Transportation Conformity

Reference Links

- Air Quality Planning for Transportation Officials, FHWA (Direct to: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/publications/air_quality_planning/index.cfm)
- Air Quality Training, FHWA (Direct to: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/conformity/training/)
- Examples of Transportation Conformity Practices, FHWA (Direct to: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/conformity/practices/)
- The Transportation Planning Process: Key Issues, FHWA (Direct to: https://www.planning.dot.gov/documents/briefingbook/bbook.htm#4BB)
- Transportation Conformity: A Basic Guide for State and Local Officials, FHWA (Direct to: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/conformity/2017_guide/)

Areas designated as air quality nonattainment or maintenance areas for the transportation-related pollutants have special meaning to transportation professionals. Transportation improvement projects in these areas must undergo a rigorous analytical process to demonstrate that they do not negatively impact air quality. In addition, there is a collaborative interagency consultation partnership between Federal agencies, the State DOT, and local government representatives that supports conformity analysis.

Transportation conformity ("conformity") is a way to ensure that Federal funding and approval goes to those transportation activities that are consistent with air quality goals. Conformity applies to transportation plans, transportation improvement programs (TIPs), and projects funded or approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in areas that do not meet or previously have not met air quality standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, particulate matter, or nitrogen dioxide. These areas are known as "nonattainment areas" or "maintenance areas," respectively. Regulations governing transportation conformity are found in Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR Parts 51 and 93).

Long Range Transportation Planning

- LRP-1 - Approve Scope of LRTP Process
  Collect information on conformity deadline and emissions budget, as well as available technical data related to conformity.
- LRP-2 - Approve Vision and Goals
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- LRP-3 - Approve Evaluation Criteria, Methods and Measures
  Consider target emissions levels in the development of criteria, methods and measures.
- 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
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- LRP-7 - Approve Plan Scenarios
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- LRP-8 - Adopt Preferred Plan Scenario
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- LRP-9 - Make Conformity Determination by MPO
  In nonattainment and maintenance areas for the transportation-related pollutants, review and approve the conformity analysis to determine that the preferred scenario meets all Federal requirements, including current conformity requirements.
- LRP-10 - Adopt LRTP by MPO
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
- LRP-11 - Make Conformity Determination
  In nonattainment and maintenance areas for the transportation-related pollutants, FHWA/FTA must make a Federal conformity determination.

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
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• PRO-5 - Reach Consensus on Draft TIP
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• PRO-6 - Adopt TIP by MPO
  In nonattainment and maintenance areas for the transportation-related pollutants, make conformity determination for the TIP.
• 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
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• PRO-9 - Approve STIP with respect to Fiscal Constraint
  In nonattainment and maintenance areas for the transportation-related pollutants, FHWA/FTA must make conformity determinations.

Corridor Planning

• COR-1 - Approve Scope of Corridor Planning Process
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• COR-2 - Approve Problem Statements and Opportunities
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• COR-3 - Approve Goals for the Corridor
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• COR-4 - Reach Consensus on Scope of Environmental Analysis
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• COR-5 - Approve Evaluation Criteria, Methods and Measures
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• COR-6 - Approve Range of Solution Sets
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• COR-7 - Adopt Preferred Solution Set
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• COR-8 - Approve Implementation Criteria for Prioritizing Projects
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• COR-9 - Adopt Priorities for Implementation
  In non-attainment and maintenance areas, consider air quality conformity impacts of the various projects or strategies in the corridor plan during prioritization for consistency with the long-range transportation, TIP and/or STIP.

Environmental Review/NEPA Merged with Permitting

• ENV-1 - Reach Consensus on Scope of Environmental Review
  Collect relevant data about air quality, including emissions budgets and potential partnerships.
• 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
  Gather information about the air quality context for the region, including the status of conformity, to inform the definition of purpose and need.
• ENV-4 - Reach Consensus on Study Area
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• ENV-5 - Approve Evaluation Criteria, Methods and Measures
  Consult with interagency partners on project-level analysis, where applicable.
• ENV-6 - Approve Full Range of Alternatives
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• ENV-7 - Approve Alternatives to be Carried Forward
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• ENV-8 - Approve Draft EIS with Conceptual Mitigation
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• ENV-9 - Approve Resource Agency Public Notice
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• ENV-10 - Approve Preferred Alternative / LEDPA
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• 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
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.
• ENV-13 - Approve Final EIS and Record of Decision
  For non-attainment and maintenance areas, approve and document the project-level conformity determination.
• ENV-14 - Render Permit Decision and Approve Avoidance and Minimization
  This Key Decision is not associated with application.