



The National Transportation Systems Center

Environmental Mitigation in Transportation Planning

Case Studies in Meeting SAFETEA-LU Section 6001 Requirements



U.S. Department of Transportation
Research and Innovative Technology Administration

Northern Transportation and
Air Quality Summit
August 24, 2010

BACKGROUND

- **SAFETEA-LU Section 6001 required**
 - Discussion in LRTPs of potential environmental mitigation activities and areas
 - Discussion be developed in consultation
- **Study purpose**
 - Examine how MPOs and DOTs responded to requirements
 - Share lessons learned

METHODOLOGY

- **Screen candidate agencies**
- **Case studies to synthesize experiences**
 - Baltimore Regional Transportation Board
 - Capital District Transportation Committee (NY)
 - Illinois DOT
 - Maricopa Association of Governments (AZ)
 - Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
 - Minnesota DOT
 - Montana DT
 - Piedmont Triad MPOs (NC)
 - San Diego Association of Governments

FINDINGS

- **Mitigation strategies vary in LRTPs**
 - More broad than they may have been with prescriptive requirements
- **6001 legitimized existing business processes**
- **Opportunity for MPOs and DOTs to serve lead environmental coordinating roles**
- **Geospatial data critical**

FINDINGS *(continued)*

- **Unsure about streamlining, but jobs likely easier**
- **Consultation leads to better awareness of environmental factors**
 - Identification of “red flags”
- **To date, little consideration of mitigation monitoring in LRTP**

CHALLENGES

- **Achieving consensus on definitions, scale, and level of detail**
- **Insufficient staff time to consider mitigation strategies**
- **Comprehending mapped resources**
- **Preparing cost estimates**

AIR QUALITY APPLICABILITY

- **Nothing preventing air quality from being considered as resource**
- **EJ considerations likely more prominent in planning for environmental mitigation**

Excerpt from Piedmont Triad MPOs' Mitigation Strategies

| Impacts | Mitigation Measures |
|-------------|---|
| Air Quality | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate pedestrian/transit oriented development areas• Adopt local air quality mitigation fee program• Develop energy efficient incentive programs• Adopt air quality enhancing design guidelines• Fund Transportation Control Measures program |

8

SELECTED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FHWA

- **Support...**
 - MPOs in identifying regional avoidance and minimization opportunities
 - MPO and resource agency efforts to identify relative importance of environmental resources
- **Facilitate MPO and DOT collaboration**
- **Address fiscal planning for mitigation**

9

QUESTIONS?

Full report available at:

www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/integ/pubcase_6001.asp

Project Team

William Lyons, Volpe Center

Carson Poe, Volpe Center

Sharon Chan Edmiston, Volpe Center

Alisa Fine, Volpe Center

Shana Baker, FHWA

Sharlene Reed, FHWA

Carson Poe

USDOT Volpe Center

617-494-2765

carson.poe@dot.gov