



# Moving Environmental Justice (EJ) Forward in Transportation Planning and Project Development

May 18, 2016  
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm (EST)

# Welcome Remarks

- ▶ In February 2016, AASHTO organized a peer exchange between State DOTs, MPOs, and FHWA with the goal of designing a roadmap that sets better guidelines on how to better include Environmental Justice goals in planning and project delivery
- ▶ *We hope to:* review eight focus areas, receive input on EJ roadmap, and further discuss strategies and plans for increasing EJ presence in planning and project development

# Participation Logistics

- ▶ Logistics with polling, questions, etc.
  - All attendees are muted.
  - There will be seven polling questions to better understand your current ideas/opinions on Environmental Justice's role in planning/project development. Each poll will be open for 30 seconds.
  - Presenters will not be taking questions during webinar. Please email [shoilett@aathto.org](mailto:shoilett@aathto.org) with questions. Webinar will be recorded and put online at the Center of Environmental Excellence.

# Introductions

- ▶ Today's Speakers will be:
  - Gail D'Avino: Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)
  - Fleming El-Amin: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
  - Elizabeth Rockwell: Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization
  - Veronica Trecuzzi: Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
  - Leigh Lane: Louis Berger Group, Inc.

# Poll Question:

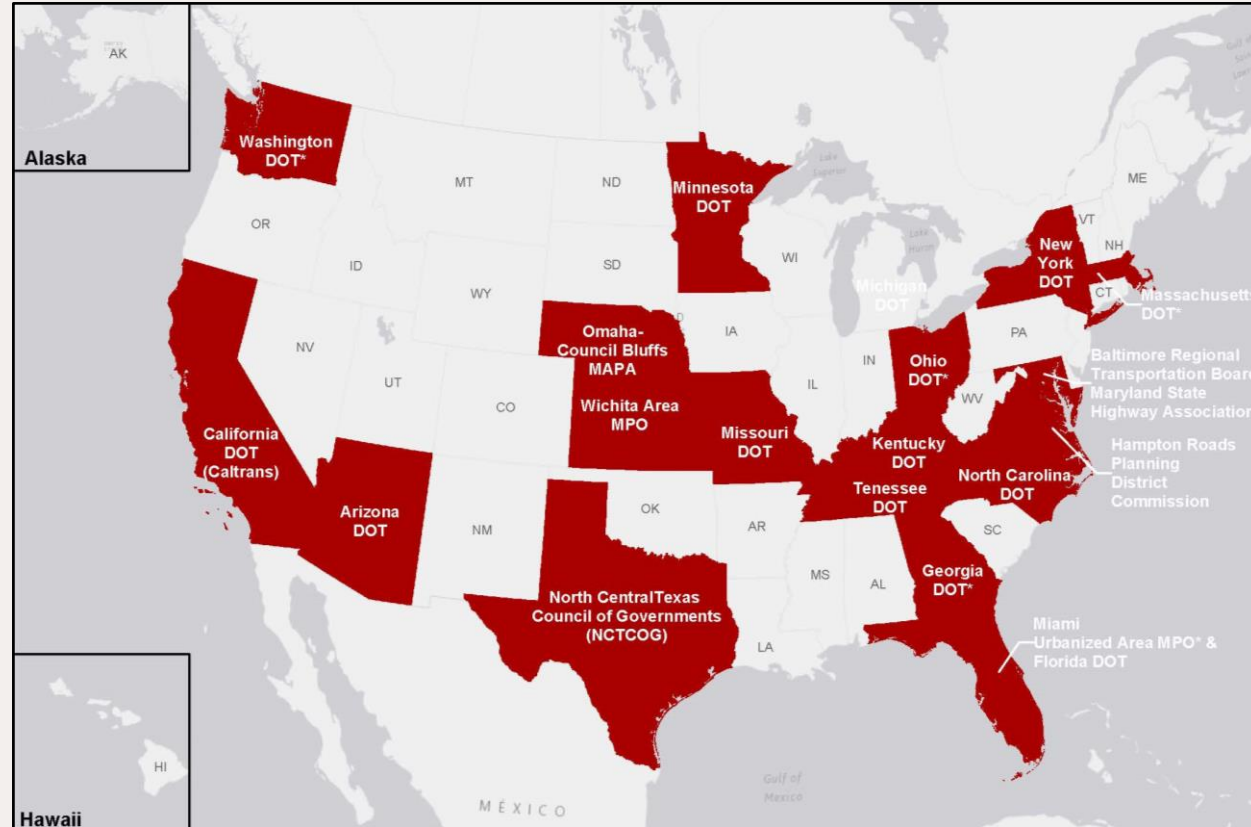
What type of organization do you represent?

Check one

- ▶ State
- ▶ Federal
- ▶ Local
- ▶ Academic/Non-profit
- ▶ Consultant

# EJ Peer Exchange Overview

- ▶ 13 State DOTs
- ▶ 6 MPOs
- ▶ FHWA staff from the Office of Human Environment Livability Team, Civil Rights, Project Development, Planning and the FHWA Resource Center
- ▶ AASHTO Staff



# EJ Peer Exchange Overview

## ► Topics Included:

- Addressing EJ as part of the Project Development Process
- Incorporating EJ in Planning and Programming
- Innovative, Meaningful Public Involvement
- FHWA EJ and Title VI Initiatives
- Emerging Issues

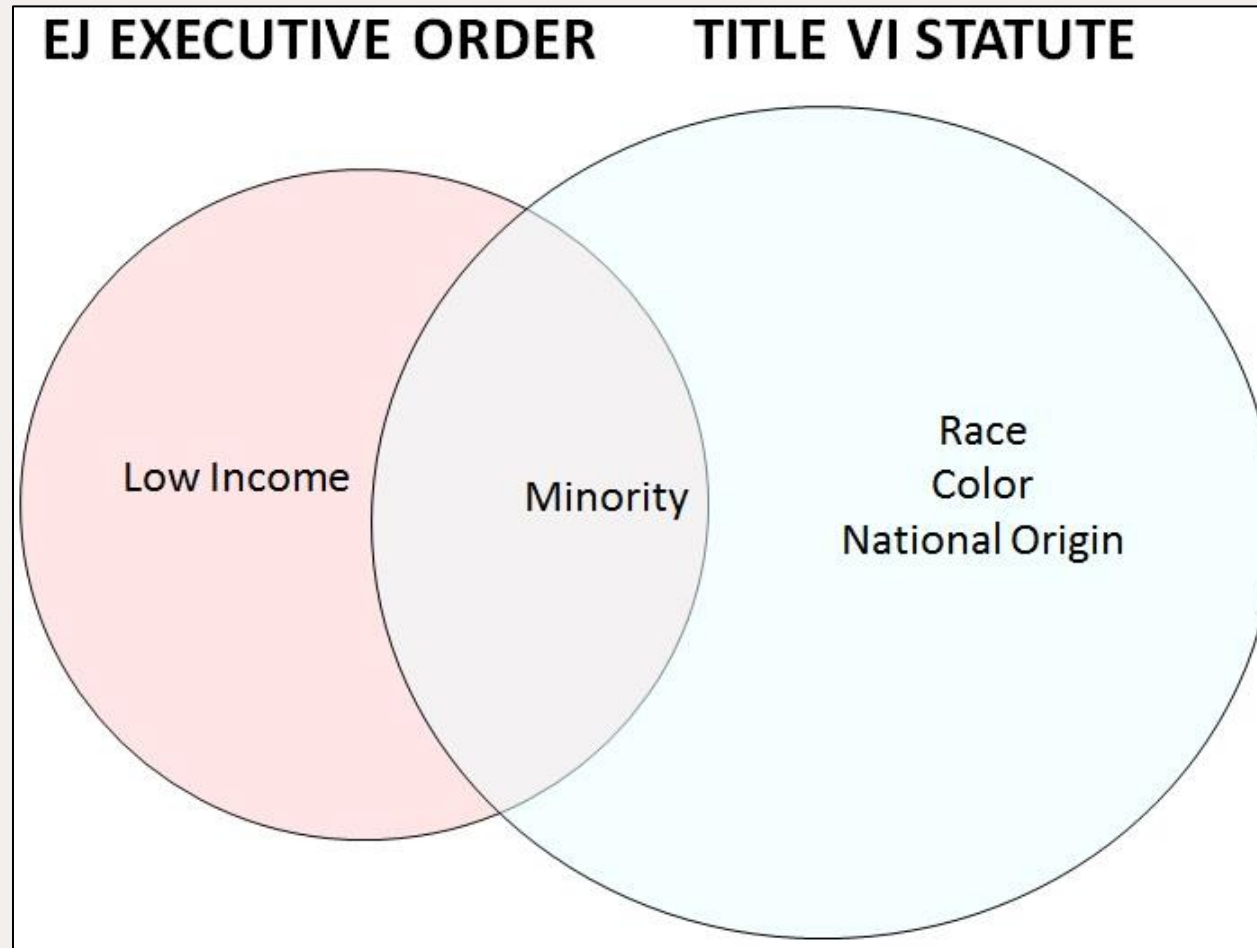


# Federal Highway Administration Environmental Justice and Title VI Initiatives

Fleming El-Amin  
Office of Human Environment



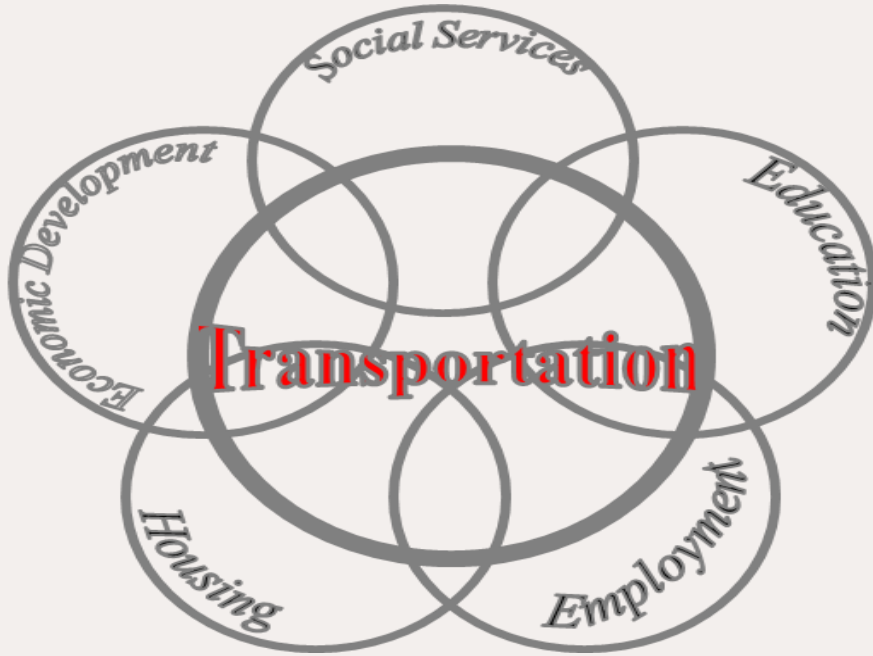
# What is Environmental Justice?



# FHWA EJ Focus Areas

- ▶ Ensure communities have a meaningful voice in the transportation decision-making process
- ▶ Ensure that impacts to communities and citizens are recognized early and addressed throughout the transportation decision-making process
- ▶ Identify and prevent discriminatory effects through active administration of programs, policies, and activities
- ▶ Prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in receipt of benefits by minority populations and low-income populations

# EJ and Ladders of Opportunity



Every Place Counts Design Challenge

<https://www.transportation.gov/opportunity/challenge>

*“Transportation can be both a **means** and a **barrier** to economic development, employment, housing, education and social opportunities...”*

# EJ Workgroups

- Federal Interagency EJ Working Group
- U.S. DOT EJ Implementation Workgroup
- FHWA EJ Implementation Workgroup



# EJ Activities

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental\\_justice](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice)

## Resources

- EJ Reference Guide
- Fact Sheets
- Case Studies
- NEPA Toolkit
- Updated EJ website
- Public Roads Magazine
- Bike/Ped Equity White Paper
- Human Environment Digest

## Training

- Peer Networks/Workshops
- Webinars
- NHI EJ Analysis Course (under development)
- NHI Fundamentals of EJ Course web-conversion (under development)



### Bicycle and Pedestrian Program

Legislation	<a href="#">FHWA</a> → <a href="#">Environment</a> → <a href="#">Bicycle and Pedestrian Program</a> → <a href="#">Resources</a>
Funding	
Guidance	
Resources	<b>Pursuing Equity in Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning</b> <b>April 2016</b> Laura Sandt, Ph.D. Tabitha Combs, Ph.D. Jesse Cohn, MRP  For: U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration



# Title VI Initiatives

## Title VI Action Plan

- ▶ September 2015: Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx asked all DOT modes to create Action Plans to strengthen Title VI compliance.



FHWA created a Plan for FY2016–2018 to meet the Secretary's call and improve the Title VI Program.

# FHWA Title VI Action Plan – Highlights

1. Task Force: interdisciplinary Task Force to ensure effective coordination, transparency, and quality delivery of the Plan
2. Technical Assistance/Guidance: assess all existing Title VI documents from FHWA Headquarters and the Resource Center to create practical, plain-language resources for all internal and external stakeholders
3. Compliance Training: deliver practical, interdisciplinary, and compliance-oriented Title VI training to emphasize State/Division actions, data analysis, and internal controls, with real-world examples
4. Internal Review: FHWA Program Management Improvement Team (PMIT) will independently analyze both the programmatic and the on-the-ground implementation of Title VI, nationwide and produce report with recommendations

# Summary

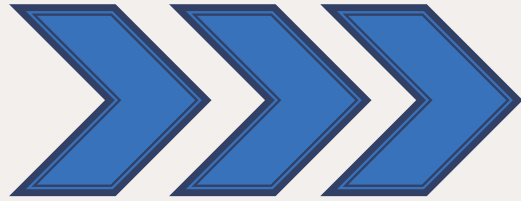
- ▶ FHWA is committed to fully integrating EJ into its activities, programs, planning and project development.
- ▶ FHWA strives to continued strengthened partnerships with State DOTs and MPOs to promote and advance environmental justice.



# Environmental Justice (EJ) Focus Areas

*“What do we need to focus on over the next two to three years to better integrate EJ considerations as part of transportation planning and project development decisionmaking processes?”*

# EJ Road Map Focus Areas



# Focus Area: The Role of EJ in Transportation Decisionmaking

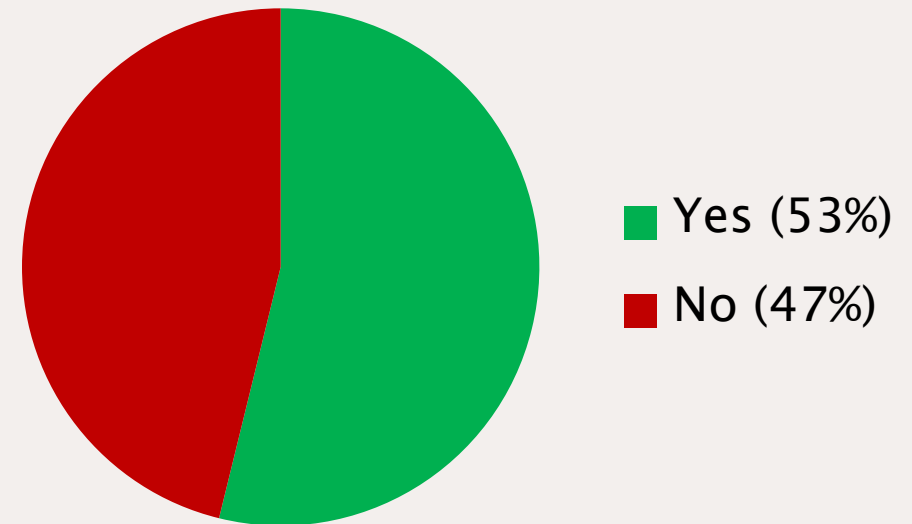
The key issue for this focus area includes the need to understand the purpose and intent of addressing EJ as part of all phases of transportation decision-making including performance accountability.

# The Role of EJ Transportation Decisionmaking: Participants Comments

- ▶ “The Why of EJ”
  - Creating a shared vision
  - EJ Ethics
  - Sense of purpose and urgency
  - Understanding the value
- ▶ “EJ Start to Finish”
  - Not an add on or after thought
  - Considered through all phases of transportation decisionmaking
  - Very important to start at systems planning

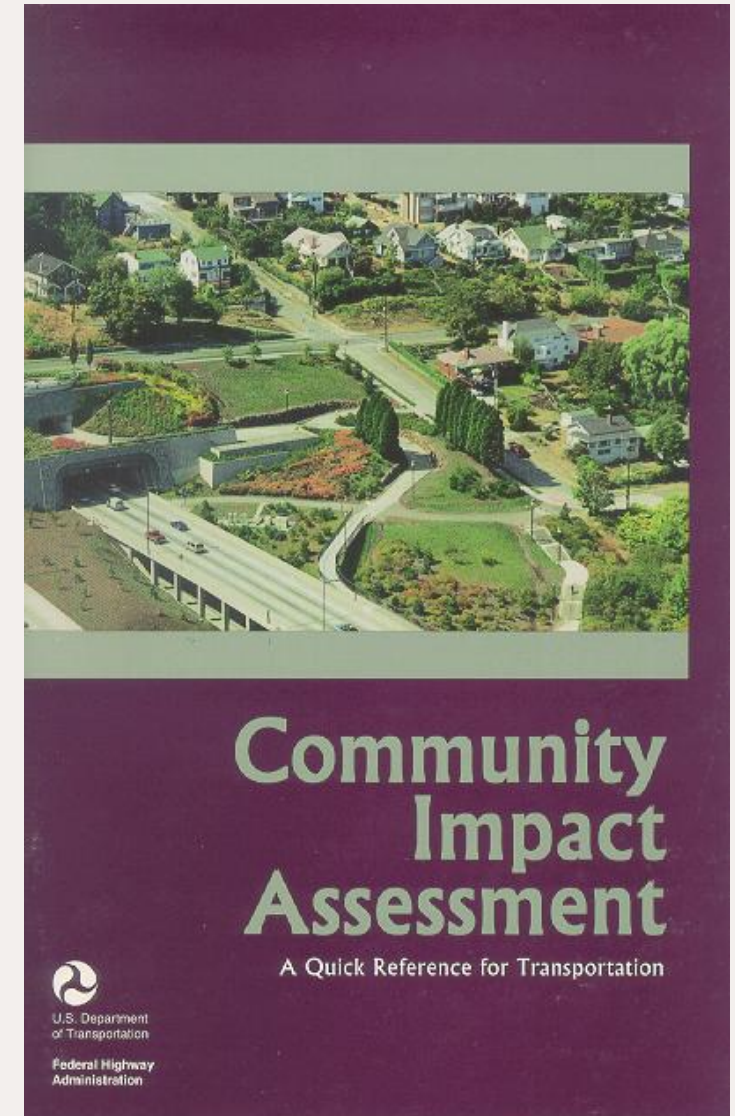
# The Role of EJ Transportation Decisionmaking: Current Practice

- ▶ Community Impact Assessment
  - 1996 Purple Book
- ▶ Context Sensitive Solutions (Since 1998)
  - Guidebooks, case studies, etc.
- ▶ EJ Reference Guide
  - Addresses all phases of transportation decisionmaking
- ▶ **Registration Poll Question**
  - **Are you familiar with Federal Highway Administration's EJ Reference Guide?**



# The Role of EJ Transportation Decisionmaking: Moving Forward

- ▶ Institutionalize transportation equity
  - Incorporate consistent EJ measures into planning processes
  - Educate upper management on importance of EJ
  - Market the importance of EJ with credible evidence
  - Collaborate with transportation professional organizations to market the importance of EJ
- ▶ Update the CIA Quick Reference Guide (Purple Book)
- ▶ Conduct an EJ National Dialogue



# Focus Area: Training

The key issue for this focus area includes delivering the knowledge and skills needed by transportation practitioners to successfully address EJ as part of all phases of the transportation decision-making.



# Training:

## Participants Comments

- While training could be expensive, having an untrained staff could be more costly in the long run
- Found training, when available, focused on regulations not the “Why of EJ”
- Inconsistencies in who was being trained, the content of the training, and the infrequency of available training
- “Successful and unsuccessful case examples” would help better address EJ as part of planning and project development



# Training: Current Practice

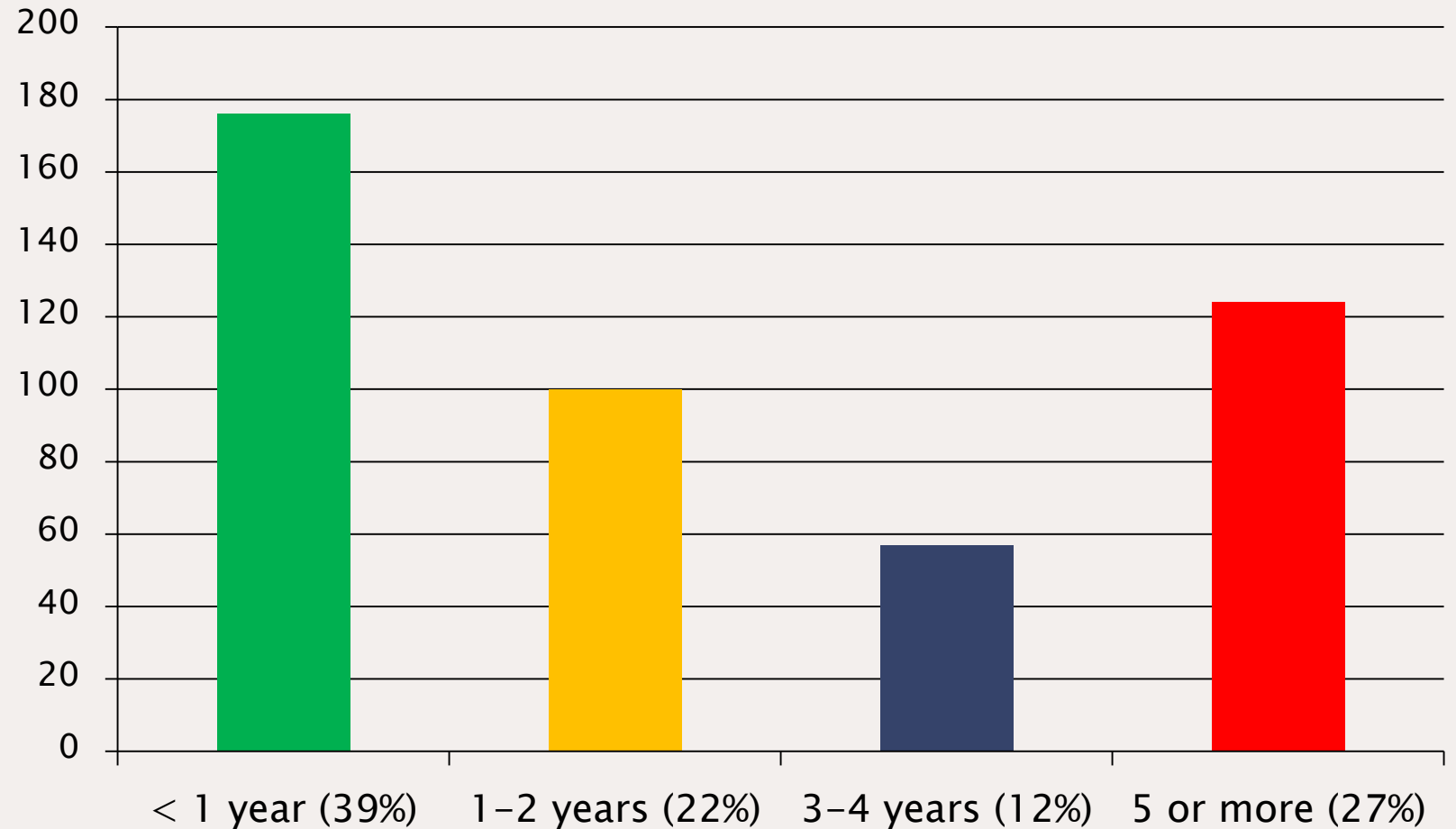
- DOTs like Caltrans and FDOT have ongoing training programs to address EJ as part of planning and project development
- It is unclear how many other transportation agencies have developed training programs

The screenshot shows the Caltrans website's Standard Environmental Reference (SER) page. The header includes the Caltrans logo and navigation links: Home, Travel, Business, Engineering, News, Maps, Jobs, About Caltrans, and Contact Us. A sidebar on the left lists various resources under 'Division of Environmental Analysis', including SER Home, Purpose of the SER, How To Use The SER, Topics Matrices, Env Handbooks, and a list of volumes (Vol 1: General, Vol 2: Cultural, Vol 3: Biological, Vol 4: Community Stormwater, Emergency Projects Environmental Process and Requirements, 2015 FSTIP). The main content area is titled 'Standard Environmental Reference' and features a search bar, tabs for 'WHAT'S NEW', 'SER POSTING HISTORY', 'PURPOSE OF THE SER', and 'HOW TO USE THE SER'. A section titled 'What is the SER?' explains that it is an on-line resource for state and local agency staff. Below this, it lists the contents of the SER, including Caltrans Environmental Handbooks (Vol 1: Guidance for Compliance, Vol 2: Cultural Resources, Vol 3: Biological Resources, Vol 4: Community Impacts Assessment), Policy Memos, Other Guidance, MOUs, MOAs, and Programmatic Agreements, Forms and Templates, and Topics Matrices.

# Training: Current Practice

## ➤ FHWA EJ Training

Participant  
Registration Poll  
Question: When did  
you last participate  
in EJ related  
training?



# Training: Moving Forward

- ▶ Survey training needs of practitioners and consultants
- ▶ Identify needs for new courses
- ▶ Provide more consistent training opportunities for practitioners and consultants
- ▶ Partner with professional organizations to host workshops and training events
- ▶ Offset training costs to state DOTs by increasing the number of consultants allowed to attend courses

# Focus Area:

## Fostering External Agency Collaboration

The key issue for this focus area includes exploring shared EJ responsibilities and interests by other federal, state and local agencies such that collaborative partnerships can be identified and cultivated for successful project outcomes.

# Fostering External Agency Collaboration: Participant Comments

- ▶ Acknowledged the expertise that other agencies can provide to fully understand the concerns and perspective of EJ population groups
- ▶ Participants stressed the need to find “common ground for collective benefit”
- ▶ Expressed an awareness that other agencies “speak another language” in terms of community services and needs (ex. is health data)
- ▶ Felt other agencies were not engaged early enough in the planning and project development processes

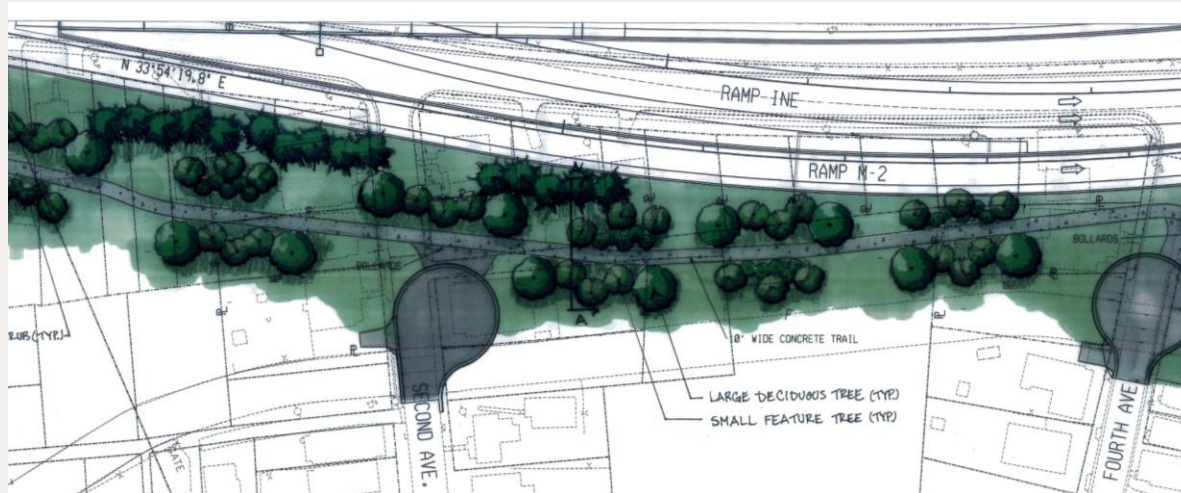


# Fostering External Agency Collaboration: Current Practice GDOT: I-16/I-75 Interchange





# Fostering External Agency Collaboration: Current Practice GDOT: I-16/I-75 Interchange



# Fostering External Agency Collaboration: Moving Forward

- Develop a synthesis research project of who and how state DOTs work with other agencies and EJ communities
- Add a session at SCOP and SCOPE annual meetings to share exemplary examples
- Add case study examples as part of training courses
- Identify process or funding partners at project start or scoping
- Develop an EJ statewide working group of key agencies around topics of importance to EJ communities



# Fostering External Agency Collaboration: Poll Question

Have you worked on a project which included resources or financial support from another governmental agency as part of the plan or project?

Check one

- ▶ Yes
- ▶ No
- ▶ Unsure

# Focus Area: Interagency Collaboration

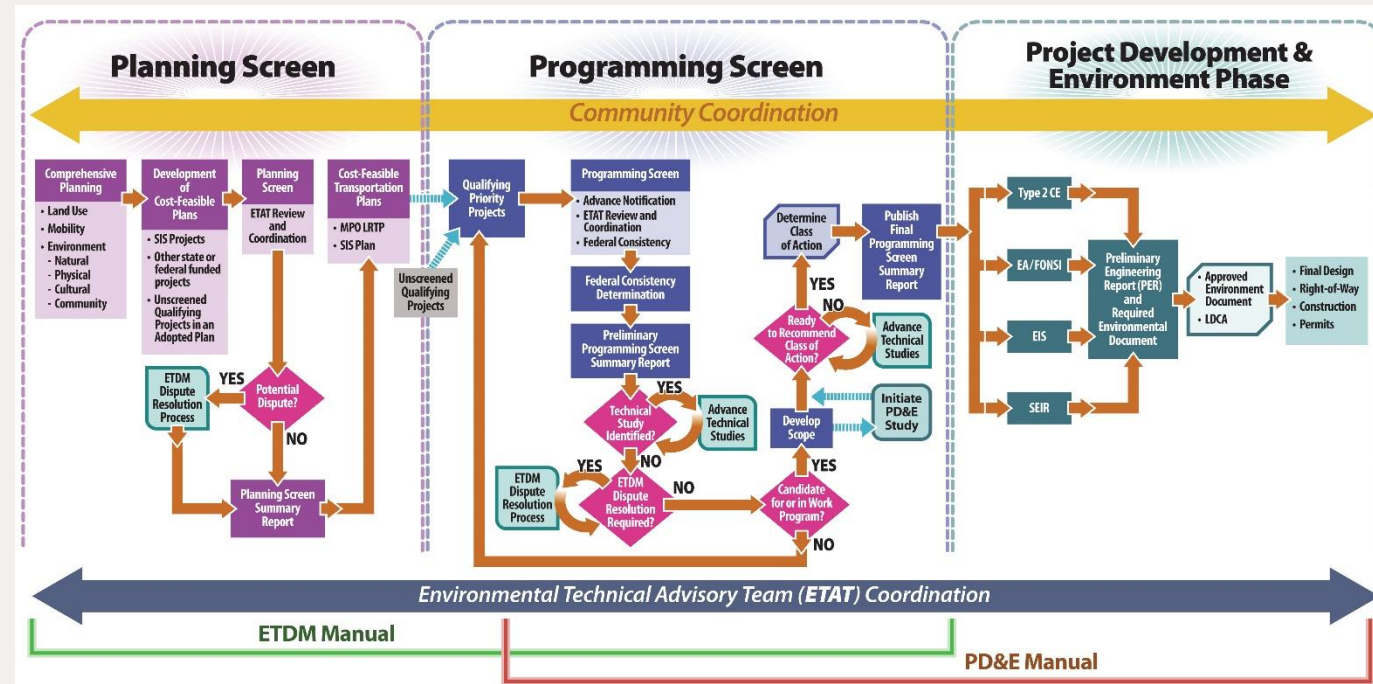
The key issue for this focus area involves the need for a close working relationship between FHWA, MPOs and DOTs to improve project development outcomes.

# Interagency Collaboration: Participants Comments

- ▶ Good working relationships between all levels of government
- ▶ Need for consistent training and guidance from FHWA to DOTs and MPOs
- ▶ Inconsistent EJ documentation between MPOs to DOTs
- ▶ Carrot verse stick motivation

# Interagency Collaboration: Current Practice

- ▶ Planning and Environmental Linkages Program (FHWA)
- ▶ Florida DOT's Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM)
  - Data and analysis tool
  - Robust stakeholder involvement
- ▶ Miami-Dade MPO's Outreach Planner
  - Customized Demographics Reports
  - Community Background Reports
  - Compliments FDOT's ETDM



# ► NCDOT Integration Project

Long Range Planning		Project Development
Problem Statement	Linked to	Purpose and Need
Alternatives analysis	Linked to	Alternatives selected for detailed study
Unreasonable solutions	Linked to	Alternatives selected for detailed study
Multi-modal	Linked to	Multi-modal alternatives
Community impacts assessment	Linked to	Community impacts analysis
Land use	Linked to	Indirect and cumulative effects
Public involvement	Linked to	Public involvement
Mitigation opportunities	Linked to	Mitigation needs and opportunities

## Interagency Collaboration: Current Practice

# Interagency Collaboration: Moving Forward

- ▶ Develop guidance on the consistency of data and information exchange between MPOs and DOTs for EJ analysis
- ▶ Develop training between MPOs and DOTs on EJ evaluation and analysis
- ▶ Showcase examples of the benefits of EJ data and information collaboration between MPOs and DOTs

# Interagency Collaboration: Poll Question

What guidance does your agency have on linking planning and environmental decisions?

Check one

- ▶ Formal
- ▶ Informal
- ▶ Unsure

# Focus Area: Community Engagement

The key issue for this focus area includes the importance of meaningful engagement of community members and how this is integral to identifying EJ populations as well as understanding the potential impacts from a transportation plan or project.

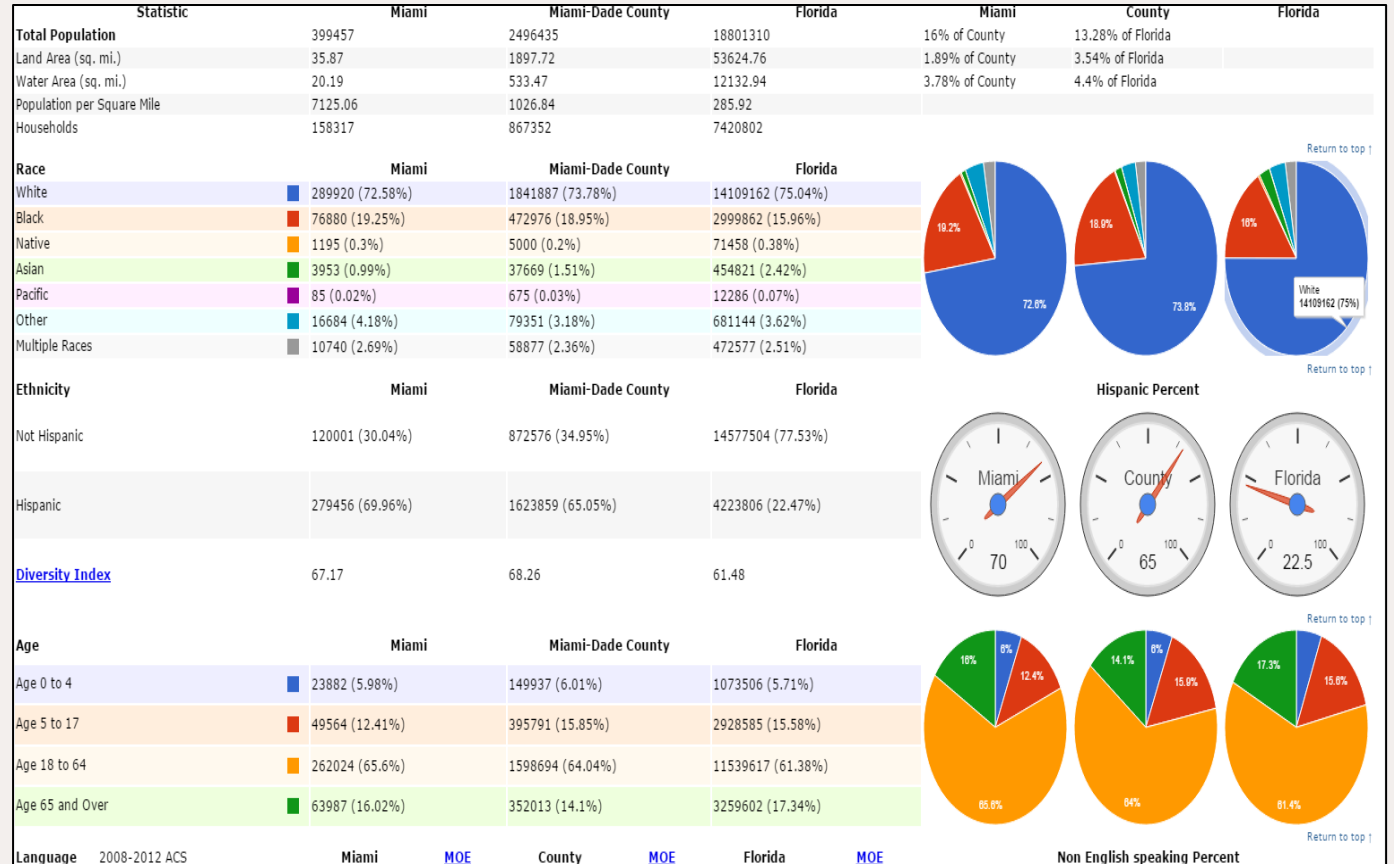


# Community Engagement: Participants Comments

- ▶ Felt their agencies would benefit from
  - Standing EJ Public Involvement Officer and/or Roundtable
  - Personal interactions/getting to know the community
- ▶ Wanted to collaborate with other agencies to assist with public outreach including
  - Workforce Alliances
  - Cities and Counties
  - Chambers of Commerce
  - Colleges/Universities
  - ADA Groups
  - Agencies on Aging
- ▶ Needed more time to get to know the community

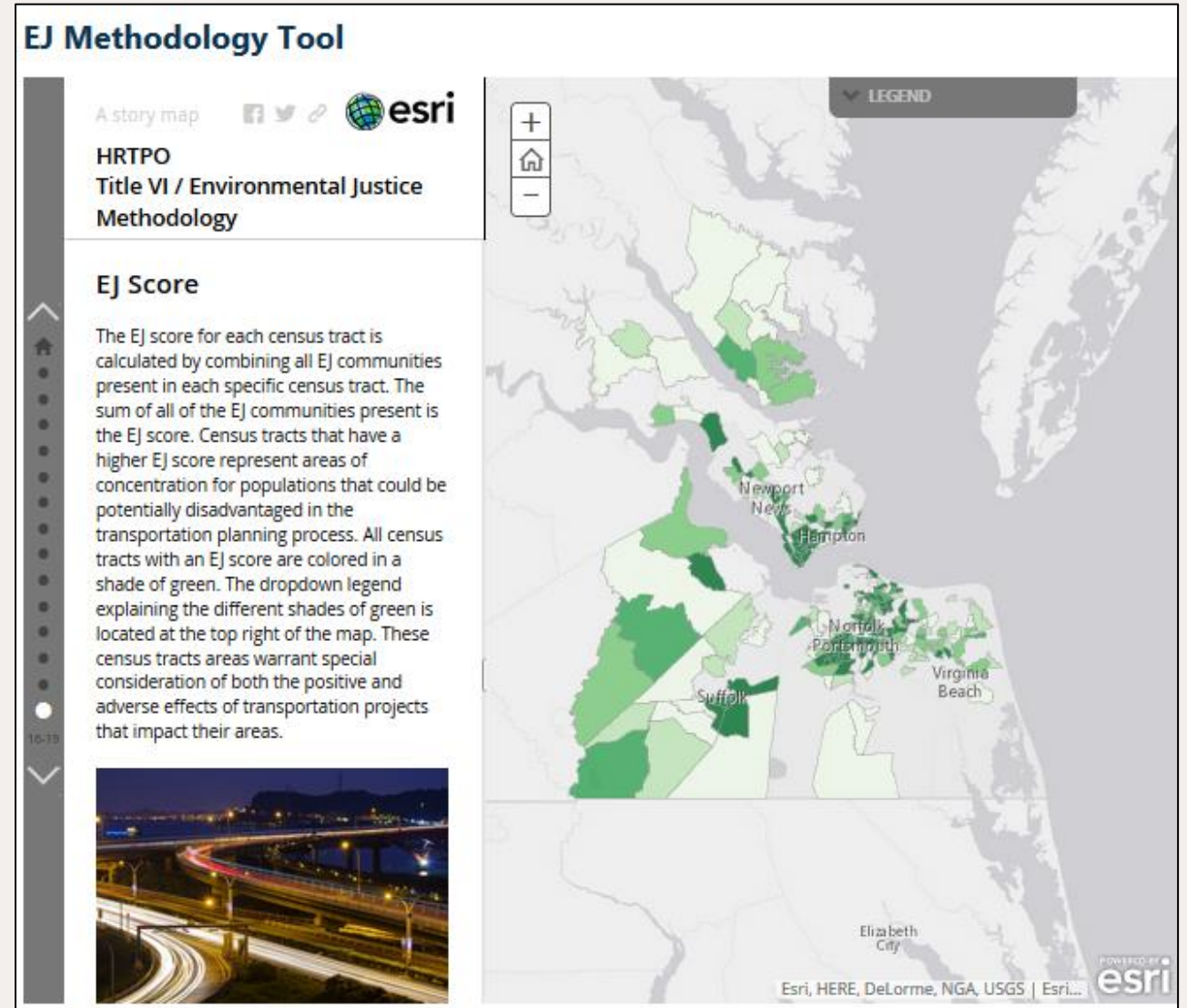
# Community Engagement: Current Practice

- ▶ Miami-Dade MPO's Transportation Outreach Planner intertwines GIS data analysis with community background information to then suggest the most appropriate outreach strategies



# Community Engagement: Current Practice

- ▶ Hampton Roads TPO's EJ Methodology Tool identifies areas of concern, and collects information on these hot spots to develop appropriate public outreach strategies



# Community Engagement: Moving Forward

- ▶ Identify best practices for engaging different EJ populations based on social and cultural differences
- ▶ Identify useful tools (example EJScreen) as a starting point for developing outreach strategies
- ▶ Review staff skills and competencies necessary to conduct meaningful community engagement

# Community Engagement: Poll Question

Have you created and/or developed community characteristic reports for your local communities/neighborhoods?

Check one

- ▶ Yes
- ▶ No
- ▶ Unsure



# Focus Area: Peer Networks

The key issue for this focus area involves ensuring that transportation professionals have a “safe” place to share stories of project successes and failures including lessons learned and effective practices.

# Peer Networks: Participants Comments

- ▶ Sharing their stories
- ▶ “Having an honest conversation”
- ▶ “Need more practitioners ‘safe’ places”



# Peer Networks: Moving Forward

- ▶ Peer Exchange Participants identified two key action items to support peer networks:
  - Providing more in-person opportunities to share their “stories”
  - Initiating professional share sites whereby practitioners can ask questions of their colleagues



# Peer Networks: Poll Question

What is your preferred method of receiving best practices, case studies or lessons learned?

Check one

- ▶ In person workshops or conferences
- ▶ Online discussion forums (example: webinar)
- ▶ Online resources (no interaction)

# Focus Area: EJ Data and Analysis

The key issue for this focus area is to identify challenges and opportunities associated with collecting EJ data and analyzing this data with the appropriate methods and tools.

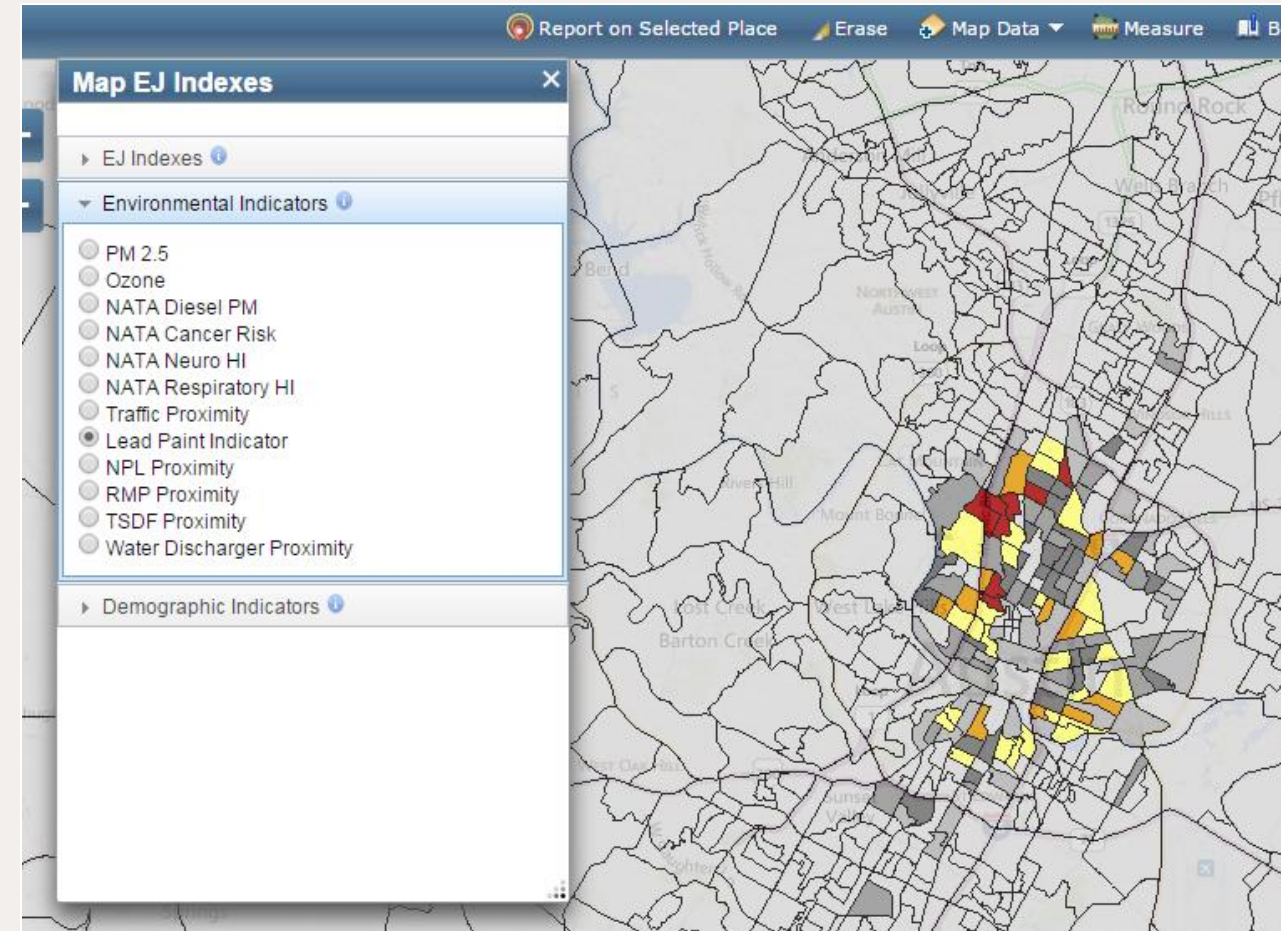
# EJ Data and Analysis: Participant Comments

- ▶ Participants identified the following needs:
  - develop better tools for analysis
  - create more consistency in evaluation methods
  - define standard best practices and data sources
  - desire for additional guidance on user-generated data and project re-evaluations
- ▶ Satisfaction at having the opportunity to learn about innovative ways of collecting and analyzing data
- ▶ Need for data sources, analytical methods, and tools to adapt to recent technological advancements and ongoing demographic shifts



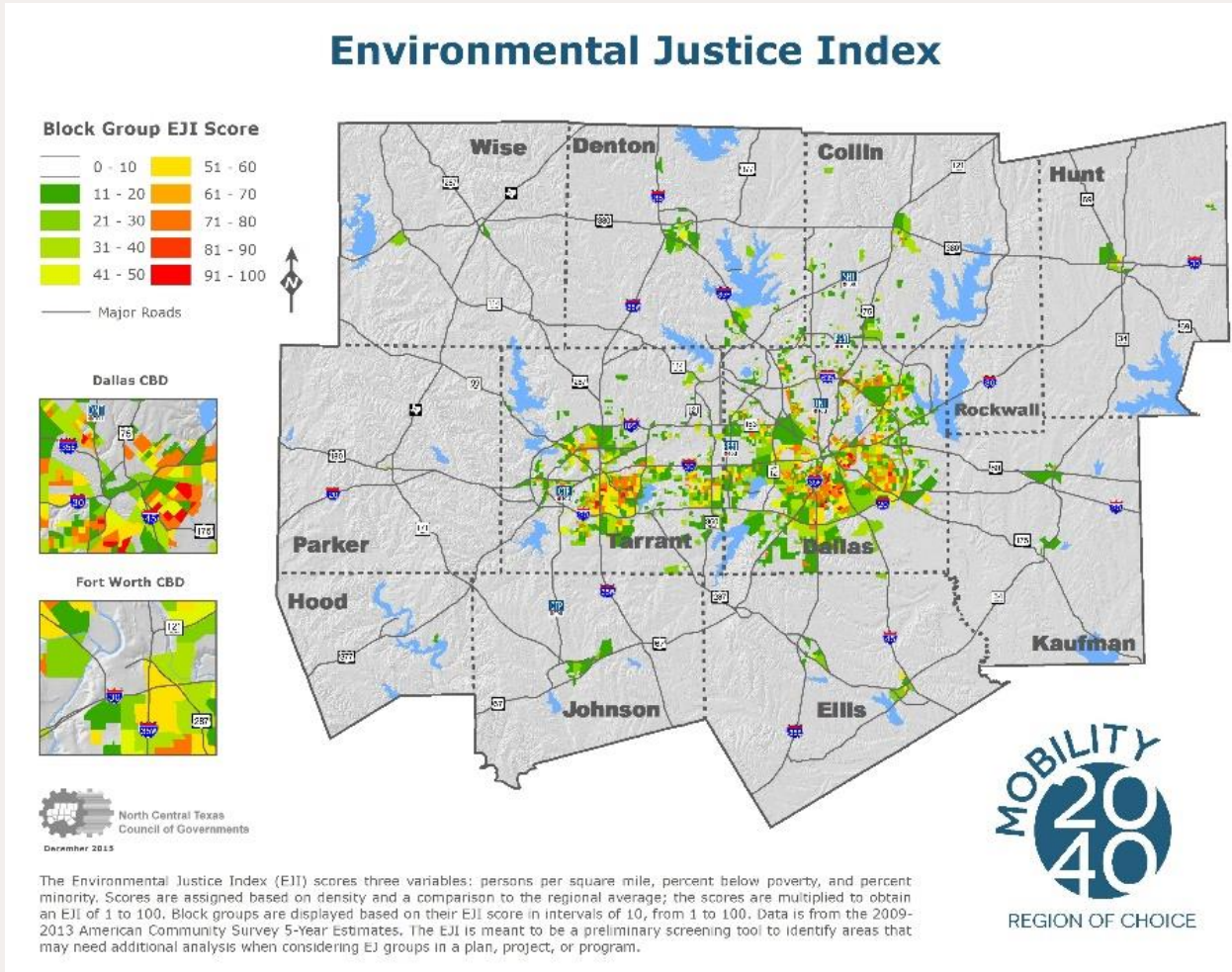
# EJ Data and Analysis: Current Practice

- ▶ A mix of qualitative and quantitative data sources are currently used by DOTs and MPOs to evaluate EJ impacts.
- ▶ While there are many high-quality data sources, the differences in geographic, spatial, and temporal scale make data aggregation challenging.



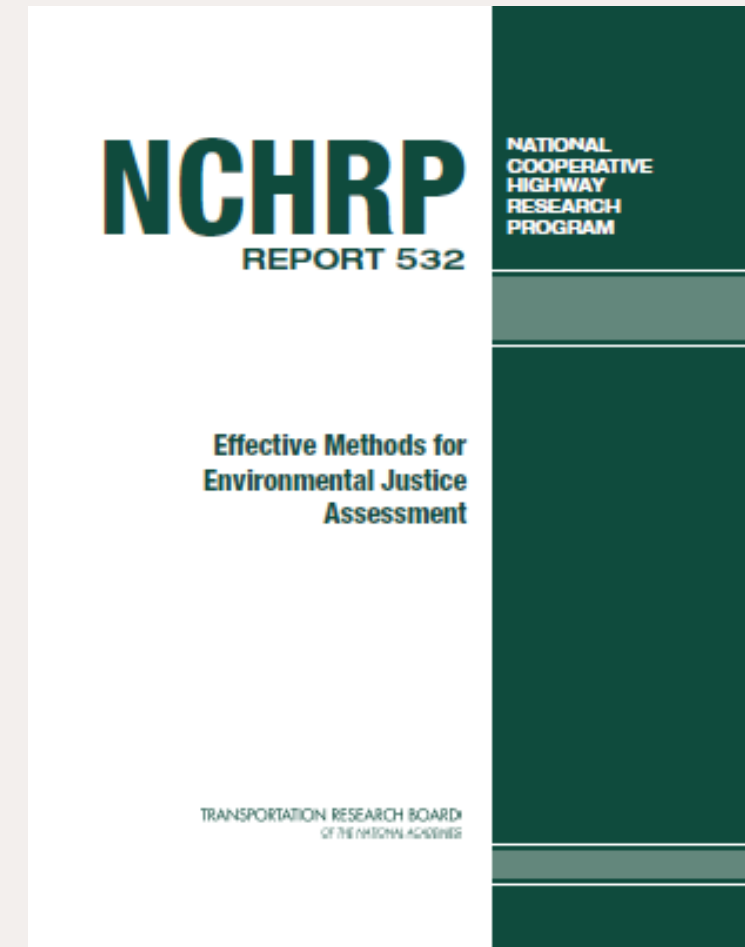
# EJ Data and Analysis: Current Practice

- ▶ Desktop and web-based Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- ▶ Difficulties in incorporating qualitative data into the same workflow and information system as quantitative data and metrics



# EJ Data and Analysis: Current Practice

- ▶ Lack of national consistency in the interpretation/determination of disproportionate impacts
- ▶ Tools and methods with which EJ and Title VI impacts are assessed are similar, while there is a strict legal distinction between them



TRB's National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) [Report 532: Effective Methods for Environmental Justice Assessment](#), completed in 2004, was created to provide practitioners with a comprehensive analytical framework to identify EJ communities and assess disproportionate impacts throughout planning and project development

# EJ Data and Analysis: Moving Forward

- ▶ Develop a toolbox to standardize the evaluation of disproportionate impacts
- ▶ Develop common best management practices and guidance on the various data sources available and how to use them
- ▶ Leverage web-based mapping tools to crowdsource demographic data
- ▶ Develop a research project that provides guidance on how to determine disproportionate impacts to EJ populations (update NCHRP 532)

# EJ Data and Analysis: Poll Question

Would your agency benefit from additional guidance on how to determine disproportionate impacts as part of planning or project development activities?

Check one

- ▶ Yes
- ▶ No
- ▶ Unsure



# Focus Area:

## The Demographics of EJ Households

The key issue for this focus area involves an examination of the changing demographics across the U.S and how this affects how we define, locate and evaluate impacts to EJ households and communities.



# Demographics of EJ Households: Participant Comments

- ▶ Transportation Disadvantaged Populations: those that have not been well represented in decision-making processes
- ▶ Demographic shifts including aging, racial identification, and concentration of populations
- ▶ Becoming a majority minority country in 20 years



# Demographics of EJ Households: Current Practice

- ▶ Most agencies continue to identify EJ populations through census data and compare to a reference population such as the county average to identify areas of concern.
- ▶ Practitioners are identifying new ways to locate and understand which populations may be adversely impacted by transportation decisions.



# Demographics of EJ Households: Moving Forward

- ▶ Identify new data sources and methods that reflect changes in self-identification and lifestyles are needed
- ▶ Address important emerging questions:
  - What is the correct reference group?
  - How will people self-identify in the future on census surveys?
  - As larger populations become multi-racial how will race be used as an EJ indicator?
- ▶ Develop a better understanding of the consequences of the changing demographics of households in order to better address the impacts of transportation on disadvantaged populations

# EJ Emerging Issues

# Emerging Issues

- ▶ Health Impacts
- ▶ Community Indirect and Cumulative Effects
- ▶ US Changing Demographics
- ▶ Climate Change
- ▶ Tolling, Congestion Pricing and Managed Lanes

# EJ Emerging Issues: Poll Question

What do you think the most important emerging issues are in terms of how critical it is to address EJ considerations as part of transportation decisionmaking?

Check three

- Health Impacts
- Community Indirect and Cumulative Effects
- US Changing Demographics
- Climate Change
- Tolling, Congestion Pricing and Managed Lanes



# Closing Remarks

The webinar will be posted online at the Center for Environmental Excellence at [environment.transportation.org](http://environment.transportation.org).

The Roadmap is expected to be complete and online by the end of May 2016. EJ Peer Exchange presentations can be found at this web link as well.

Any questions regarding today's webinar or roadmap, please email Samantha Hoilett at [shoilett@AASHTO.org](mailto:shoilett@AASHTO.org).