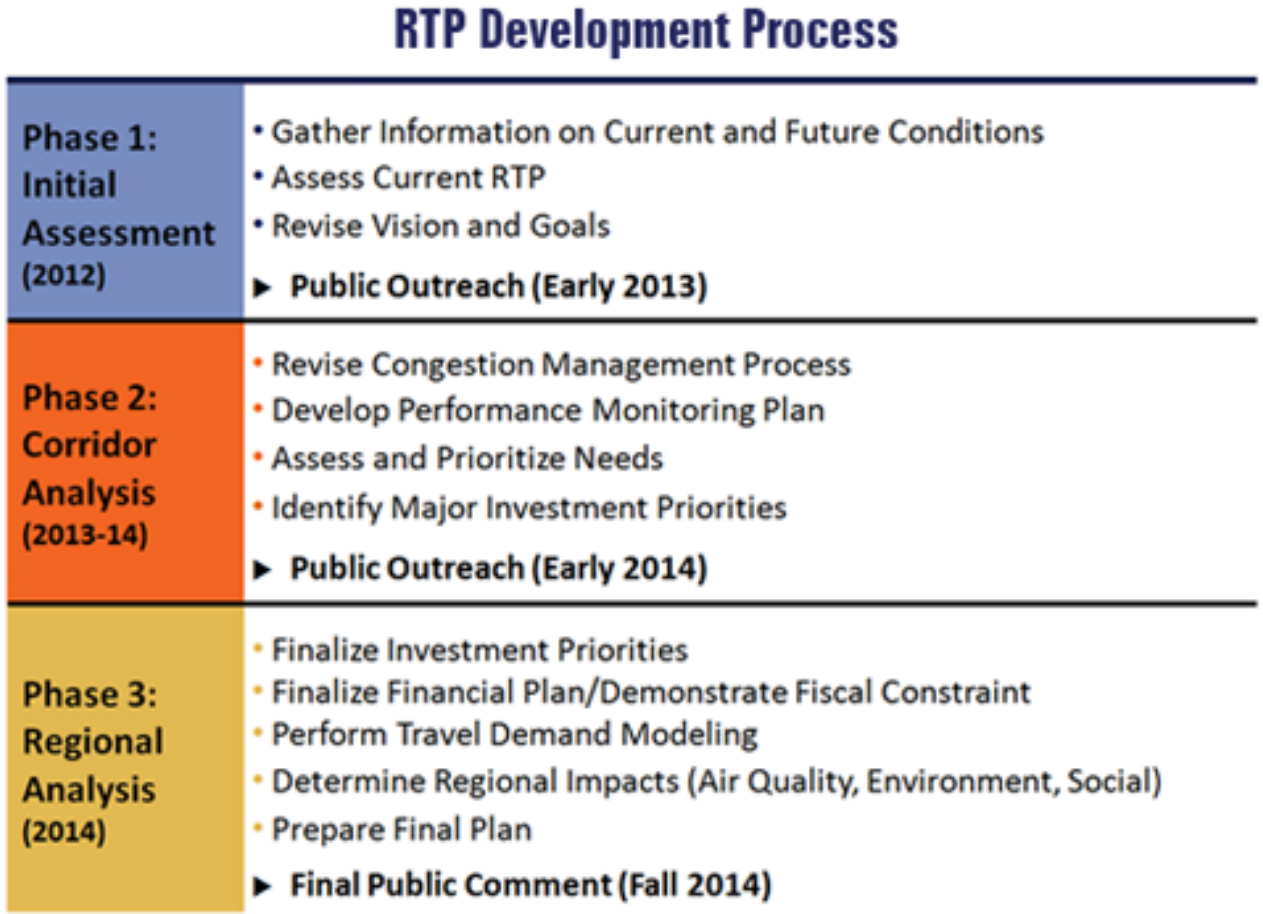
MPO Coordination

- MPOs can use TxDOT provided software to analyze:
  - Impact based on each project's potential impact on safety, preservation, congestion, and connectivity, as well as its economic and environmental effects.
  - TxDOT uses this data-driven approach to select the projects with the best return on investment.
- Once the districts and MPOs have identified their highest priority projects, they assess the work that will be needed to make the projects a reality. Project development activities can include detailed planning, engineering design, environmental analysis, public involvement, right-of-way acquisition, and utility relocations.

Opportunities:

- Is there anything in this software that would let us know if the project would eventually lead to a higher class of action NEPA study? How is NEPA prioritized and programmed, and how long before NEPA are PEL studies conducted?
- Is there opportunity for a systematic process for applying PEL in advance of NEPA?
- What does environmental data inclusion look like here?
- What does collaboration with resource agencies look like?

MPO Example Process: Houston RTP



Engagement:

- The Transportation Policy Council (TPC) is responsible for setting transportation policies & approving all funding decisions. There are committees **specialized by topic area to delve more deeply into technical matters.**

How are environmental resources considered in plan development? Are resource agencies involved in this process?

MPO Stakeholder Engagement

- The MPO maintains several databases of individuals and stakeholder groups who receive notices about scheduled public meetings and other opportunities to provide comments on transportation planning issues.
- Elected and appointed officials, business and chambers of commerce institutions, representatives of public transportation, non-profit agencies, community organizations, public agencies, public ports, the freight industry, private transportation providers, commuter programs, active transportation, environmental justice, LEP advocates, tourist organizations, media representatives, and other interested parties.

Are resource agencies involved in this process?

Building leadership commitment

Current strategy of getting the Districts on board, then leadership will eventually follow, but:

- How do you get leadership champions, and who should they be, what kind of communication is necessary?
  - Agency heads, departmental leadership
- Based on TxDOT organization and structure, what level of commitment is necessary?

Next Steps

- Renaissance to document opportunities for TxDOT to further PEL practices
- Look over any new documents/resources identified
- Next meeting continues today’s conversation & includes any others who would be beneficial to engage?

Planning and Environment Linkages National Framework

Overview and Application

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

JUNE 2023

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Overview of National PEL framework
3. Overview of Texas's PEL practice
4. Overview of Florida ETDM Process as notable practice
5. Opportunities for TXDOT

TA Scope

1. Systems oriented transportation planning deep dive
   A. Explore how systems oriented transportation planning can provide relevant products and decisions useful for the NEPA process
   B. Identify example PEL approaches that illustrate useful strategies or ideas
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Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) National Framework

- PEL is a collaborative and integrated approach to decision making and project delivery
  - Incorporates environmental considerations during the planning process to align with and support the environmental review process
  - Helps to accelerate project delivery, reduce risks, and improve project and planning outcomes
- PEL has broad applicability and can yield benefits to a wide range of transportation plans and programs prior to project development
- PEL as an approach supported by flexible and scalable applications
  - Flexible - there is no singular prescribed application
  - Scalable – applications implemented in systems and corridor planning as a foundation for NEPA so that it's more efficient; geographically scalable too

Relevant Terms

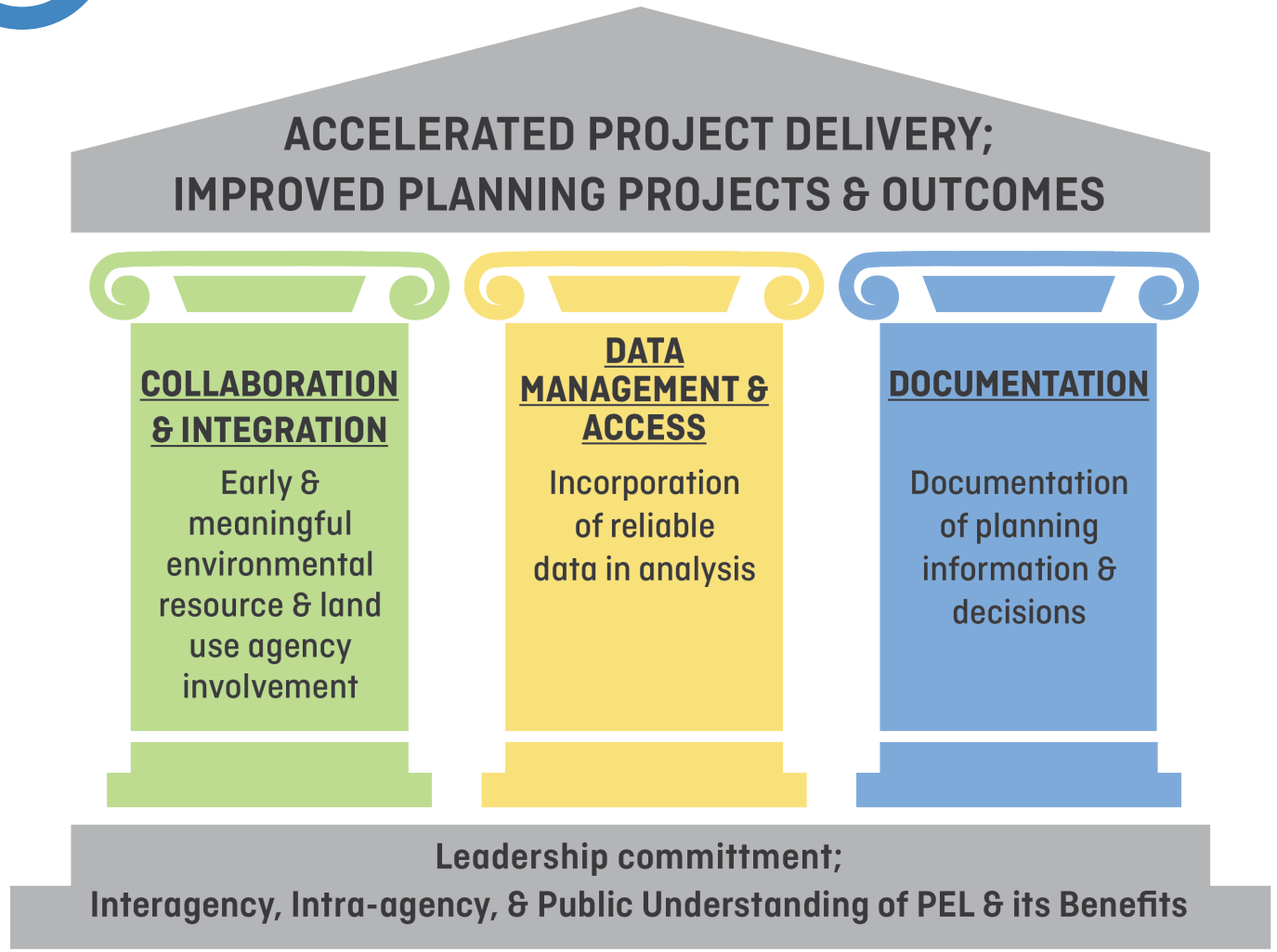
- Systems Planning – the analysis and collaborative development of a transportation plan extending over a regional or statewide geography.

  Flexible application of the PEL Framework is detailed for products developed and decisions made within systems plans, such as an MPO Long Range Transportation Plan, statewide Transportation Plan, or specific modal plans and programs.

- Corridor Planning –the analysis and collaborative development of a corridor plan that extends for a certain buffer along an existing or proposed transportation corridor.

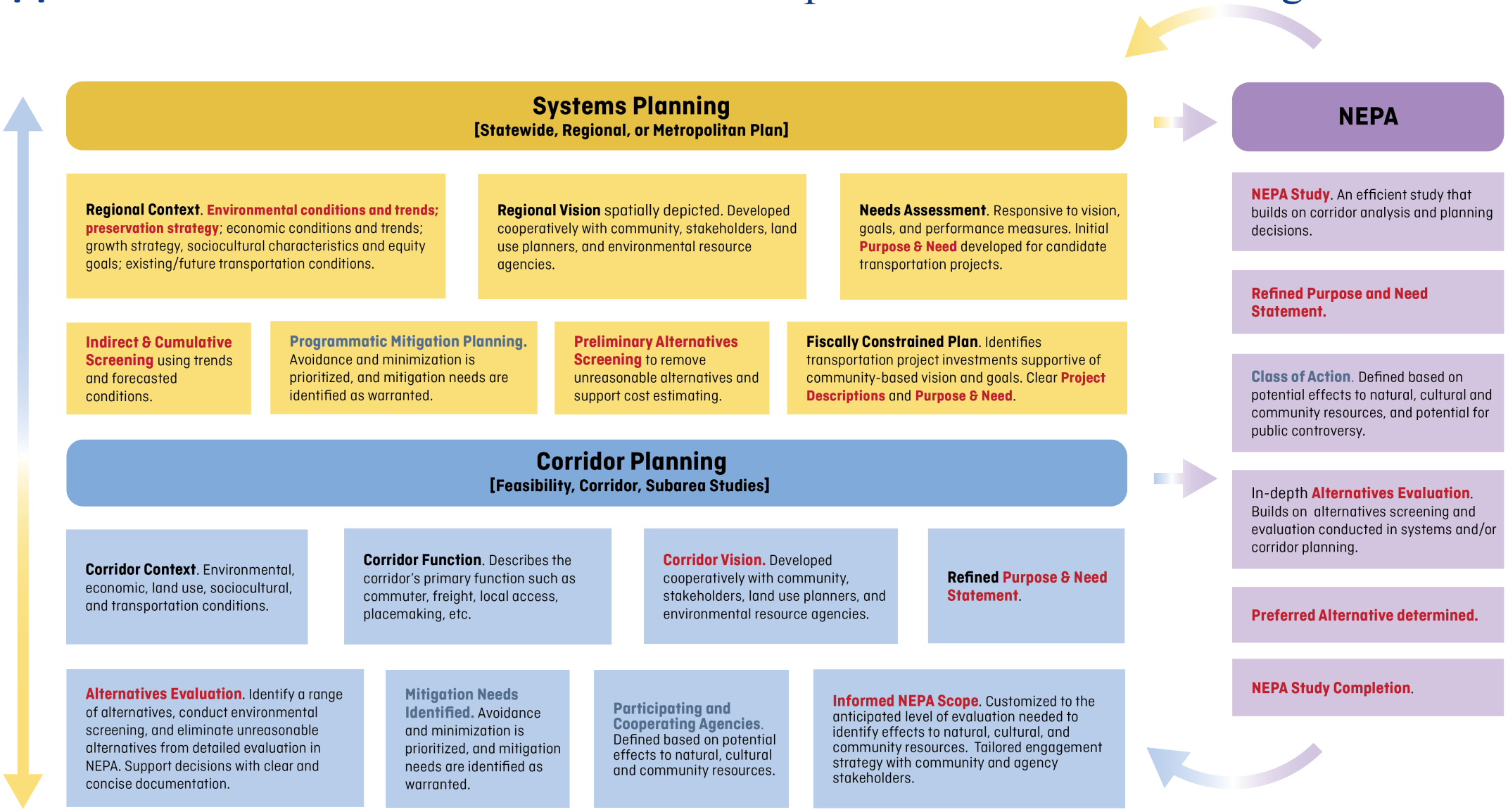
  Flexible application of the PEL Framework is detailed for products developed and decisions made within corridor plans conducted in advance of NEPA.

National PEL Framework



Pillars supported by notable practices for flexible application of PEL

Application of the PEL Framework for Transportation Decision Making



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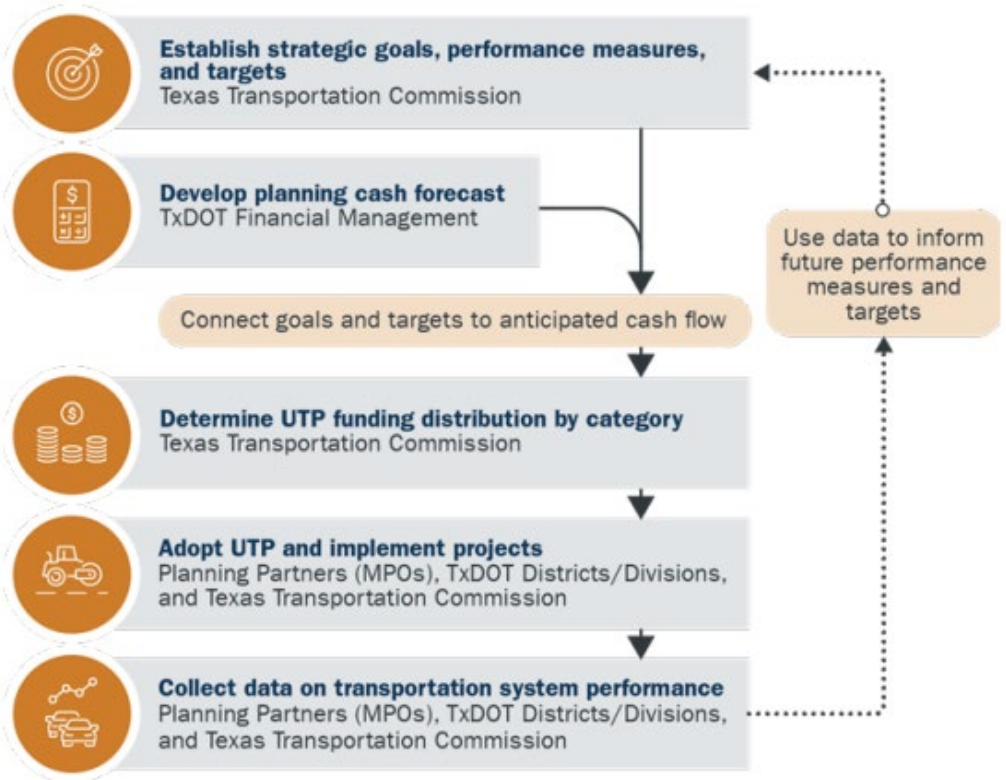

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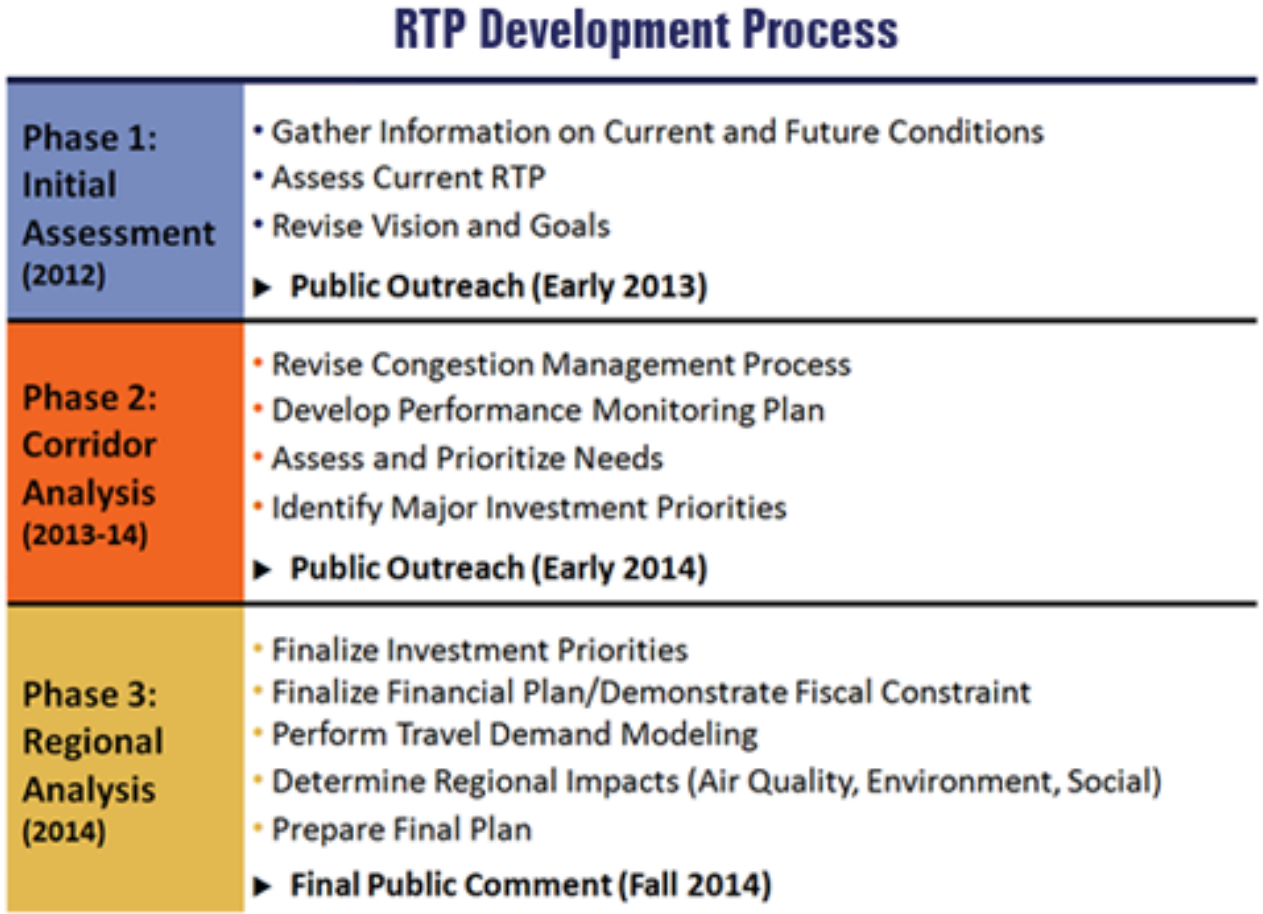

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Are resource agencies involved in this process?

Integrating PEL Approaches

- Corridor
  - What is the intent of current studies?
  - When are they are conducted & why?
- Systems level
  - How do you have these discussions?
  - Who do you meet with?
  - How do you get commitment?

AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. Overview of National PEL framework
3. Overview of Texas's PEL practice
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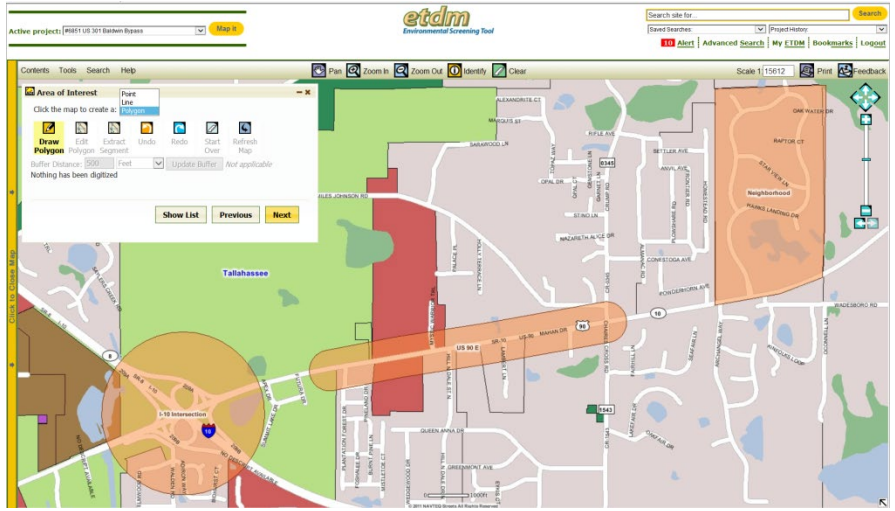
Florida's Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Process

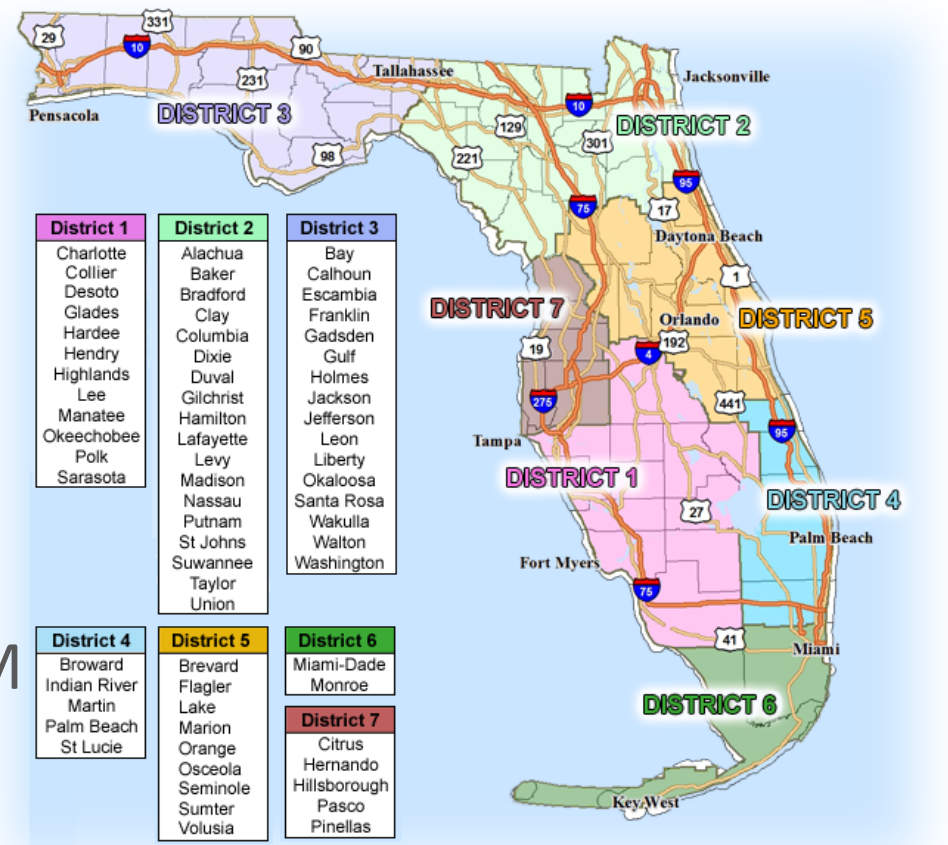


8/15/2023

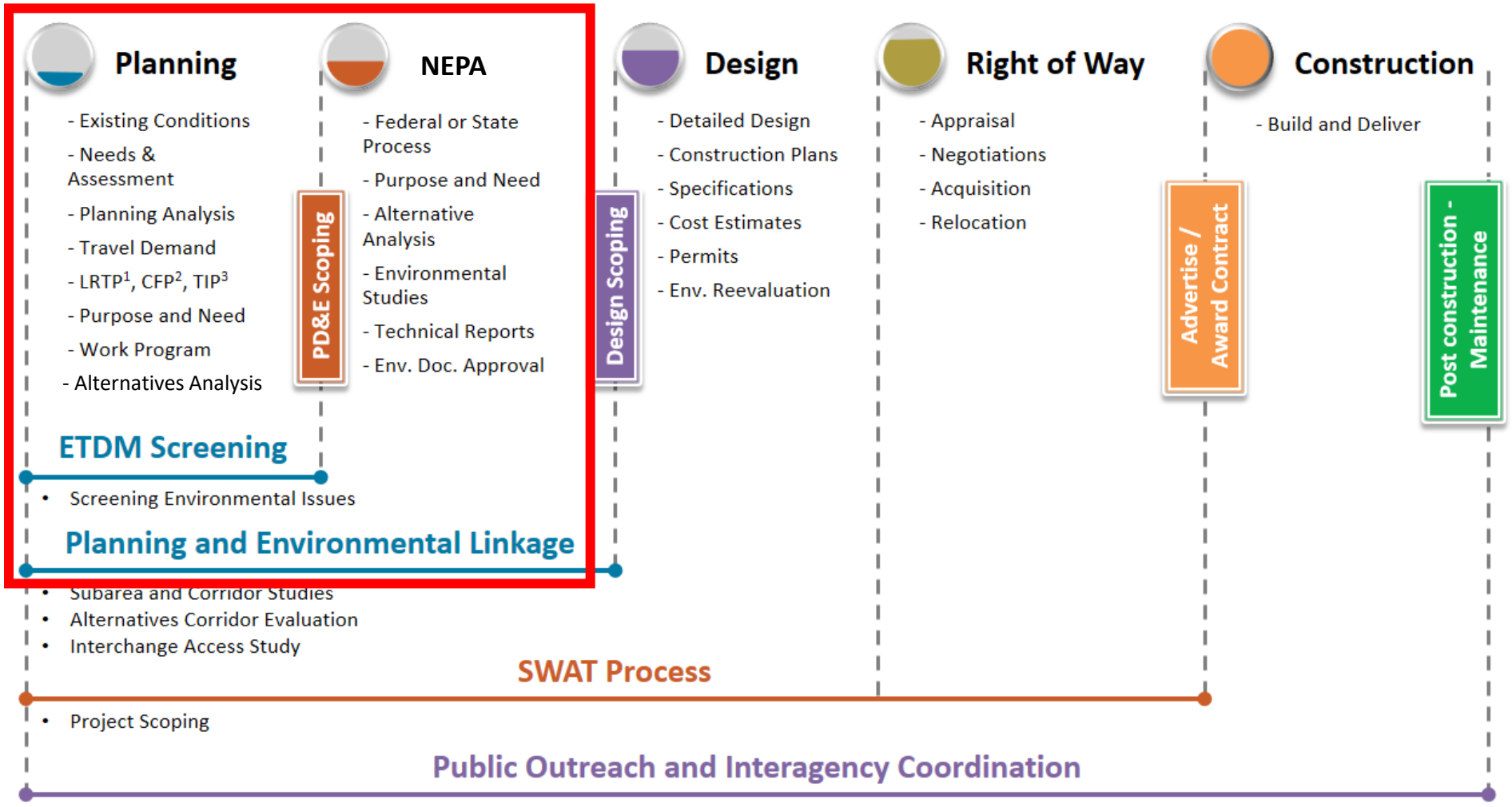
The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws described in this training are carried out by FDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. §327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated 12/14/2016, executed by FHWA and FDOT.

Topics

- Overview
- Florida's PEL ETDM Overview
- Integrating our Processes
- Institutionalizing the ETDM Process

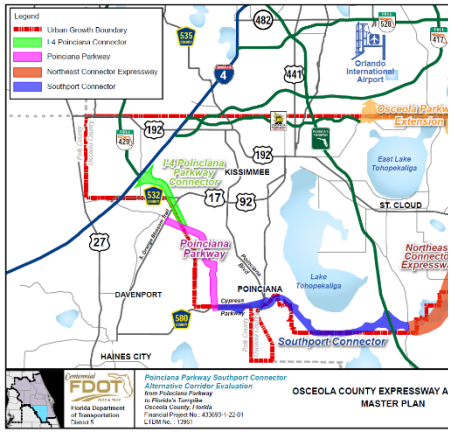


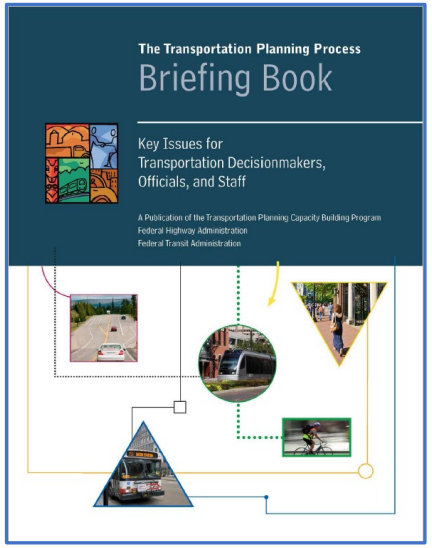
FDOT Transportation Project Development Process



Planning Phase

- Transportation projects identified to support mobility, economic, community needs
- Florida Transportation Plan (FTP)
- Cost Feasible Plan (CFP)
- Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Plans
- Planning Studies
  - Define or refine project parameters and mode
  - Establish Purpose and Need
  - Define the Project Area
  - Characterize Environmental Setting
  - Develop and Evaluate Alternatives
  - Facilitate scope of work for the PD&E Phase





Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Considerations

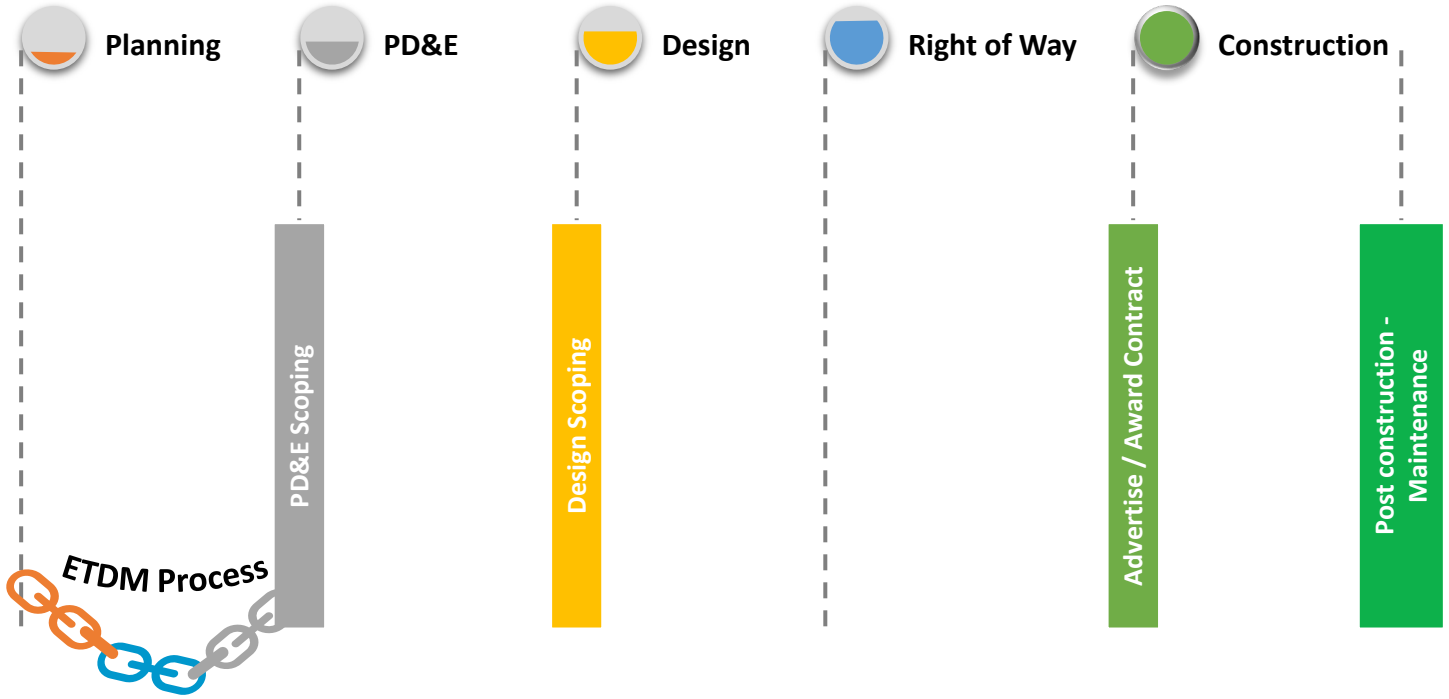
Federal laws and FDOT procedures for PD&E studies enable FDOT to reuse data gathered, methodology used, results obtained, and decisions made during the planning studies to streamline project development and environmental review. In particular, planning products such as the **Existing and Future Conditions Report** and decisions made in the planning process can be adopted or incorporated by reference into a project development and environmental (PD&E) study that is compliant with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) if certain requirements are met.

Several of these requirements are particularly relevant to the development of a **Work Plan** for ***Exploring Existing and Future Conditions*** and the associated partner and public engagement activities that FDOT undertakes throughout the planning process, as shown in the table below.

Selected Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Requirements for Planning Products[1]	Relevance to Products of *Exploring Existing and Future Conditions* That Will Be Adopted into a NEPA Process
The planning product was developed in consultation with appropriate federal and state resource agencies and Indian Tribes.	Indian Tribes in the study area boundaries must be given an opportunity to review the **Draft Existing and Future Conditions Report**.
The planning process included broad multidisciplinary consideration of systems-level or corridor-wide transportation needs and potential effects, including effects on the human and natural environment.	The **Work Plan** for ***Exploring Existing and Future Conditions*** must include data collection and analysis to address these topics. The Planning Project Manager will consult with staff responsible for PD&E studies as needed.
The planning process included public notice that the planning products produced in the planning process may be adopted during a subsequent environmental review process in accordance with federal law.	See PD&E Manual, Project Development Process Section 4.2.2 for guidance and specific language that must be inserted in the **Existing and Future Conditions Report** and any other planning products that are to be adopted in a subsequent environmental review process.
There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.	The **Existing and Future Conditions Report** contains the most current information practicable. The inventory of data will note the date the source data sets were published and period the data will be relevant ("shelf life").
The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies.	The **Work Plan** for ***Exploring Existing and Future Conditions*** ensures the final report will reflect reliable and reasonably current data based on reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies
The planning product is documented in sufficient detail to support the decision or the results of the analysis and to meet requirements for use of the information in the environmental review process.	The **Work Plan** for ***Exploring Existing and Future Conditions*** describes the detail required for information collected. The Planning Project Manager will consult with staff responsible for PD&E as needed.
The planning product was approved within the 5-year period ending on the date on which the information is adopted or incorporated by reference.	Information gathered for use in the **Existing and Future Conditions Report** will be as current as possible. The Planning Project Manager will consult with staff responsible for PD&E studies as needed.

[1] From United States Code at 23 U.S.C. § 168(d)

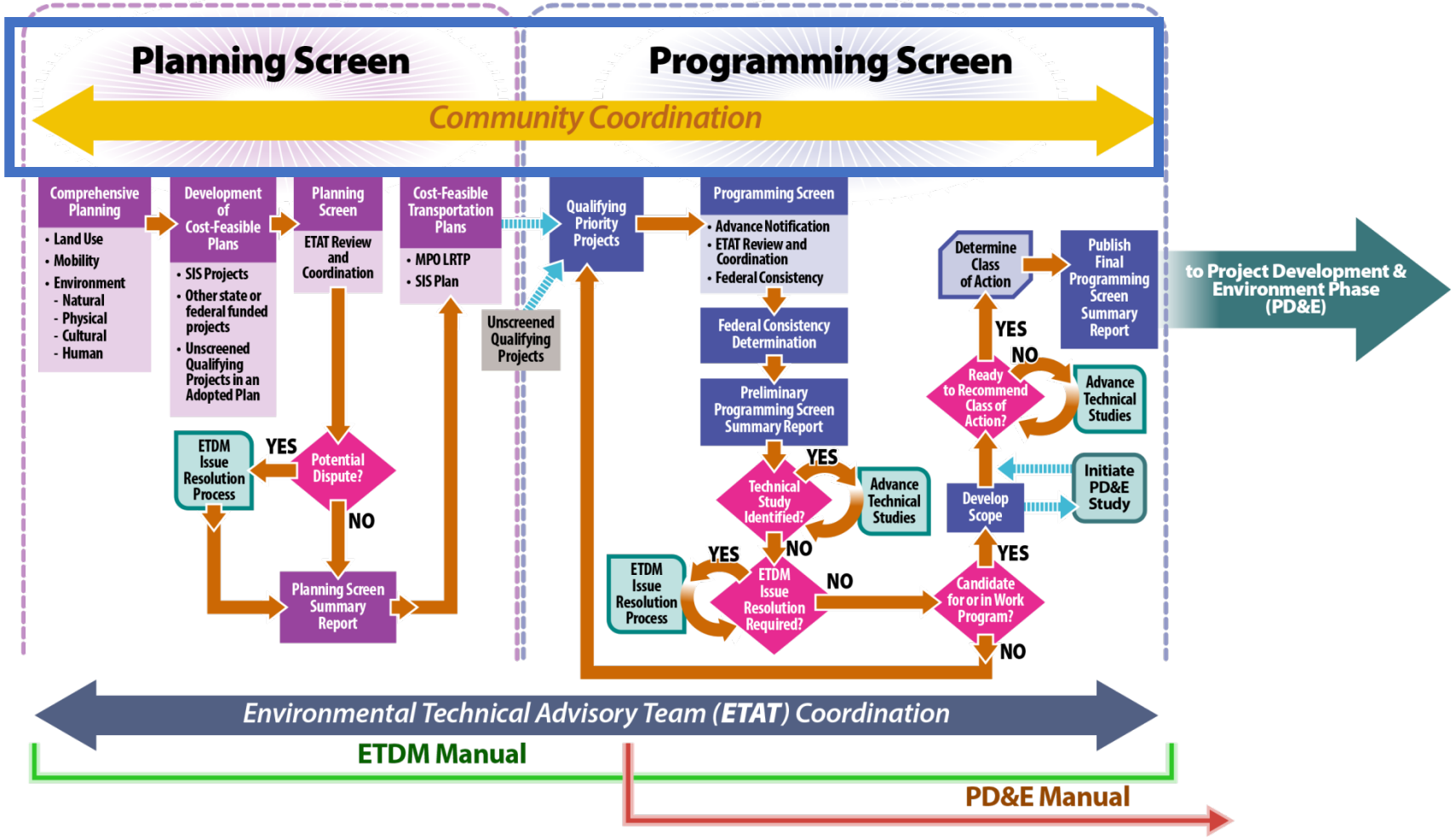
ETDM Links Planning and NEPA



Qualifying Projects

- **Roadway Projects**
  - Additional through lanes that add capacity to an existing road
  - A new roadway, freeway, or expressway
  - A highway providing new access to an area
  - A new or reconstructed arterial highway (e.g. realignment)
  - A new circumferential or belt highway bypassing a community
  - Addition of interchanges or major interchange modifications to a completed freeway or expressway
  - A new bridge providing new access to an area; bridge replacements
- **Public Transportation**
  - Rail – non-passenger rail on the SIS, new commuter rail, or new freight rail extending beyond current footprint
  - Transit – new facility, new terminal, New Start project extending beyond current footprint

ETDM Process



Key Players and Roles

- **ETAT representative**
  - Well versed in agency's statutory and regulatory authority
  - Access to key agency decision-makers
  - Single point of contact
- **District ETDM Coordinator**
  - Coordinate activities of the process
    - Initiate project screens
    - Prepare summary reports
- **Community Liaison Coordinator**
  - Prepare sociocultural effects inventory
  - Solicit and respond to public comments
- **OEM Reviewers**
  - Complete Pre-Screening
  - Approve Planning Products and future Environmental activities

Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT)

Federal Agencies

- Office of Environmental Management – serving as Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Federal Transit Agency (FTA)
- US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE)
- US Coast Guard (USCG)
- US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- US Forest Service (USFS)
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
- National Park Service (NPS)

State	Number of Liaisons in 2009		Number of Liaisons in 2019	Agencies Involved in 2019
Florida	*Federal*	14.5	*18.25*	U.S. Forest Service (USFS) (1.25), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) (3), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) (4), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) (4), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) (2), U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) (2), National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) (1), National Park Service (NPS) (1),
	State	7.5	*16.5*	Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (FDEO) (1.25), Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) (1), Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) (2), Northwest Florida Water Management District (NWFWMD) (1), South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) (2), St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) (2), Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) (1.25), Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) (1) Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) (2) Department of State – State Historic Protection Officer (3)
	TOTAL	**22**	**34.75 (26.75 funded)**	
	Note: Liaisons numbers above can be handled by multiple individual resources and not all liaison positions are funded positions			

Native American Tribal Governments

- Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida
- Seminole Tribe of Florida

State Agencies

- Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)
- Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (FDEO)
- Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC)
- Northwest Florida Water Management District (NWFWMD)
- South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD)
- Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD)
- St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD)
- Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD)

Local Governments

- Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)
- Transportation Planning Organizations (TPOs)
- Regional Planning Councils (RPCs)

Environmental Considerations

What is the Planning Screen?

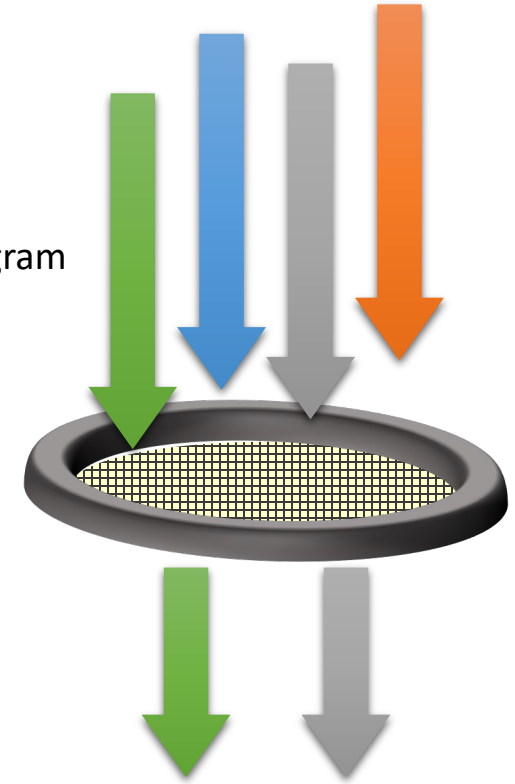
What decisions are we supporting through this screening?

- Understanding of
  - Purpose and need
  - Affected environment
- Agreement on mode
- Initial identification of fatal flaws and potential controversies
- Development and refinement of reasonable alternatives
- Early avoidance and minimization
- Inform our Cost Feasible Plans

What is the Programming Screen?

What decisions are we hoping to make through this screening?

- Send out Advance Notification Package
  - Intergovernmental Coordination and Review (ICAR)
  - Federal assistance eligibility
  - Federal consistency – compliance with Florida Coastal Management Program
- Identify potential avoidance, minimization and mitigation opportunities
  - Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects
- Fill data blanks
- Develop PD&E scope
- Acceptance of purpose and need
- Potentially eliminate alternatives
- Highlight critical path issues
- Obtain Federal consistency determination (incl. local government comprehensive plan)
- Provide considerations for class of action determination

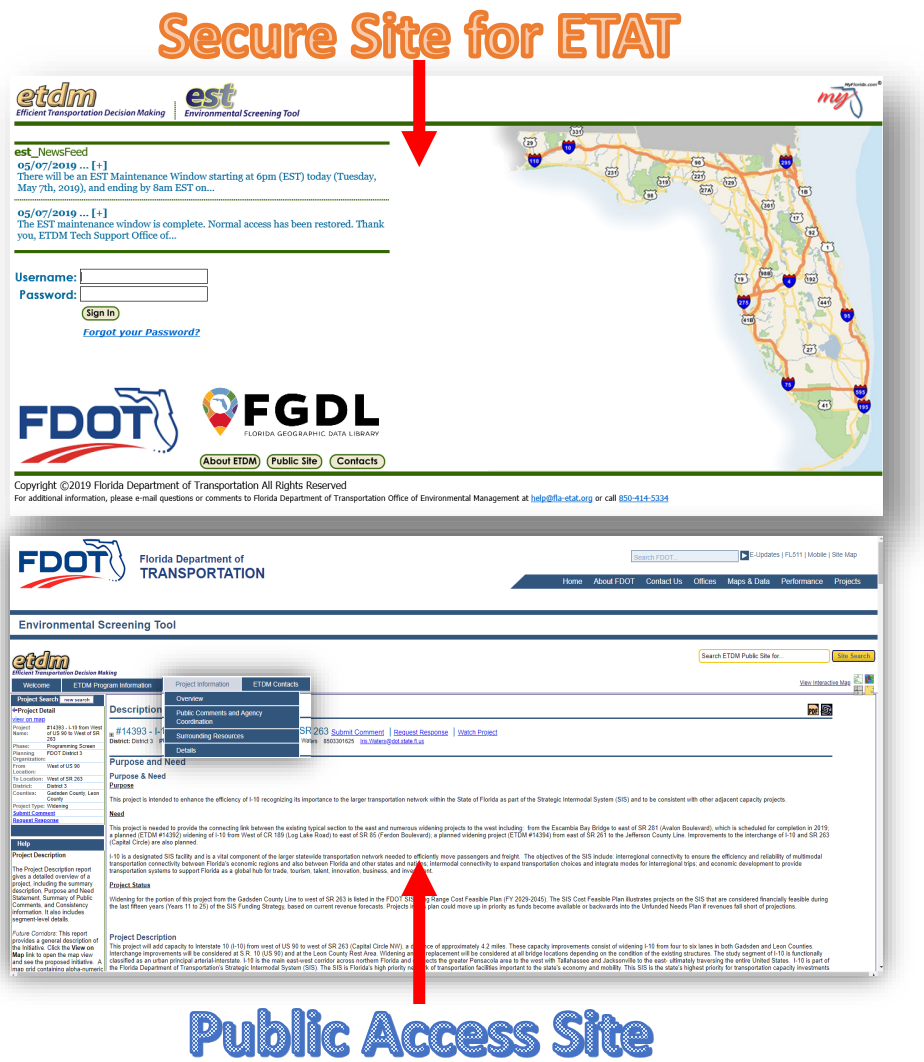


What is a Preliminary Environmental Discussion?

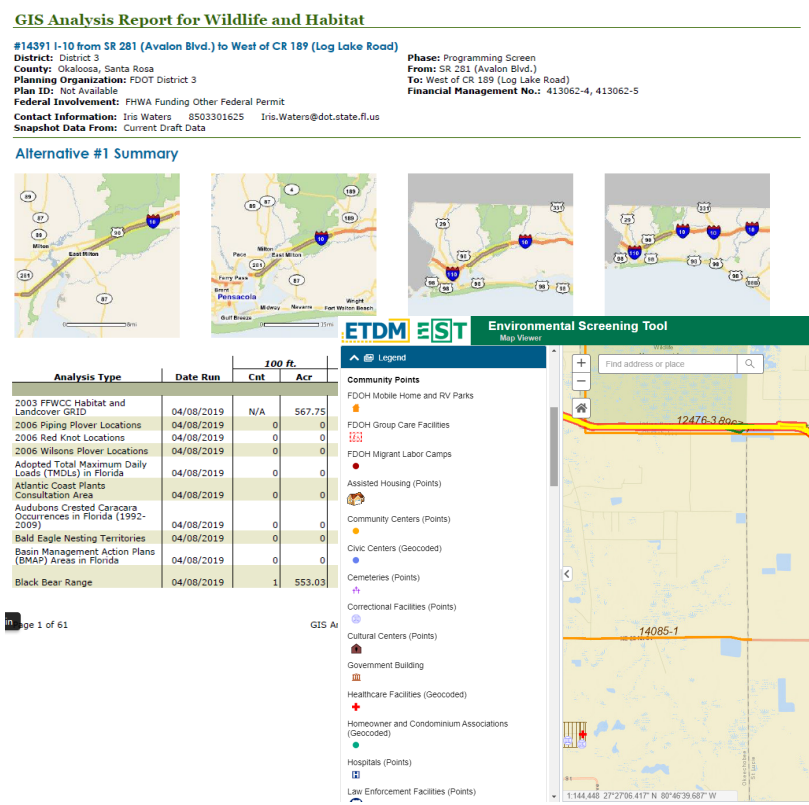
- Report that
  - Informs reviewing agencies and the public of our understanding of potential environmental issues on a proposed project
    - FDOT providing project context
  - Communicates what we know relative to the specific:
    - Project
    - Alternative
    - Issue
- Opportunity to identify
  - Resources FDOT knows about and whether we might come in contact with them, or not
  - Coordination needs
  - Technical studies
  - Anticipated permits

Environmental Screening Tool (EST)

- Integrates
- Analyzes
- Communicates
- Informs



GIS Maps and Analysis Reports



GIS Analysis Report for Wildlife and Habitat

#14391 I-10 from SR 281 (Avalon Blvd.) to West of CR 189 (Log Lake Road)

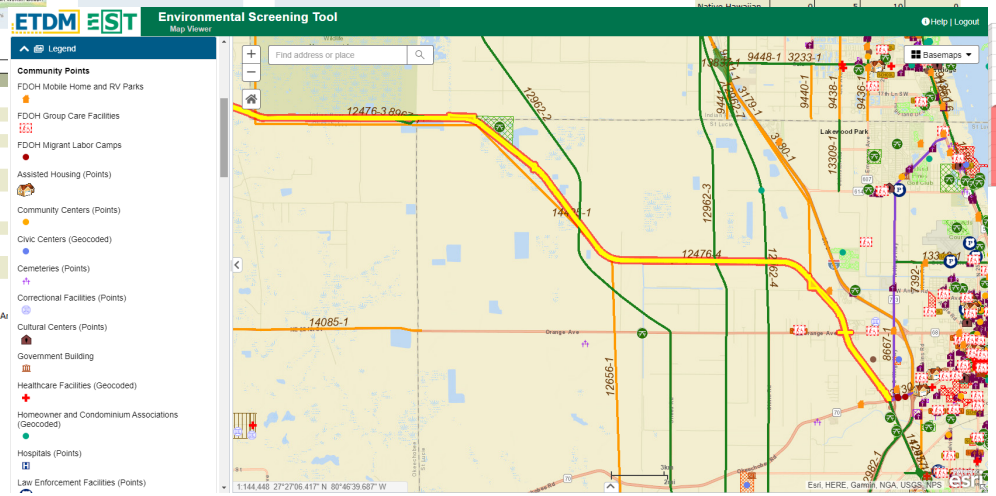
District: District 3
County: Okaloosa, Santa Rosa
Planning Organization: FDOT District 3
Plan ID: Not Available
Federal Involvement: FHWA Funding Other Federal Permit
Contact Information: Iris Waters 8503301625 Iris.Waters@dot.state.fl.us
Snapshot Data From: Current Draft Data

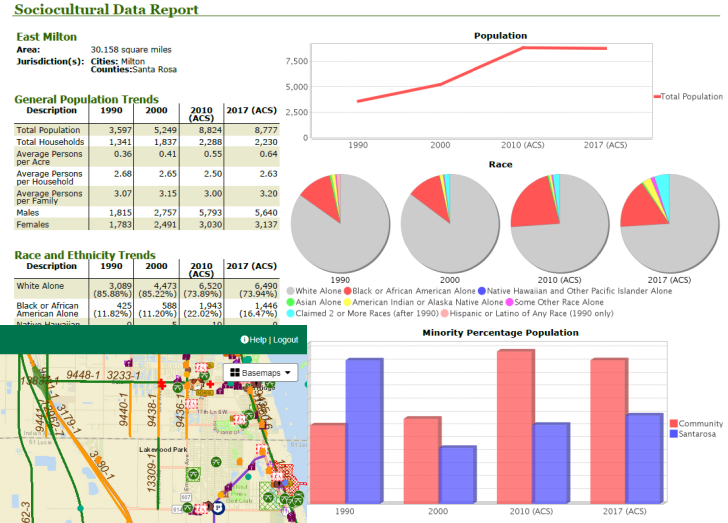
Phase: Programming Screen
From: SR 281 (Avalon Blvd.)
To: West of CR 189 (Log Lake Road)
Financial Management No.: 413062-4, 413062-5

Alternative #1 Summary

Analysis Type	Date Run	100 ft. Cnt	100 ft. Acr
2003 FFWCC Habitat and Landcover GRID	04/08/2019	N/A	567.75
2006 Piping Plover Locations	04/08/2019	0	0
2006 Red Knot Locations	04/08/2019	0	0
2006 Wilsons Plover Locations	04/08/2019	0	0
Adopted Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) in Florida	04/08/2019	0	0
Atlantic Coast Plants Consultation Area	04/08/2019	0	0
Audubons Crested Caracara Occurrences in Florida (1992-2009)	04/08/2019	0	0
Bald Eagle Nesting Territories	04/08/2019	0	0
Basin Management Action Plans (BMAP) Areas in Florida	04/08/2019	0	0
Black Bear Range	04/08/2019	1	553.03

Page 1 of 61 GIS Ar





Sociocultural Data Report

East Milton

Area: 30.158 square miles
Jurisdiction(s): **Cities:** Milton **Counties:** Santa Rosa

General Population Trends

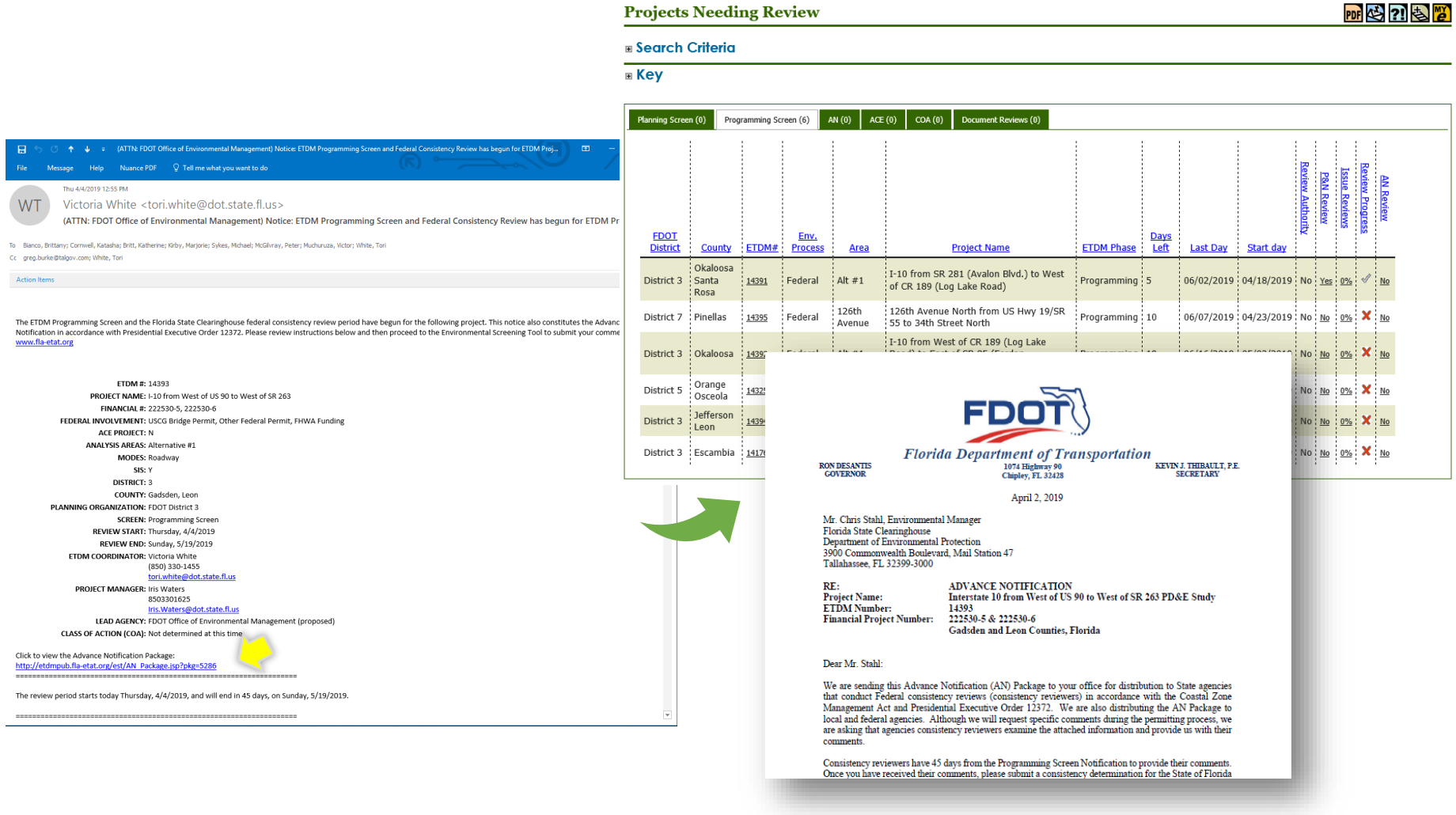
Description	1990	2000	2010 (ACS)	2017 (ACS)
Total Population	3,597	5,249	8,824	8,777
Total Households	1,341	1,837	2,288	2,230
Average Persons per Acre	0.36	0.41	0.55	0.64
Average Persons per Household	2.68	2.65	2.50	2.63
Average Persons per Family	3.07	3.15	3.00	3.20
Males	1,815	2,757	5,793	5,640
Females	1,783	2,491	3,030	3,137

Race and Ethnicity Trends

Description	1990	2000	2010 (ACS)	2017 (ACS)
White Alone	3,089 (85.88%)	4,473 (85.22%)	6,520 (73.89%)	6,490 (73.94%)
Black or African American Alone	425 (11.82%)	588 (11.20%)	1,943 (22.02%)	1,446 (16.47%)

FGDL
FLORIDA GEOGRAPHIC DATA LIBRARY

ETAT Review



(ATTN: FDOT Office of Environmental Management) Notice: ETDM Programming Screen and Federal Consistency Review has begun for ETDM Proj...

File Message Help Nuance PDF Tell me what you want to do

Thu 4/4/2019 12:55 PM

WT Victoria White <tori.white@dot.state.fl.us>

(ATTN: FDOT Office of Environmental Management) Notice: ETDM Programming Screen and Federal Consistency Review has begun for ETDM Pr

To Bianco, Brittany; Cornwell, Katasha; Britt, Katherine; Kirby, Marjorie; Sykes, Michael; McGilvray, Peter; Muchuruza, Victor; White, Tori

Cc greg.burke@talgov.com; White, Tori

Action Items

The ETDM Programming Screen and the Florida State Clearinghouse federal consistency review period have begun for the following project. This notice also constitutes the Advanc
Notification in accordance with Presidential Executive Order 12372. Please review instructions below and then proceed to the Environmental Screening Tool to submit your comme
www.fla-etat.org

ETDM #: 14393
PROJECT NAME: I-10 from West of US 90 to West of SR 263
FINANCIAL #: 222530-5, 222530-6
FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT: USCG Bridge Permit, Other Federal Permit, FHWA Funding
ACE PROJECT: N
ANALYSIS AREAS: Alternative #1
MODES: Roadway
SIS: Y
DISTRICT: 3
COUNTY: Gadsden, Leon
PLANNING ORGANIZATION: FDOT District 3
SCREEN: Programming Screen
REVIEW START: Thursday, 4/4/2019
REVIEW END: Sunday, 5/19/2019
ETDM COORDINATOR: Victoria White
(850) 330-1455
tori.white@dot.state.fl.us
PROJECT MANAGER: Iris Waters
8503301625
Iris.Waters@dot.state.fl.us
LEAD AGENCY: FDOT Office of Environmental Management (proposed)
CLASS OF ACTION (COA): Not determined at this time

Click to view the Advance Notification Package:
http://etdmpub.fla-etat.org/est/AN_Package.jsp?pkg=5286

The review period starts today Thursday, 4/4/2019, and will end in 45 days, on Sunday, 5/19/2019.

Projects Needing Review

Search Criteria

Key

Planning Screen (0) | Programming Screen (6) | AN (0) | ACE (0) | COA (0) | Document Reviews (0)

FDOT District	County	ETDM#	Env. Process	Area	Project Name	ETDM Phase	Days Left	Last Day	Start day	Review Authority	PD&N Review	Issue Reviews	Review Progress	AN Review
District 3	Okaloosa Santa Rosa	14391	Federal	Alt #1	I-10 from SR 281 (Avalon Blvd.) to West of CR 189 (Log Lake Road)	Programming	5	06/02/2019	04/18/2019	No	Yes	0%	✓	No
District 7	Pinellas	14395	Federal	126th Avenue	126th Avenue North from US Hwy 19/SR 55 to 34th Street North	Programming	10	06/07/2019	04/23/2019	No	No	0%	✗	No
District 3	Okaloosa	1439[illegible]			I-10 from West of CR 189 (Log Lake					No	No	0%	✗	No
District 5	Orange Osceola	1432[illegible]								No	No	0%	✗	No
District 3	Jefferson Leon	1439[illegible]								No	No	0%	✗	No
District 3	Escambia	1417[illegible]								No	No	0%	✗	No

FDOT
Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

1074 Highway 90
Chipley, FL 32428

KEVIN J. THIBAULT, P.E.
SECRETARY

April 2, 2019

Mr. Chris Stahl, Environmental Manager
Florida State Clearinghouse
Department of Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, Mail Station 47
Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000

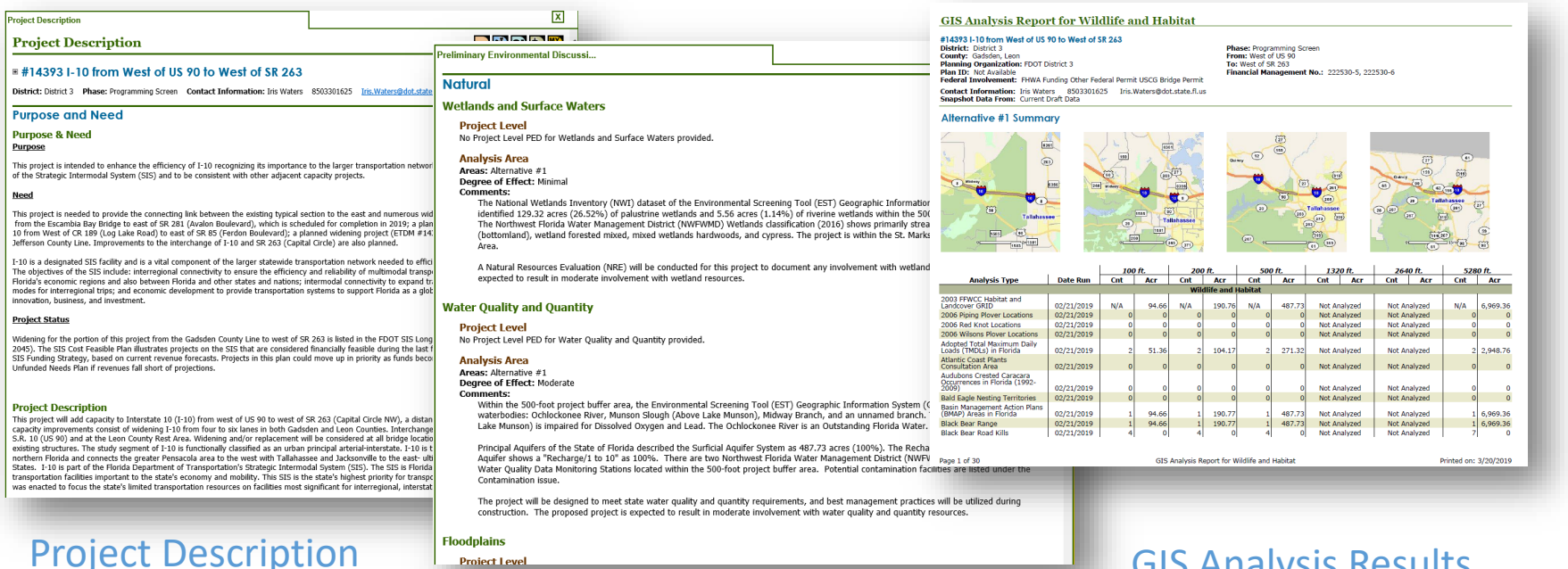
RE: ADVANCE NOTIFICATION
Project Name: Interstate 10 from West of US 90 to West of SR 263 PD&E Study
ETDM Number: 14393
Financial Project Number: 222530-5 & 222530-6
Gadsden and Leon Counties, Florida

Dear Mr. Stahl:

We are sending this Advance Notification (AN) Package to your office for distribution to State agencies that conduct Federal consistency reviews (consistency reviewers) in accordance with the Coastal Zone Management Act and Presidential Executive Order 12372. We are also distributing the AN Package to local and federal agencies. Although we will request specific comments during the permitting process, we are asking that agencies consistency reviewers examine the attached information and provide us with their comments.

Consistency reviewers have 45 days from the Programming Screen Notification to provide their comments. Once you have received their comments, please submit a consistency determination for the State of Florida

Review Project Information



Project Description

Purpose and Need

Project Documents

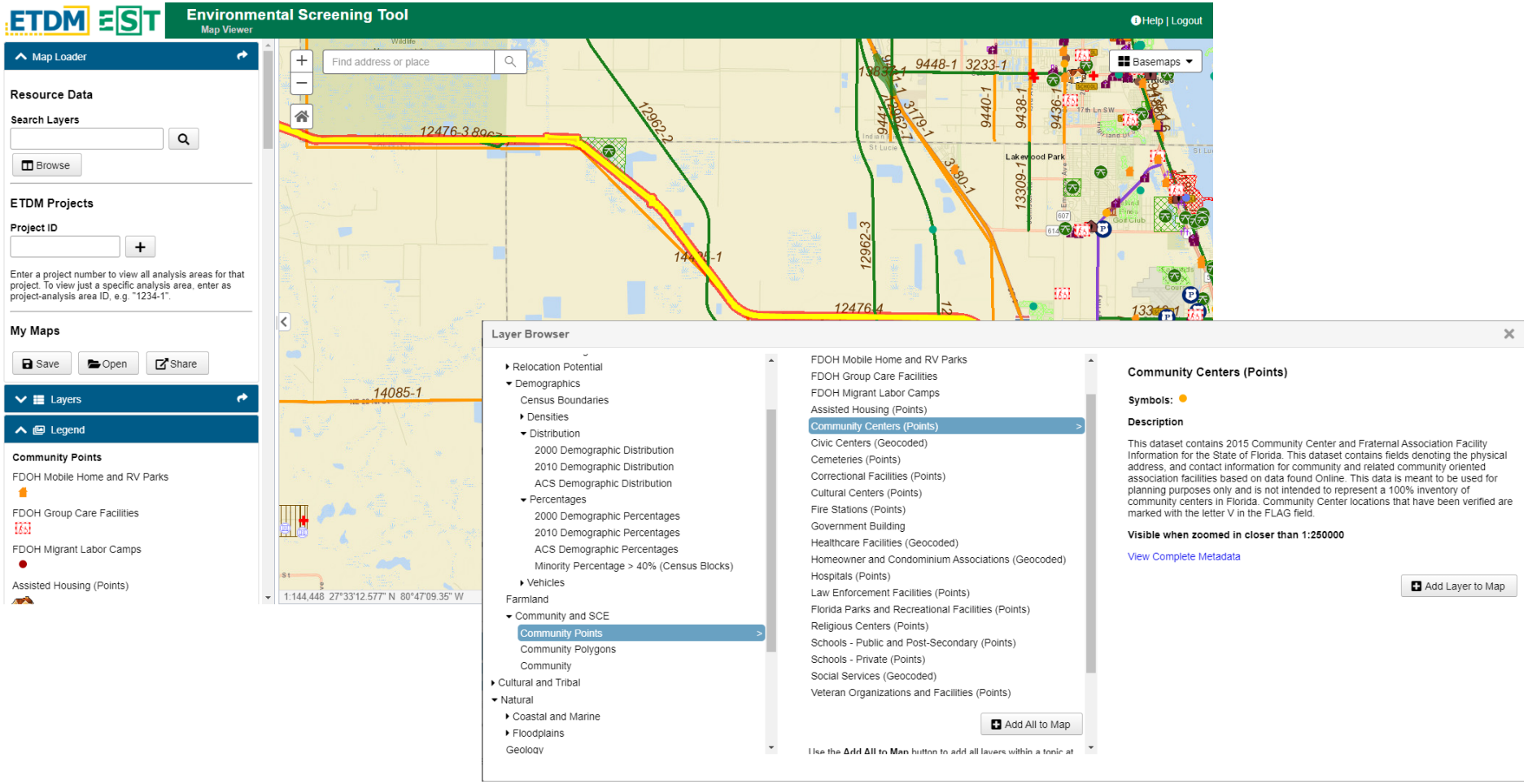
Preliminary Environmental Discussion

GIS Analysis Results

Sociocultural Data Report

Cultural Resources Report

Explore Maps



Additional Information

Field Reviews

Agency-specific Knowledge (not in EST)

Agency Publications

Degree of Effect (DOE)

a.

Identify resources & level of importance

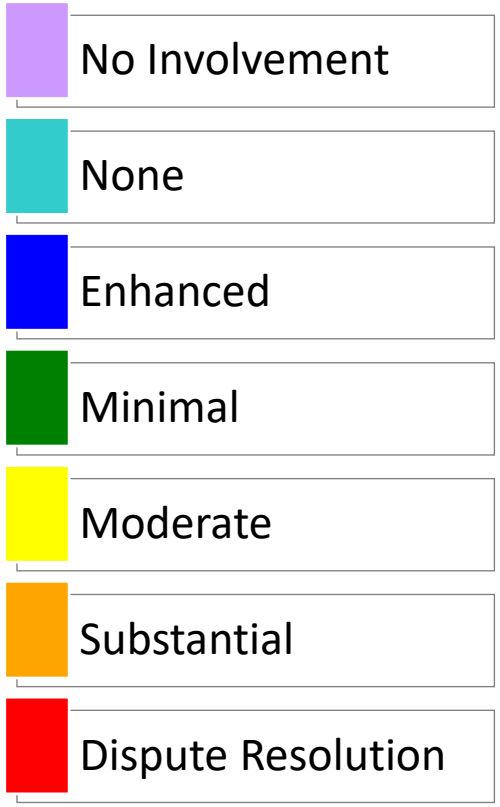
b.

Assess effects

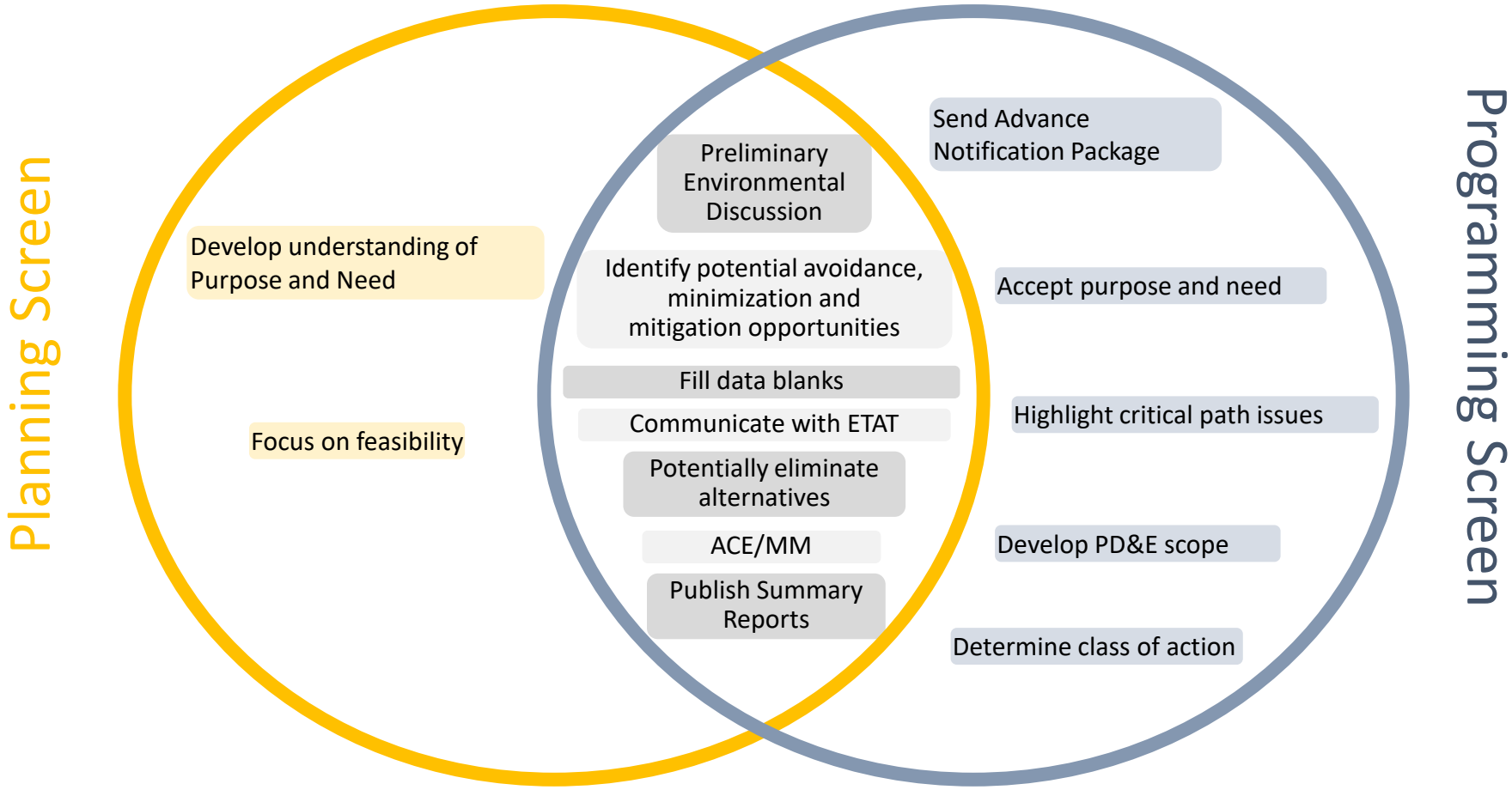
Direct **Indirect** **Cumulative**

c.

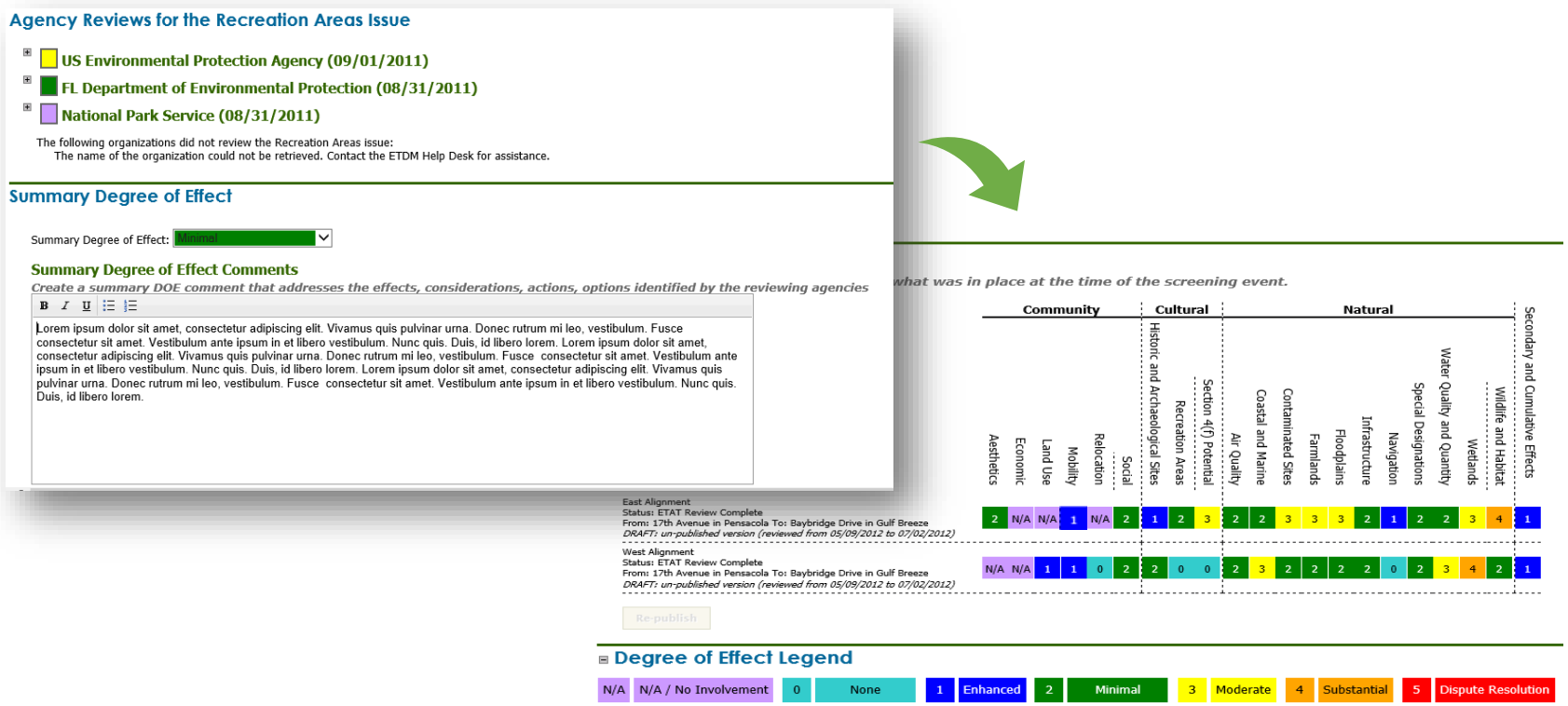
Identify potential severity of effects with detailed comments



Tasks and Outcomes

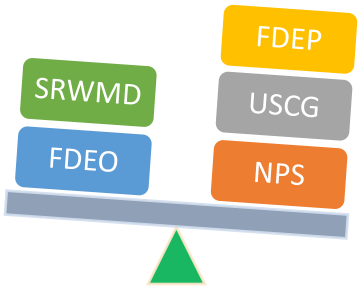


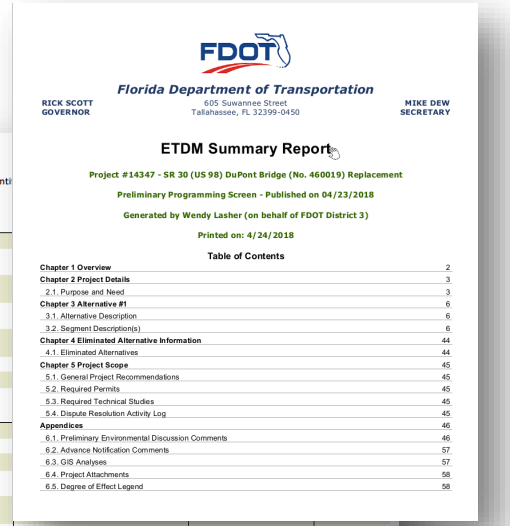
ETDM Coordinator Summarizes Results



Screening Summary Report

- Resource to Project Managers, ETDM Coordinators, Consultants, future team members, and future phases
  - Feedback with documents project reviews, identification of concerns and summarize future project activities
    - Summary DOEs
    - Anticipated Permits & Technical Studies
    - Summary of Public Comments
    - Commitments
- Provided coordination document within Dis





FDOT

Florida Department of Transportation

RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

MIKE DEW
SECRETARY

ETDM Summary Report

Project #14347 - SR 30 (US 98) DuPont Bridge (No. 460019) Replacement

Preliminary Programming Screen - Published on 04/23/2018

Generated by Wendy Lasher (on behalf of FDOT District 3)

Printed on: 4/24/2018

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Project Scope

General Project Recommendations

There are no general project recommendations identi

Anticipated Permits

Permit	Type
Gopher Tortoise Permit	FFWCC
Individual Stormwater Permit	Stormwater
Standard (Individual) Permit	USACE
Environmental Resource Permit	FDEP
Utility Permits	County/Municipality - Local
NPDES General Permit	FDEP
Bridge Permit	USCG

Anticipated Technical Studies

Technical Study Name	Type			
Geotechnical Report	ENGINEERING			
Typical Section Package	ENGINEERING			
Bridge Hydraulic Report	ENGINEERING			
Draft Environmental Assessment	ENVIRONMENTAL			
Finding of No Significant Impact	ENVIRONMENTAL			
Noise Study Report	ENVIRONMENTAL		FDOT District 3	12/20/2017
Air Quality Report	ENVIRONMENTAL		FDOT District 3	12/20/2017
Contamination Screening Evaluation Report	ENVIRONMENTAL		FDOT District 3	12/20/2017
Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan	ENVIRONMENTAL		FDOT District 3	12/20/2017
Traffic Analysis	ENGINEERING		FDOT District 3	12/20/2017
USCG Bridge Questionnaire	Other		FDOT District 3	12/20/2017
Essential Fish Habitat Assessment	ENVIRONMENTAL		FDOT District 3	12/20/2017
Preliminary Engineering Report	ENGINEERING		FDOT District 3	12/20/2017
Water Quality Impact Evaluation (WQIE)	ENVIRONMENTAL		FDOT District 3	12/20/2017
Navigation Study	Other		FDOT District 3	12/20/2017
Cultural Resource Assessment Survey	ENVIRONMENTAL		FDOT District 3	12/20/2017

#14347 SR 30 (US 98) DuPont Bridge (No. 460019) Replacement

District: District 3
County: Bay
Planning Organization: FDOT District 3
Plan ID: Not Available
Federal Involvement: FHWA Funding Other Federal Permit USCG Bridge Permit

Phase: Programming Screen
From: Bonita Bay Rec Center Entrance
To: Oakshore Drive
Financial Management No.: 442667-1-22-01

Contact Information: Iris Waters 8503301625 Iris.Waters@dot.state.fl.us
Snapshot Data From: Programming Screen Summary Report Re-published on 04/23/2018 by Wendy Lasher
Issues and Categories are reflective of what was in place at the time of the screening event.

	Social and Economic						Cultural			Natural					Physical					
	Land Use Changes	Social	Relocation Potential	Farmlands	Aesthetic Effects	Economic	Mobility	Section 4(f) Potential	Historic and Archaeological Sites	Recreation Areas	Wetlands and Surface Waters	Water Quality and Quantity	Floodplains	Wildlife and Habitat	Coastal and Marine	Noise	Air Quality	Contamination	Infrastructure	Navigation	Special Designations
Alternative #1 From: Bonita Bay Rec Center Entrance To: Oakshore Drive *Re-Published: 04/23/2018 Reviewed from 01/19/2018 to 03/05/2018)*	2	2	2	N/A	2	1	1	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	4	0

Information to Advance to NEPA

- Purpose and Need
- Class of Action
- Cooperating and Participating Agencies
- Identification/refinement of alternatives
- Preliminary Environmental Discussion (PED)
- Elimination of unreasonable alternatives
- Identification of anticipated technical studies and permits
- Summary of public comments, sociocultural effects evaluation, and identification of community desired features
- Identification of future coordination activities
- Recommendations for subsequent project phases
- Results of planning studies that may support the PD&E Study

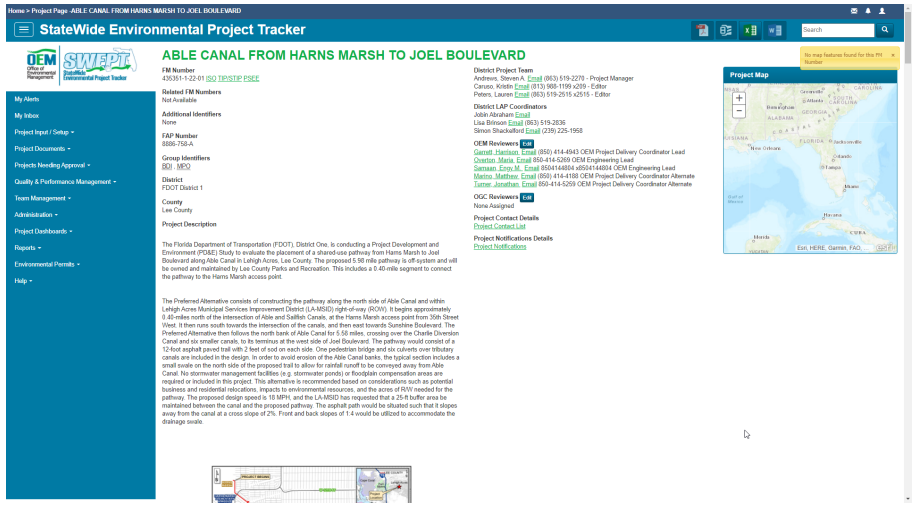
Adopt Planning Products

- Information can be used within 5 years of publication
- Must follow conditions of ***23 U.S.C. § 168***
- May include planning products identified in ***23 U.S.C. § 168***

Secure Site

Public Access Site

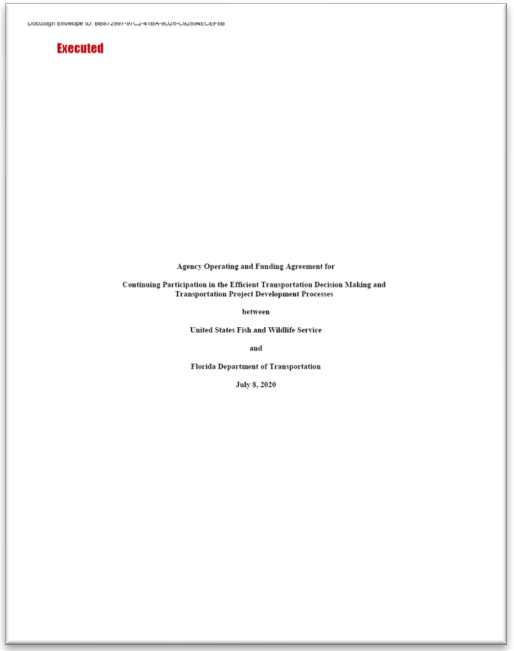
Information and Outcomes Feed Environmental Document Development



https://etdmpub.fla-etat.org/est/

Institutionalizing the Process

Agency Agreements



Executed

Agency Operating and Funding Agreement for

Continuing Participation in the Efficient Transportation Decision Making and Transportation Project Development Processes

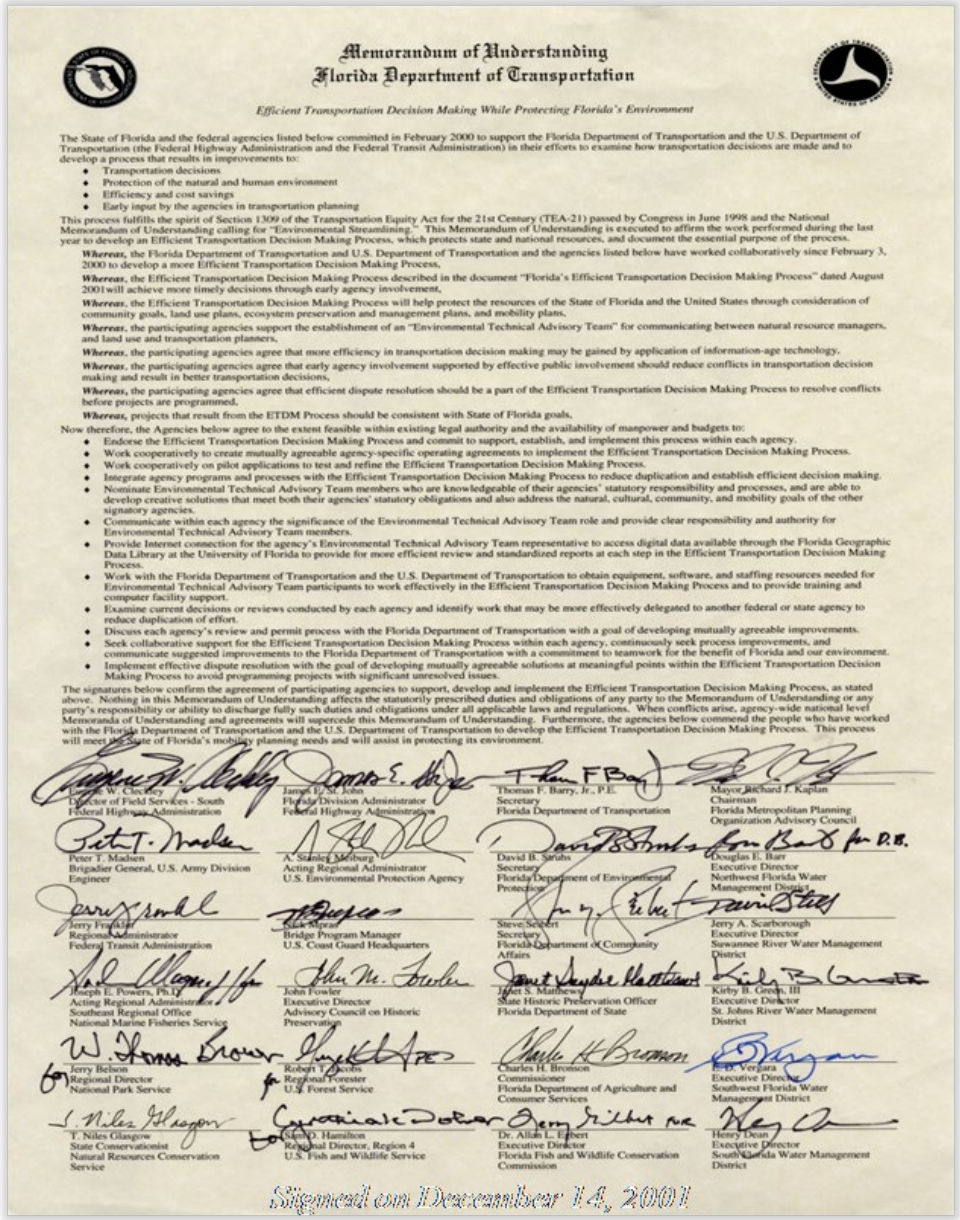
between

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

and

Florida Department of Transportation

July 8, 2020



Memorandum of Understanding
Florida Department of Transportation

Efficient Transportation Decision Making While Protecting Florida's Environment

The State of Florida and the federal agencies listed below committed in February 2000 to support the Florida Department of Transportation and the U.S. Department of Transportation (the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration) in their efforts to examine how transportation decisions are made and to develop a process that results in improvements to:

- Transportation decisions
- Protection of the natural and human environment
- Efficiency and cost savings
- Early input by the agencies in transportation planning

This process fulfills the spirit of Section 1309 of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) passed by Congress in June 1998 and the National Memorandum of Understanding calling for "Environmental Streamlining." This Memorandum of Understanding is executed to affirm the work performed during the last year to develop an Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process, which protects state and national resources, and document the essential purpose of the process.

Whereas, the Florida Department of Transportation and U.S. Department of Transportation and the agencies listed below have worked collaboratively since February 3, 2000 to develop a more Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process,

Whereas, the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process described in the document "Florida's Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process" dated August 2001 will achieve more timely decisions through early agency involvement,

Whereas, the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process will help protect the resources of the State of Florida and the United States through consideration of community goals, land use plans, ecosystem preservation and management plans, and mobility plans,

Whereas, the participating agencies support the establishment of an "Environmental Technical Advisory Team" for communicating between natural resource managers, and land use and transportation planners,

Whereas, the participating agencies agree that more efficiency in transportation decision making may be gained by application of information-age technology,

Whereas, the participating agencies agree that early agency involvement supported by effective public involvement should reduce conflicts in transportation decision making and result in better transportation decisions,

Whereas, the participating agencies agree that efficient dispute resolution should be a part of the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process to resolve conflicts before projects are programmed,

Whereas, projects that result from the ETDM Process should be consistent with State of Florida goals,

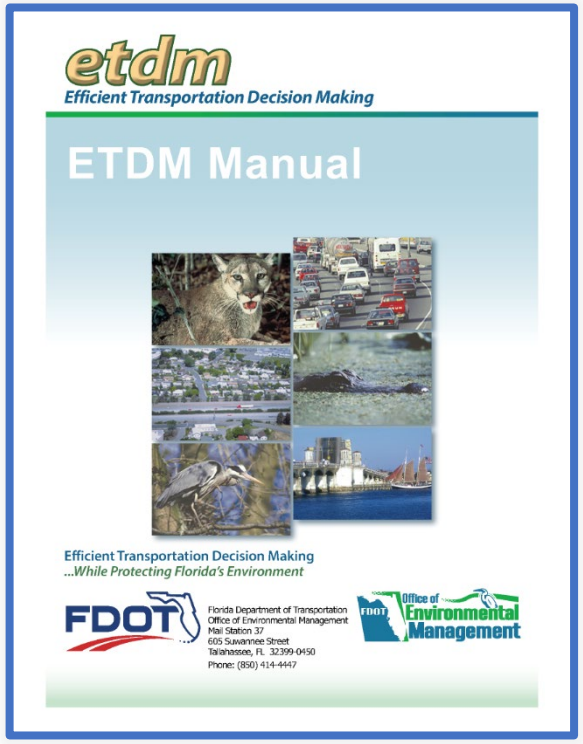
Now therefore, the Agencies below agree to the extent feasible within existing legal authority and the availability of manpower and budgets to:

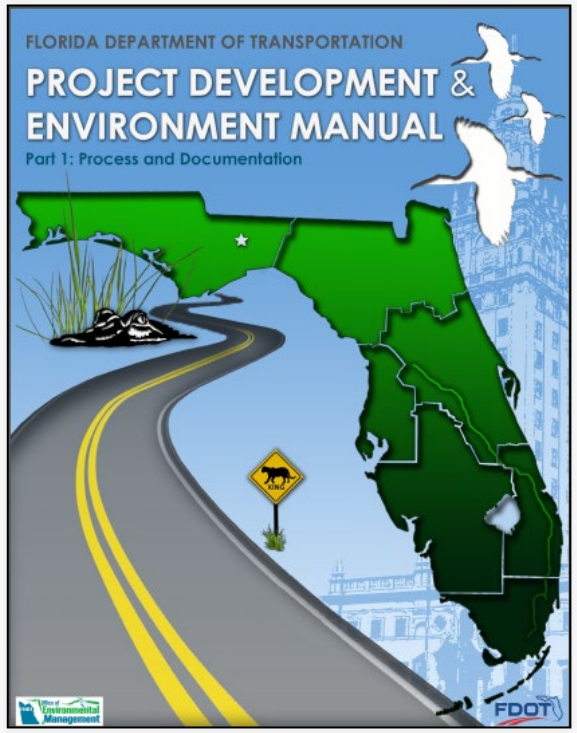
- Endorse the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process and commit to support, establish, and implement this process within each agency.
- Work cooperatively to create mutually agreeable agency-specific operating agreements to implement the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process.
- Work cooperatively on pilot applications to test and refine the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process.
- Integrate agency programs and processes with the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process to reduce duplication and establish efficient decision making.
- Nominate Environmental Technical Advisory Team members who are knowledgeable of their agencies' statutory responsibility and processes, and are able to develop creative solutions that meet both their agencies' statutory obligations and also address the natural, cultural, community, and mobility goals of the other signatory agencies.
- Communicate within each agency the significance of the Environmental Technical Advisory Team role and provide clear responsibility and authority for Environmental Technical Advisory Team members.
- Provide Internet connection for the agency's Environmental Technical Advisory Team repeesentative to access digital data available through the Florida Geographic Data Library at the University of Florida to provide for more efficient review and standardized reports at each step in the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process.
- Work with the Florida Department of Transportation and the U.S. Department of Transportation to obtain equipment, software, and staffing resources needed for Environmental Technical Advisory Team participants to work effectively in the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process and to provide training and computer facility support.
- Examine current decisions or reviews conducted by each agency and identify work that may be more effectively delegated to another federal or state agency to reduce duplication of effort.
- Discuss each agency's review and permit process with the Florida Department of Transportation with a goal of developing mutually agreeable improvements.
- Seek collaborative support for the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process within each agency, continuously seek process improvements, and communicate suggested improvements to the Florida Department of Transportation with a commitment to teamwork for the benefit of Florida and our environment.
- Implement effective dispute resolution with the goal of developing mutually agreeable solutions at meaningful points within the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process to avoid programming projects with significant unresolved issues.

The signatures below confirm the agreement of participating agencies to support, develop and implement the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process, as stated above. Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding affects the statutorily prescribed duties and obligations of any party to the Memorandum of Understanding or any party's responsibility or ability to discharge fully such duties and obligations under all applicable laws and regulations. When conflicts arise, agency-wide national level Memoranda of Understanding and agreements will supercede this Memorandum of Understanding. Furthermore, the agencies below commend the people who have worked with the Florida Department of Transportation and the U.S. Department of Transportation to develop the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process. This process will meet the State of Florida's mobility planning needs and will assist in protecting its environment.

Signed on December 14, 2001

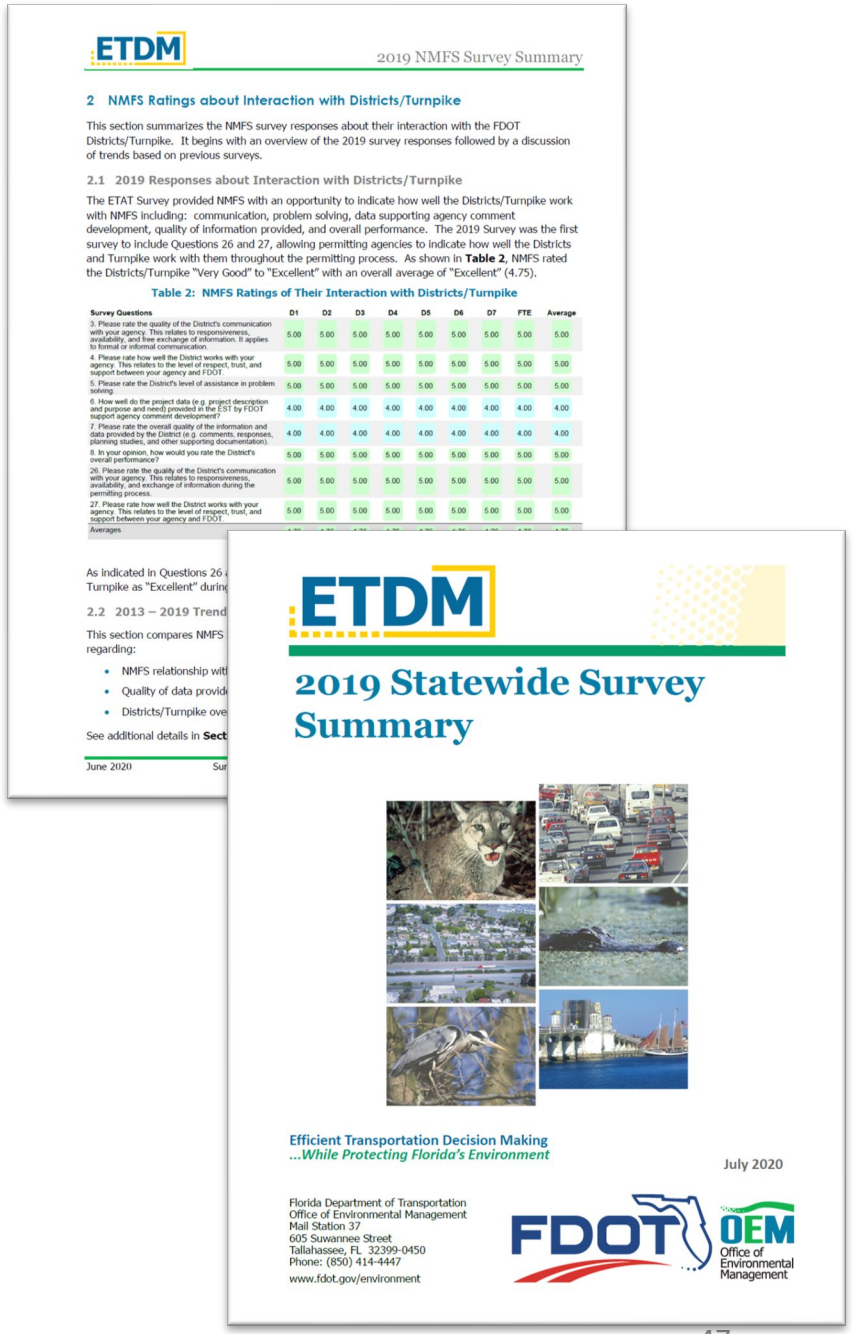
Policies and Procedures





Performance Management

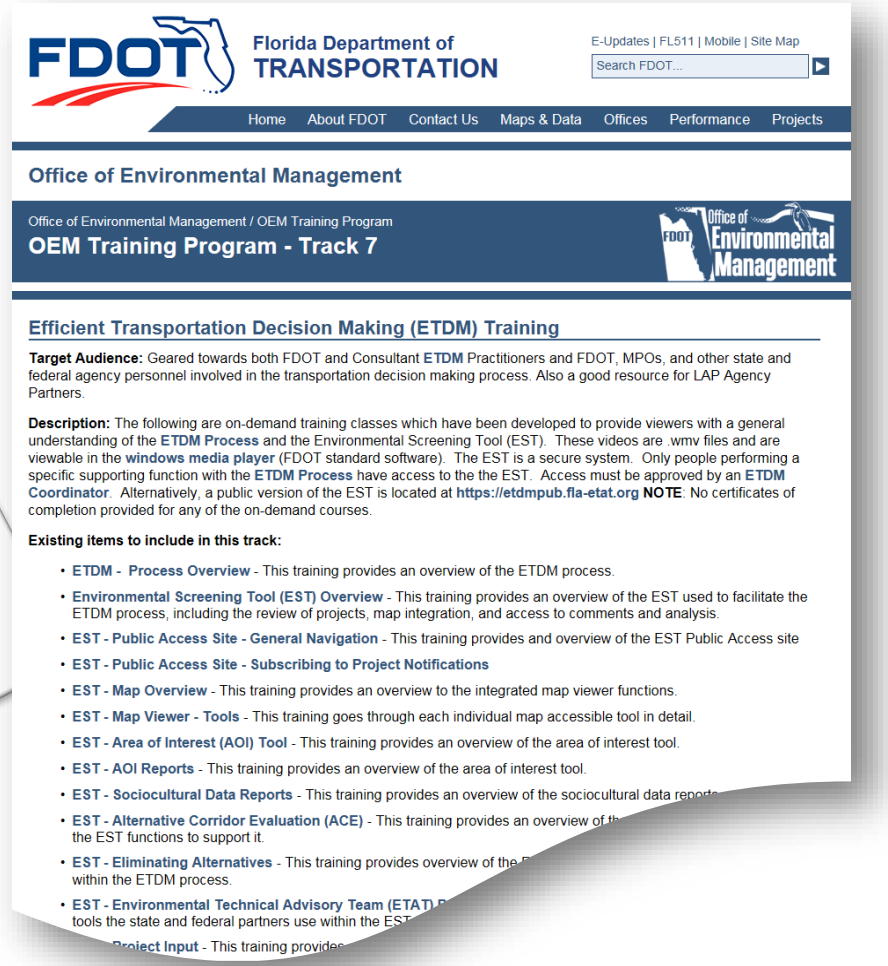
- Quarterly Feedback Reports
- Annual Self-Assessments
- Annual Agency Communication Surveys
- Biennial Comprehensive ETDM Surveys



Training Program

Training Videos

http://www.fdot.gov/environment/sched/track7.shtm



Opportunities for TXDOT

- Given TxDOT's current processes – what are the opportunities?
- Who else needs to be involved in these conversations?
- Building leadership commitment – what are the specific challenges that need to be addressed?

Next Steps

Planning and Environment Linkages National Framework

Overview and Application

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

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