

ENV-6 - Approve Full Range of Alternatives

Description

At this key decision, a full range of possible project alternatives to meet the purpose and need is identified. At future key decisions, this range will be narrowed and eventually a preferred alternative will be selected. Information about both selected and eliminated scenarios and solution sets from long range transportation planning and corridor planning inform the range of alternatives approved at this step. There is information developed in prior key decisions that informs this step.

There is information developed in prior key decisions that informs this step. In order to effectively execute this key decision there is essential information created at LRP-7 and COR-6 related to preferred or approved solutions and those that were eliminated.

Purpose

To identify a range of alternatives that meet the project purpose and need

Outcome

All alternatives that address the project's purpose and need

Partner	Role Type	Description
MPO	Advisor	Provides support on consideration of full range of alternatives based on regional/corridor planning. This includes documentation of alternatives eliminated from consideration.
FHWA/FTA	Decision Maker	Approves the full range of alternatives identified to meet the purpose and need; agrees to the elimination of specific alternatives.
State DOT	Decision Maker	Ensures the full range of alternatives is broadly inclusive, meets federal requirements, and is well documented.
Resource Agency	Decision Maker	The USACE is a decision-maker and approves a full range of alternatives that meets NEPA, permitting, and consultation requirements and has been informed by environmental planning. USACE approves a full range of alternatives that includes and does not eliminate a potential LEDPA. Other resource agencies are advisors, supporting a full range of alternatives that consider their agencies' relevant goals.
Public Transportation Operator(s)	Advisor	Provides support as needed on consideration of full range of alternatives based on regional/corridor planning. This includes documentation of alternatives eliminated from consideration.

Policy Questions

Questions are a way to elicit information and to validate that the information has been considered. The partners should discuss the listed questions to ensure a broad array of interests is considered at a key decision. Discussions arising from these questions support collaborative decision making.

Questions Partners Discuss

Questions about purpose and roles

- Is there agreement by partners that this represents the full range of alternatives?
- What partners were involved in the development of the alternatives?

Questions about stakeholders, including modal and operational partners

- Have the alternatives for P3 projects been developed with private sector input and is there consensus between the private and public sector?
- What stakeholders, including modal and operational partners were involved in the development of the alternatives?

Questions about the transportation process supporting the decision

- Are there alternatives that will support the inclusion of operations strategies and treatments consistent with the adopted purpose and need (if applicable)?
- Are there any viable alternatives that are not included?
- Do all of the alternatives meet purpose and need?
- Do any of the proposed alternatives present or remove a barrier to bicyclists and pedestrians?
- Do the alternatives support the use of innovative means for financing, revenue generation, and procurement consistent with the adopted purpose and need of the P3 project (if applicable)?
- Do the P3 alternatives help achieve more efficient project implementation?
- How well do the alternatives support bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, accessibility for all users, equity, and safety outcomes? What are the positive and negative impacts?

Questions about other phases

- Are the alternatives consistent with the financial assumptions from the LRTP?
- Do the alternatives support our vision and goals of the LRTP and/or Corridor Plan?
- Is the alternative from the adopted LRTP or adopted preferred solution set from corridor planning included?

Questions about non-transportation sectors/processes

- Are the alternatives supportive of land use goals?
- Do any of the alternatives support identified freight benefits and stakeholder preferences?
- Do the alternatives avoid priority areas for ecological conservation, restoration and mitigation?
- Do the alternatives support economic development objectives?
- Have smart growth impacts on travel demand, congestion, and conformity been considered?

Stakeholder Inputs

'Questions to Gather Stakeholder Interests' allow staff to determine which stakeholders have interests at a key decision and to collect those interests for partner consideration. 'Questions to Incorporate Stakeholder Interests' ensure the interests of stakeholders are included in the decision. For more help with stakeholder collaboration visit the Stakeholder Portal

Questions to Gather Stakeholder Interests

- What are your ideas for solving the problem?
- What do you think about the proposed alternatives? Is there anything missing from these alternatives? What would you add?

Questions to Incorporate Stakeholder Interests

- Are the alternatives feasible and rational?
- Did the stakeholders identify any missing alternatives? If so, how did we address that?
- What alternatives did the stakeholders suggest?
- What input have we received from stakeholders about project implementation through a P3?
- What is the rationale for how we handled information from the stakeholders? How has this been communicated to the stakeholders?
- What suggested alternatives are not included in our final list?

Data

The following is a list of data needed to support the key decision. Practitioners collect this information for decision makers to consider.

Supporting Data for the Key Decision		
From other phases of transportation decision making	Long Range Planning	Information from the preferred plan scenario in the LRTP, including any scenarios that were eliminated.
	Programming	No Specific Data.
	Corridor Planning	Information on the range of solutions evaluated in the corridor planning process, including any solutions that were eliminated.
	Environmental Review	No Specific Data.
From other sectors and processes	Land Use	Information about any land use alternatives that meet the purpose and need (all or in part) and supporting goals Smart growth impacts on travel demand, congestion, and conformity (as applicable)
	Transportation Conformity	No Specific Data.
	Natural Environment and Implementing Eco-Logical	Map of conservation, restoration and enhancement priorities
	Capital Improvement	No Specific Data.
	Safety and Security	No Specific Data.
	Human Environment	No Specific Data.
	Economic Development	Information on the potential economic development impact of various strategies
	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Not applicable.
Freight	No Specific Data.	
From the transportation technical process supporting this key decision	Analysis comparing the alternatives to the approved purpose and need	
	Any conceptual design completed.	
	Data to support the comparison of proposed alternatives to purpose and need.	
	Description of each identified alternatives	
	Fatal flaws of any alternatives that were eliminated	
From stakeholder collaboration	Summary of public and stakeholder comments and justification for how feedback was addressed.	
From public private partnership	No Specific Data.	

Links to Decisions

This table identifies how a key decision is connected to other key decisions. The linkages are a two-way transfer of information. Understanding and applying these linkages means that partners will recognize how a decision will impact other specific key decisions. Recognizing that the transportation processes are linked will: (1) encourage practitioners to produce information that can be used later and (2) remind them to look at information from previous key decisions.

linkages to other phases of transportation decision making

Key Decision	What is Linked?	Purpose of Linkage
From Long Range Transportation Planning		
LRP-7 - Approve Plan Scenarios	Information on the scenarios considered in long range planning and the basis for any that were eliminated	To help define the range of alternatives for consideration during environmental review/permitting and to preclude those alternatives that are inconsistent with region-wide multimodal improvements
From Programming		
PRO-9 - Approve STIP with respect to Fiscal Constraint	Information from the TIP regarding a project description, logical termini, and funding identified for the project.	To inform, but not constrain, the development of the full range of alternatives for environmental review.
From Corridor Planning		
COR-6 - Approve Range of Solution Sets	Information on the range of solutions evaluated in the corridor planning process	To help define the range of alternatives for consideration.
COR-7 - Adopt Preferred Solution Set	Information on the preferred solution set from the corridor planning process	To inform the development of the full range of alternatives for environmental review/permitting in order to preclude alternatives that are inconsistent with region-wide multimodal improvements

Examples

In-depth case studies of successful practices in collaborative decision making were used to develop the Decision Guide. Links in this table point to a specific paragraph or section of a case study that supports a key decision. It is not necessary to read through an entire case study to find the example; however, full versions are available in the Library.

PlanWorks Case Study Examples

- Regional TIP Policy Framework and Vision 2040 for Puget Sound Regional Council

Other Examples

- None

Integrated Planning

Integrated Planning looks at the interaction between the transportation decision making process and other processes. Considering these inputs will ensure that important values and goals outside the transportation process are recognized and considered. For a full understanding of a specific process and how it influences transportation decisions, visit Applications.

Process	Integration Type	Integration Description
Land Use	Data	Information about any land use alternatives that meet the purpose and need (all or in part) and supporting goals.
Transportation Conformity	None.	None.
Natural Environment and Implementing Eco-Logical	Data and Analysis Between IEF Step 3- Create Regional Ecosystem Framework	The full range of alternatives from environmental review will inform the combined map of conservation priorities, other land uses and potential alternatives developed in ecological planning. The IEF is designed for this integration to take place at LRP-3. The integration is included at ENV-6 as well for users who "enter" the Decision Guide/IEF at environmental review without completing the IEF process.
		These sub steps listed in the IEF are the integrated analysis at this key decision: Sub-step 3a - Overlay alternatives and combined map of conservation, restoration and enhancement priorities; Sub-step 3b and c - Show and record areas and resources potentially impacted by transportation alternatives and potential opportunities for joint action on conservation or restoration priorities; Sub-step 3d - Distribute combined conservation/restoration and transportation priorities map layer. This integration cannot occur until there are some alternatives, but it is possible that transportation alternatives could be fatally flawed and eliminated through this analysis. Note that the IEF is designed for this integration to occur using scenarios in long range planning, and has been modified here to reflect how the same approach could be used if the process is entered during environmental review.
Capital Improvement	None.	None.
Safety and Security	None.	None.
Human Environment	None.	None.
Economic Development	Data	Information on the potential economic development impact of various strategies.
		Identification of any fatally flawed alternatives from an economic development perspective.
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Freight	Data	Data from individual project alternatives that support the needs of freight stakeholders
Bicycles and Pedestrians	Data	Data from individual project alternatives that reflect the needs and potential support of bicycle and pedestrian stakeholders.

Special Topics

This table provides an overview of the relationship between a key decision and individual special topics. A special topic may be an external process, a new regulation, or any emerging issue requiring collaboration. For a full understanding of a specific topic and how it influences transportation decisions, visit Applications.

Key Decision Relationship to Other Topics

Topic	Description
Public-Private Partnerships	<p>Identify Alternatives - Identify any fatally flawed P3 alternatives and provide information for any P3 alternatives that support purpose and need.</p> <p>Data Transfer - Potential impacts on project financing, revenue, and implementation for remaining P3 alternatives that meet the purpose and need. Documentation of any fatally flawed alternatives.</p>
Planning and Environment Linkages	<p>Identify Alternatives - Identify any fatally flawed alternatives that include operations strategies and communicate the flaw to interested and engaged operational partners.</p> <p>Data Transfer - Data and information that supports operations strategy inclusion in alternatives that carry forward and identifies those that are unsuitable to consider.</p>
Streamlining a Congestion Bottleneck Project	<p>Approve Range of Alternatives</p> <p>Data Transfer - Full range of alternatives to ENV-7/PER-4 for evaluation and analysis</p>