

Human Environment and Communities

Reference Links

- Census Issues, FHWA(Direct to: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census_issues/)
- Creating Livable Communities, FHWA(Direct to: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/creating_livable_communities/)
- Environmental Justice, FHWA(Direct to: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/)
- Historic Preservation, FHWA(Direct to: <https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/histpres/index.asp>)
- INVEST-Sustainable Highways Initiative, FHWA(Direct to: <https://www.sustainablehighways.org/>)
- Resource Center - Civil Rights Team, FHWA(Direct to: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/resourcecenter/teams/civilrights/index.cfm>)
- Section 4(f), FHWA(Direct to: <https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/4f/index.asp>)
- Transportation Equity-Planning Process Briefing Book, FHWA(Direct to: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/publications/briefing_book/part02.cfm)

Human Environment is the context in which we live, work, and play—in short, it's our livable community. It reflects a sense of place, including the infrastructure, natural resources, and services that support the community. It requires focusing on the people in a geographic area who are connected by how they live, in addition to where they live. It means considering subgroups within the overall population and how transportation systems can affect everyone's quality of life.

For many years, considering impacts on the community has been expanding to include economy, equity, connectivity, livability, sustainability, and sensitivity to the context in which transportation systems are built and operate. The breadth of this topic can be challenging to transportation practitioners. Developing both broad and specific understanding of individual communities often requires new data-gathering techniques, outreach methodologies, and partnerships.

Collaboration with the community is essential to understand the relationship between transportation systems and the communities they serve. Transportation decisions are of mutual interest to professionals and a wide range of community groups and individuals. This includes agencies with a mission to preserve and protect community features and populations as well as individuals or groups with specific interests.

Although the **Newtown Pike Extension Project** near Lexington, Kentucky was conceived in 1931, severe traffic congestion in the 1990's required a solution. During environmental review, an urban village plan and Community Land Trust were shown to address environmental justice impacts, provide equitable and affordable housing, and preserve community cohesion- showing how transportation investment can support mobility, quality of life, and community goals. *See more at The Road that Rebuilt a Neighborhood*

Long Range Transportation Planning

- LRP-1 - Approve Scope of LRTP Process
Identify how agencies and stakeholders with an interest in the community context and built environment as well as individual populations will participate in long-range planning. This is an opportunity to involve and inform resource agencies that will make project-level decisions about the long range plan. Collect information about known human environment features, populations, and interests.
- LRP-2 - Approve Vision and Goals
In developing the transportation goals, take into consideration the vision and goals of individual communities as well as groups or populations represented.
- LRP-3 - Approve Evaluation Criteria, Methods and Measures
Incorporate criteria, methods, and measures that will support evaluation of how the community is impacted in each scenario considered, including specific impacts typically considered evaluated during environmental review.
- LRP-4 - Approve Transportation Deficiencies
This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- LRP-5 - Approve Financial Assumptions
This Key Decision is not associated with application.

- LRP-6 - Approve Strategies
Collect and evaluate information about transportation improvement strategies that are important, meaningful, and consistent with community values and needs.
- LRP-7 - Approve Plan Scenarios
Identify and evaluate potential scenarios to determine which are preferred from a human environment perspective.
- LRP-8 - Adopt Preferred Plan Scenario
Prior to adoption, provide information to decision makers about the overall advantages and/or disadvantages of individual scenarios to communities and populations. After adoption, provide information to the community on implementation of the LRTP, its benefits, and any associated community changes which may support or enhance those benefits.
- LRP-9 - Make Conformity Determination by MPO
This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- LRP-10 - Adopt LRTP by MPO
This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- LRP-11 - Make Conformity Determination
This Key Decision is not associated with application.

Programming

- PRO-1 - Approve Revenue Sources
This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- PRO-2 - Approve Project Cost and Revenue Allocation Approach
This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- PRO-3 - Approve Project List from Adopted Plan
This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- PRO-4 - Approve Project Prioritization
Identify potential human environment impacts, support, and/or opposition for individual projects that may impact project prioritization or sequencing.
- PRO-5 - Reach Consensus on Draft TIP
When the Draft TIP is released, request comments on individual projects from representatives of disadvantaged communities, cultural and historic resources, and other stakeholders to provide support for the human environment and community goals, interests, and transportation needs.
- PRO-6 - Adopt TIP by MPO
Collect and consider input from the community and/or individual stakeholders on projects in the TIP prior to adoption.
- PRO-7 - Approve TIP by Governor and Incorporate into Draft STIP
This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- PRO-8 - Reach Consensus on Draft STIP
When the Draft STIP is released, request comments on individual projects from representatives of disadvantaged communities, cultural and historic resources, and other stakeholders to provide support for the human environment and community goals, interests, and transportation needs in the non-metropolitan area.
- PRO-9 - Approve STIP with respect to Fiscal Constraint
Collect and consider input from non-metropolitan community stakeholders in support of or opposition to individual projects prior to approval.

Corridor Planning

- COR-1 - Approve Scope of Corridor Planning Process
During scoping for the corridor plan, identify relevant community information and potential stakeholders to engage that will bring a full and inclusive understanding of the community. Prepare for environmental review to the extent possible by soliciting participation from the State Historic Preservation Office and others.
- COR-2 - Approve Problem Statements and Opportunities
Collect information about the community needs and interests as context for the corridor.
- COR-3 - Approve Goals for the Corridor
Provide information on community goals and plans to help define the corridor planning process.
- COR-4 - Reach Consensus on Scope of Environmental Analysis
Engage decision makers in the environmental review process concerning data available and/or needed to ensure robust consideration of the human environment and community needs for specific corridor planning solutions. This agreement is a critical streamlining approach.
- COR-5 - Approve Evaluation Criteria, Methods and Measures
Incorporate data provided from human environment sources in the development of criteria, methodology, and performance measures to evaluate potential solutions.
- COR-6 - Approve Range of Solution Sets
Develop solution sets that support the needs and goals of the community. Identify any solutions that are fatally flawed with respect to the human environment and community.
- COR-7 - Adopt Preferred Solution Set
Evaluate how individual solution sets will impact the community prior to selecting the preferred. After this selection, identify how best to communicate the outcome to community stakeholders and human environment decision makers for environmental review.

- COR-8 - Approve Implementation Criteria for Prioritizing Projects
This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- COR-9 - Adopt Priorities for Implementation
Consider how the implementation priorities will affect the community and individual populations.

Environmental Review/NEPA Merged with Permitting

- ENV-1 - Reach Consensus on Scope of Environmental Review
Based on the proposed project limits, identify specific populations, champions, representatives, and other key community leaders to engage during environmental review.
- ENV-2 - Approve Notice of Intent
This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- ENV-3 - Approve Purpose and Need/Reach Consensus on Project Purpose
Consider the community need for the proposed changes to transportation infrastructure in defining project purpose and need.
- ENV-4 - Reach Consensus on Study Area
Take into account individual populations as well as the entire community interests in determining the geographic extent of human, natural, and socioeconomic resources which may be impacted by the project.
- ENV-5 - Approve Evaluation Criteria, Methods and Measures
Develop evaluation criteria that allow full consideration of specific human, natural, and socioeconomic resources.
- ENV-6 - Approve Full Range of Alternatives
Ensure consideration of those alternatives preferred by the community and/or that benefit specific individual populations prior to approving the full range. If any community-preferred alternatives are fatally flawed, provide a full description of the issues to stakeholders/partners for resolution.
- ENV-7 - Approve Alternatives to be Carried Forward
Evaluate each alternative across relevant human environment considerations. Identify and document those alternatives which meet community goals and individual population interests.
- ENV-8 - Approve Draft EIS with Conceptual Mitigation
Conduct broad public involvement on the Draft EIS alternatives in order to identify potential mitigation needed.
- ENV-9 - Approve Resource Agency Public Notice
This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- ENV-10 - Approve Preferred Alternative / LEDPA
Inform the community and individual populations on the implications and impacts associated with the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA).
- ENV-11 - Approve Final Jurisdictional Determination
This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- ENV-12 - Reach Consensus on Avoidance and Minimization for the LEDPA
Engage key stakeholders/community in identifying means to avoid and minimize impacts of LEDPA.
- ENV-13 - Approve Final EIS and Record of Decision
Provide public involvement on the Final EIS. Report to specific stakeholders on avoidance and minimization agreements to collect final input.
- ENV-14 - Render Permit Decision and Approve Avoidance and Minimization
This Key Decision is not associated with application.