

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1.1	PURPOSE .....	1-2
1.2	AUTHORITY .....	1-3
1.3	SCOPE .....	1-3
1.4	INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE .....	1-4
1.5	DISTRIBUTION AND REVISIONS .....	1-4
1.6	TRAINING .....	1-4
1.7	FORMS .....	1-5
1.8	REFERENCES .....	1-5
1.9	HISTORY .....	1-6

The Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process is Florida's procedure for reviewing qualifying<sup>1</sup> transportation projects to consider potential environmental effects in the Planning phase. This process provides stakeholders the opportunity for early input, involvement, and coordination. It provides for the early identification of potential project effects and informs the development of scopes for projects advancing to the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) phase.

Stakeholders involved in the ETDM process generally include Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)/Transportation Planning Organizations (TPOs), county and municipal governments, federal and state agencies, Native American tribes, and the public. To facilitate intergovernmental interaction, each of the seven geographic Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District has an Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT). The ETATs for the geographic FDOT Districts are responsible for reviewing the Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (Turnpike) projects located in those areas. The ETAT includes representatives from MPOs/TPOs, state and federal agencies, and participating Native American Tribes. ETAT members and the public have the opportunity to provide input to the FDOT regarding a project's potential effects on the natural, physical, cultural, and community resources throughout the Planning phase of project delivery. These comments help to determine the feasibility of a proposed project; focus the issues to be addressed during the PD&E phase; allow for early identification of potential avoidance, minimization, and mitigation opportunities; and create products that may be used in the PD&E phase to promote efficiency and consistency during project development.

The ETDM process connects the Planning and PD&E phases by carrying forward planning products, previous analyses, and decisions supporting transportation project implementation during subsequent project development phases. Furthermore, the ETDM process is fully consistent with the streamlining objectives of ***Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)***.

The ETDM process is composed of two project-screening events: Planning and Programming. During the Planning Screen, comments received from the ETAT members and the public help FDOT and MPOs/TPOs to identify environmental considerations that assist in assessing projects for inclusion or advancement in Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs) and further into the Cost Feasible Plan. During the Programming Screen, qualifying projects are reviewed when being considered for funding in the FDOT Five Year Work Program or MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), or if already funded, before advancing to the PD&E phase. It should be noted that priority projects in non-MPO areas and qualifying bridge projects do not typically complete a Planning Screen; however, a Planning Screen may be conducted at the discretion of the FDOT District depending on the nature the project.

Coordination with the ETAT members is facilitated through the Environmental Screening Tool (EST), an Internet-accessible interactive database and mapping application. The EST brings together resource and project data from multiple sources into one consistent format. It

---

<sup>1</sup> Refer to **Chapter 2** of this **Manual** for a listing of applicable types of projects.

provides quick, standardized Geographic Information System (GIS) analyses, identifying potential natural, physical, cultural, and community resources present in the project area. The EST also allows the ETAT members the opportunity to provide input on proposed projects. Project information is made available to the public through the ETDM Public Access Site (<https://etdmpub.fl.a-etat.org/est/>).

See **Chapter 2** of this **Manual** for a more detailed discussion of the ETDM process.

## 1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this **Manual** is to provide transportation planners, project analysts, project managers, and other practitioners with sufficient information to consider as they review qualifying transportation projects during the ETDM Planning and Programming Screens. It sets the standard procedure by which qualifying projects are screened through the ETDM process. This **Manual** also provides direction for the potentially affected community and stakeholder involvement in the transportation planning phase of project delivery.

This **Manual** is to be used in conjunction with resources such as handbooks, the EST, and the two-part **PD&E Manual (Procedure Number 650-000-001)**. The **PD&E Manual** provides guidance on the process for satisfying the requirements of the **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** and other related state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and applicable environmental considerations regarding all projects.

This **Manual** is intended to be used by transportation professionals through 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 the FDOT Central Environmental Management Office (CEMO) website (<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/emo/>).

## 1.2 AUTHORITY

This **Manual** was developed under the authority of the **Florida Transportation Plan, Section 334.044, Florida Statutes (F.S.)** and **Section 339.155, F.S.**, and complies or supports compliance with the following federal authorities and agreements:

1. **23 United States Code (U.S.C.), Highways, as amended**
2. **23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450** [Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Planning Assistance and Standards]
3. **49 CFR 613** [Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Planning]
4. **23 CFR 771** (Environmental Impact and Related Procedures)
5. **42 U.S.C., Chapter 55, National Environmental Policy, as amended**
6. **40 CFR parts 1500 – 1508** (Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing **NEPA**)
7. FHWA/FTA Master Agreement and Agency Operating Agreement dated February 12, 2003
8. State and federal agency Master Agreements and Agency Operating Agreements (various dates)

Development of Florida's ETDM process was undertaken to comply with the provisions in **Section 1309** of the **Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21)**. Subsequently, in December 2005, the FHWA determined that Florida's ETDM process was consistent with federal legislation pursuant to the **Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)** and grandfathered the process as satisfying **Section 6002b** of **SAFETEA-LU**. The ETDM process supports **Subparts B (Sections 1201-1203)** and **C (Section 1301-1323) of MAP-21**, serving as a mechanism to provide stakeholders the opportunity for early input to enhance the consideration of the environment during the transportation planning process and assisting in the acceleration of project delivery by better linking planning and project development processes.

On March 16, 2006, the FDOT Secretary approved **Procedure Number 650-000-002**, which established statewide use of the **ETDM Manual**. The approved procedure also established the process by which this **Manual**, or portions thereof, will be subsequently revised and updated.

## 1.3 SCOPE

The following organizational entities are affected by or are most likely to use this **Manual**: FDOT District Environmental Management, Planning, and Design offices and their FDOT Central Office counterparts. **Manual** users outside FDOT could also include the FHWA - Florida Division, the FTA, MPOs/TPOs, other ETAT members, consultants, and other state and federal agencies to support their role in the ETDM process.

## 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 AND REVISIONS

CEMO is responsible for the preparation and maintenance of this **Manual**. Copies of this **Manual** may be obtained by downloading and printing from the FDOT CEMO website (<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/emo/>).

Frequent changes in federal and state environmental laws require flexibility to update this **Manual** often and quickly. At a minimum, this **Manual** will be reviewed annually and updated, if required. Updated versions of the **Manual** will be posted on the CEMO website.

CEMO is responsible for all **ETDM Manual** revisions, which will be accomplished through the ETDM Committee. The Committee is composed of each District ETDM Coordinator, Turnpike ETDM Coordinator, Manager of the CEMO, CEMO Natural and Communities Administrator, CEMO Project Screening and Technologies Administrator, and a FHWA Florida Division representative. The FHWA representative serves as a non-voting member. The Manager of the CEMO chairs the ETDM Committee. The committee is notified by email, and a majority opinion is obtained before approving major revisions. Committee representatives have one vote, and six committee members comprise a quorum. A majority vote is required to approve a change to this **Manual**. The Manager of the CEMO is responsible for the deciding vote. Revisions to standards and policies set by the FHWA, and laws, rules, or regulations will not be subject to this majority vote.

Any major changes or substantive revisions or additions (e.g., policy changes, new chapters) to this **Manual**, as determined by the ETDM Committee, will be approved by the FDOT Executive Committee through the process established by FDOT in **Procedure No. 025-020-002, Standard Operating System**.

The CEMO Project Screening and Technologies Administrator will issue minor revisions or corrections to this Manual after approval by the ETDM Committee and consultation with other affected parties. Prior to issuance, these revisions will be coordinated with ETDM Coordinators and ETAT members, as appropriate.

## 1.6 TRAINING

Training courses available from FDOT pertaining to this **Manual** include **Efficient Transportation Decision Making Overview (BT-19-0045)** 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.

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 CEMO website (<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/emo/>) for more training opportunities.

## 1.7 FORMS

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 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 and fields that exist within the EST. Results are permanently stored in FDOT's archive system, 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 in the ***Environmental Screening Tool Handbook***.

## 1.8 REFERENCES

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 23, Part 450 (23 CFR 450). Planning Assistance and Standards.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 23, Part 771 (23 CFR 771). Environmental Impact and Related Procedures.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 49, Part 613 (49 CFR 613). Federal Transit Administration Planning.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 40, Parts 1500 – 1508. (40 CFR 1500 – 1508). Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act .

Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Administration, Master Agreement and Agency Operating Agreement (February 12, 2003).

Florida Department of Transportation. 2007. Standard Operating System (Procedure Number 025-020-002). Accessed at <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/proceduraldocuments/procedures.shtm> on 7/21/2013.

Florida Department of Transportation. 2010. Environmental Screening Tool Handbook. Accessed at [etdmpub.fl.a-etat.org](http://etdmpub.fl.a-etat.org) on 7/21/2013.

Florida Department of Transportation. 2012. ETDM Public website. Accessed at <http://etdmpub.fl.a-etat.org/est/> on 7/21/2013.

Florida Department of Transportation. 2012. Project Development and Environment Manual (Procedure Number 650-000-001). Accessed at <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/emo> on 7/21/2013.

Florida Department of Transportation. State and federal agency Master Agreements and Agency Operating Agreements regarding ETDM, various dates. Accessed at [etdmpub.flh-estat.org](http://etdmpub.flh-estat.org) on 7/21/2013..

Florida Statutes, Section 334.044. Florida Transportation Plan.

Florida Statutes, Section 339.155. Transportation Planning.

“Highways,” U.S. Code, Title 23 (as amended).

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21). 2012.

“National Environmental Policy,” U.S. Code, Title 42, Chapter 55.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). 2005.

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). 1998.

## **1.9 HISTORY**

03/2006: Original publication

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