



U.S. Department of Transportation  
**Federal Highway Administration**  
Office of Planning, Environment and Realty

# Office of **PLANNING**

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/>

The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty offers research opportunities to improve transportation decision making and promote efficiency while protecting communities and the environment. The Office supports and conducts research that:

- Informs Decisions
- Reduces Environmental Impacts
- Enhances Quality of Life
- Accelerates Project Delivery
- Advances Transportation Planning

The following document highlights specific research activities in the Office of Planning. For more information, please visit: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/hep\\_research/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/hep_research/).

## **OFFICE OF PLANNING**

FHWA's Office of Planning develops and implements programs and activities that advance comprehensive international, interstate, State, metropolitan, rural, tribal, and multi-modal planning.

### **Research Focus**

The Office of Planning's research efforts focus on improving the transportation planning process to ensure that agencies undertake a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the potential impact of transportation plans and programs, while addressing society's aspirations and concerns. The Office's research areas include:

- Census and Travel Modeling
- Certification Review Tools
- Congestion Management
- Health in Transportation
- Interstate and Border Planning
- Planning and Environmental Linkages
- Planning Capacity Building
- Public Involvement
- Safety Planning
- Scenario Planning and Visualization
- Security Planning

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## **FEATURED RESEARCH ACTIVITIES**

### **Scenario Planning of Future Freight and Passenger Traffic Flows across the U.S./Mexico and U.S./Canada Borders**

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), through FHWA and in cooperation with Transport Canada and the Mexican Secretariat of Transportation and Communications, has initiated a study to develop U.S.-Mexico and U.S.-Canada regional projections of future freight and passenger volumes over the next 30 years from a

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regional border perspective and within a North American framework. The study will develop detailed micro-level population, business, passenger, and freight flow projections along and within the border regions of the United States and for each crossing, and will also develop national macro-level regional multi-modal freight and passenger traffic flow, population, and industry projections between the United States and Canada and between the United States and Mexico. The proposed scenarios will be displayed in a visualization tool compatible with the Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty GIS Planning Tool (HEPGIS). **Staff Contact:** Tricia Harr, 202-366-9214 or [tricia.harr@dot.gov](mailto:tricia.harr@dot.gov).

### **The Statewide Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning Handbook**

This handbook is designed to help State departments of transportation (SDOTs) develop or update State pedestrian and bicycle plans. For each stage of the planning process, this handbook uses recent experiences and noteworthy practices from DOTs around the country, to help inform a new generation of statewide non-motorized planning and implementation. **Staff Contact:** Jody McCullough, 202-366-5001 or [jody.mccullough@dot.gov](mailto:jody.mccullough@dot.gov).

### **The Briefing Book**

This book provides government officials, transportation decision-makers, planning board members, and transportation service providers with an overview of transportation planning. It contains a basic understanding of key concepts in statewide and metropolitan transportation planning, along with references for additional information. This report is available electronically on the Transportation Planning Capacity Building website at [www.planning.dot.gov](http://www.planning.dot.gov) and is updated periodically to include additional topics or information. **Staff Contact:** James Garland, 202-366-6221 or [james.garland@dot.gov](mailto:james.garland@dot.gov).

### **Model Long-Range Transportation Plans: A Guide for Incorporating Performance-Based Planning**

This guidebook informs SDOTs, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and regional transportation planning organizations (RTPOs)—as well as their planning partners such as transit agencies, local governments, and federal agencies—about effective practices for incorporating performance-based planning into the development of a long-range transportation plan. Examples and case studies illustrate the guidebook's key points. It is available for download at:

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/performance\\_based\\_planning/mlrtp\\_guidebook/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/performance_based_planning/mlrtp_guidebook/). **Staff Contact:** Jody McCullough, 202-366-5001 or [jody.mccullough@dot.gov](mailto:jody.mccullough@dot.gov).

### **Handbook for Estimating Transportation Greenhouse Gases for Integration into the Planning Process**

This publication is a handbook designed to provide information on how to analyze on-road greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at the State and regional levels, and how to incorporate those analyses into transportation planning efforts. The handbook is intended to help SDOTs and MPOs understand the possible approaches, data sources, and step-by-step procedures for analyzing GHG emissions. **Staff Contact:** Jody McCullough, 202-366-5001 or [jody.mccullough@dot.gov](mailto:jody.mccullough@dot.gov).

### **Metropolitan Area Transportation Planning for Healthy Communities**

This report identifies an integrated and flexible approach to how MPOs and their partners can successfully consider aspects of health during the transportation planning process. Based on research including four best practice studies, the white paper offers a framework for MPOs and partners to use to integrate health into metropolitan area transportation planning. The report develops a comprehensive approach both to how MPOs can explore health as a direct, broadly-based goal for their interdisciplinary planning, and how they can consider health during all stages of the metropolitan area transportation planning process. The report is available for download at:

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/health\\_in\\_transportation/resources/healthy\\_communities/mpohealth1212\\_2012.pdf](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/health_in_transportation/resources/healthy_communities/mpohealth1212_2012.pdf). **Staff Contact:** Fred Bowers, 202-366-2374 or [frederick.bowers@dot.gov](mailto:frederick.bowers@dot.gov).