

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this **Manual** is to provide transportation planners, project analysts, project engineers, project managers, and other practitioners with sufficient information to consider as they review transportation projects during the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Process Planning and Programming Screens. It is the procedure by which qualifying projects are screened through the ETDM process. This **Manual** also provides guidance for involving potentially affected communities and stakeholders in the project's transportation planning phase.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and state and federal partners began developing the ETDM process in 1999 to support environmental streamlining objectives identified in **Section 1309** of the **Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) (Pub. L. No. 105-178)**. The **Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)** included a process for conducting "Efficient Environmental Reviews for Project Decision Making" for highway projects under **Section 6002 (b)** of the bill. In December 2005, FHWA recognized the ETDM process as satisfying the statutory requirements of **SAFETEA-LU Section 6002(b)** and being acceptable for use on federal-aid projects. **SAFETEA-LU Section 6002** was codified as **23 U.S.C. § 139**. The ETDM process is consistent with the streamlining objectives of subsequent amendments to **23 U.S.C. §§ 139 and 168** through the **Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)** and the **Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act**.

On March 16, 2006, the FDOT Secretary approved [Procedure Number 650-000-002](#), which established statewide use of the **Manual**, as well as the process by which the **Manual**, or portions thereof, will be subsequently revised and updated.

This **Manual** supports project development in conjunction with related FDOT Office of Environmental Management (OEM) Handbooks, the Environmental Screening Tool (EST), and the two-part [Project Development and Environment \(PD&E\) Manual \(Procedure Number 650-000-001\)](#). The [PD&E Manual](#) describes the process for satisfying the requirements of the **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** and other related federal and state laws, rules, and regulations.

Transportation professionals use this **Manual** during the Planning phase of transportation project delivery, specifically the ETDM Planning and Programming Screens. The **Manual** is organized as follows:

Chapter 1 – Describes the purpose and organization of the **Manual**

Chapter 2 – Describes the ETDM process in general

Chapter 3 – Details Planning Screen procedures

Chapter 4 – Details Programming Screen procedures

Chapter 5 – Discusses the transition from the ETDM process to the PD&E phase

Chapter 6 – Describes procedures for managing data through the EST

Acronyms – Provides a list of acronyms used in the *Manual*

This *Manual* and the [PD&E Manual](#) are both available at [OEM's Website](#).

1.2 AUTHORITY

This *Manual* was developed under the authority of **Section 334.044 and Section 339.155, Florida Statutes**.

The *Manual* supports objectives identified in the following:

1. **Title 23 United States Code (U.S.C.), Highways, as amended**
2. **23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 450** (FHWA Planning Assistance and Standards)
3. **Planning and Environmental Linkages, 23 U.S.C. § 168**
4. **Efficient Project Reviews for Environmental Decision Making 23 U.S.C. § 139**
5. **49 CFR Part 613** [Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Planning]
6. **23 CFR Part 771** (Environmental Impact and Related Procedures)
7. **Title 42 U.S.C. Chapter 55, National Environmental Policy, as amended**
8. **40 CFR §§ 1500 – 1508** (Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing **NEPA**)
9. State and federal agency ETDM agreements (various dates)
10. Memorandum of Understanding dated 05/26/2022 and executed by FHWA and FDOT concerning the State of Florida's participation in the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program pursuant to **23 U.S.C. § 327**
11. FHWA Order 6640.1A clarifying the FHWA Policy regarding the permissible project-related activities that can be advanced prior to the conclusion of the **NEPA** Process

1.3 SCOPE

The following FDOT offices use this **Manual**: Environmental Management, Planning, and Design offices. **Manual** users outside FDOT include Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPOs), Transportation Planning Organization (TPOs), other transportation planning agencies, Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) members, consultants, and other state and federal agencies.

1.4 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

This **Manual** is hereby incorporated by [Procedure No. 650-000-002](#) and made a part of the **Standard Operating System** of FDOT (see [Procedure No. 025-020-002](#)).

1.5 DISTRIBUTION

A copy of this **Manual** may be obtained by downloading and printing it from [OEM's Website](#).

1.6 REVISIONS

While OEM has the ultimate responsibility for the development of and updates to this **Manual**, the Districts share in this responsibility as well. OEM regularly evaluates and updates the **Manual** in response to changing environmental requirements, standards, and policies to ensure consistency with the procedures established by the FDOT Policy and Procedure Management unit. Revisions to chapters are made on an as-needed basis that consider the last revision date; current information; District-identified issues and suggested modifications; changes in other FDOT Manuals; or changes in federal or state law, rule, policy, or guidance.

OEM annually reviews the chapters of this **Manual** to ensure they are current and up to date. Revisions are incorporated into the **Manual** over the course of the following year. As chapters are updated, they are also checked for consistency and for opportunities to clarify, simplify, and focus process and procedures.

Major changes, substantive revisions, or additions (i.e., policy changes, new chapters) to the **Manual** are approved by the Executive Team through the process established in [Procedure No. 025-020-002, Standard Operating System](#).

1.7 TRAINING

Training courses available from FDOT pertaining to this **Manual** include **ETDM Process - Overview** and courses on the use of the EST. This training is required for users of the secure EST Website and is highly recommended for others engaged in the ETDM process. Computer-based training is available on FDOT's [ETDM Training Website](#). Instructor-led training may be requested through OEM.

FDOT offers additional courses covering procedures supportive of the FDOT environmental programs and the ETDM process. Training opportunities on related subjects may become

available based on user-identified needs. See the [OEM Training Program Website](#) for more training opportunities. Additional training is available for authorized users through the EST.

1.8 FORMS

The results of the Planning and Programming Screens completed during the ETDM process are documented within the EST. Interaction with this database system is managed by the FDOT ETDM Coordinators, who are responsible for advancing projects through the Planning and Programming Screens and working with the FDOT Project Managers to maintain the project database during the PD&E phase. Persons involved with the Planning and Programming Screens provide input directly into forms that exist within the EST. Results are stored in the Environmental Electronic Document Management System. All forms required by the ETDM process are provided within the EST. Information about accessing and using the EST is available on FDOT's [ETDM Training Website](#).

1.9 REFERENCES

23 CFR Part 450. Planning Assistance and Standards.

23 CFR Part 450. Appendix A. Linking the Transportation Planning and NEPA Processes,

23 CFR Part 771. Environmental Impact and Related Procedures.

23 CFR Part 773. Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program.

23 U.S.C. Highways.

23 U.S.C. § 139. Efficient Project Reviews for Environmental Decision Making

23 U.S.C. § 168. Planning and Environmental Linkages.

40 CFR §§ 1500 – 1508. Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act.

42 U.S.C. Chapter 55. National Environmental Policy.

49 CFR Part 613. Federal Transit Administration Planning.

FHWA Order 6640.1A FHWA Policy on Permissible Project Related Activities During the NEPA Process

Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), (Pub. L. 112-141, 2015).

Florida Department of Transportation. 2013. Standard Operating System (Procedure Number 025-020-002). Accessed at <https://pdl.fdot.gov/Procedures> accessed on 09/27/2021.

Florida Department of Transportation. 2019. Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Training. Accessed at <https://www.fdot.gov/environment/sched/track7.shtm> on 03/25/2021.

Florida Department of Transportation. 2019. Project Development and Environment Manual (Procedure Number 650-000-001). Accessed at <http://www.fdot.gov/environment/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm> on 03/25/2021.

Florida Department of Transportation. State and federal agency agreements regarding ETDM, various dates. Accessed at <https://etdmpub.fla-etat.org/est/?startPageId=493&categoryList=85#> on 03/25/2021.

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (Pub L. 112-141) 2012.

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (Pub. L. 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347, January 1, 1970, as amended by Pub. L. 94-52, July 3, 1975, Pub. L. 94-83, August 9, 1975, and Pub. L. 97-258, § 4(b), Sept. 13, 1982).

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (Pub. L. 109-59). 2005.

Section 334.044, Florida Statutes. Florida Transportation Plan.

Section 339.155, Florida Statutes. Transportation Planning.

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (Pub. L. 105-178). 1998.

1.10 HISTORY

03/2006: Original publication

07/2013: Updated to reflect current laws, requirements, and practices

12/2015: Edited to reduce redundancy with Chapter 2 and references to CEMO changed to SEMO

05/2017: Updated to incorporate requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding dated 12/14/2016 and executed by FHWA and FDOT concerning the State of Florida's participation in the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program pursuant to **23 U.S.C. § 327**

03/2019: Pen and ink update to FDOT website links

09/2019: Updated to reflect current laws, requirements, and practices

12/2021: Reviewed for updates in authorities, requirements, and practices. Only editorial clarifications were needed.

07/2024: Updated to reflect current laws, requirements, and practices

