

OVERVIEW

SCE Evaluation is the process of identifying and quantifying changes in the community that will result from implementing a transportation action. It involves testing various community scenarios that can reasonably be foreseen if a proposed project is (or is not) implemented (Figure 4-1). The community analysts should determine the implications of each projected change – if the change is adverse or beneficial to the community, as well as its significance within the context of the community. This process of evaluation must be conducted for each of the six SCE issues (Table 4-1) for each project alternative considered, including the no-build scenario.

- Establishing the consequences of doing nothing helps to quantify the benefits that can be attributed to the build alternatives.
- Comparing effects between the no-build and build alternatives will quantify the relative degrees of effect attributed to the various build alternatives.
- Tabulating the results will provide a basis for comparing alternatives and selecting a preferred alternative.

Table 4-1 Sociocultural Effects Issues

SOCIAL	ECONOMIC	LAND USE	MOBILITY	AESTHETICS	RELOCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demographics ■ Community Cohesion ■ Safety/Emergency Response ■ Community Goals ■ Quality of Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Business & Employment ■ Tax Base ■ Traffic Patterns ■ Business Access ■ Special Needs Patrons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Land Use – Urban Form ■ Local Plan Consistency ■ Open Space ■ Sprawl ■ Focal Points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Modal Choices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pedestrian ■ Bicyclists ■ Transit ■ Transportation Disadvantaged ■ Connectivity ■ Traffic Circulation ■ Public Parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Noise/Vibration ■ Viewshed ■ Compatibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Residential ■ Non-Residential ■ Public Facilities

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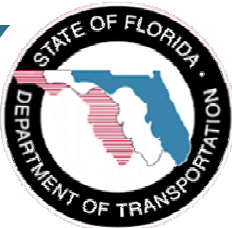
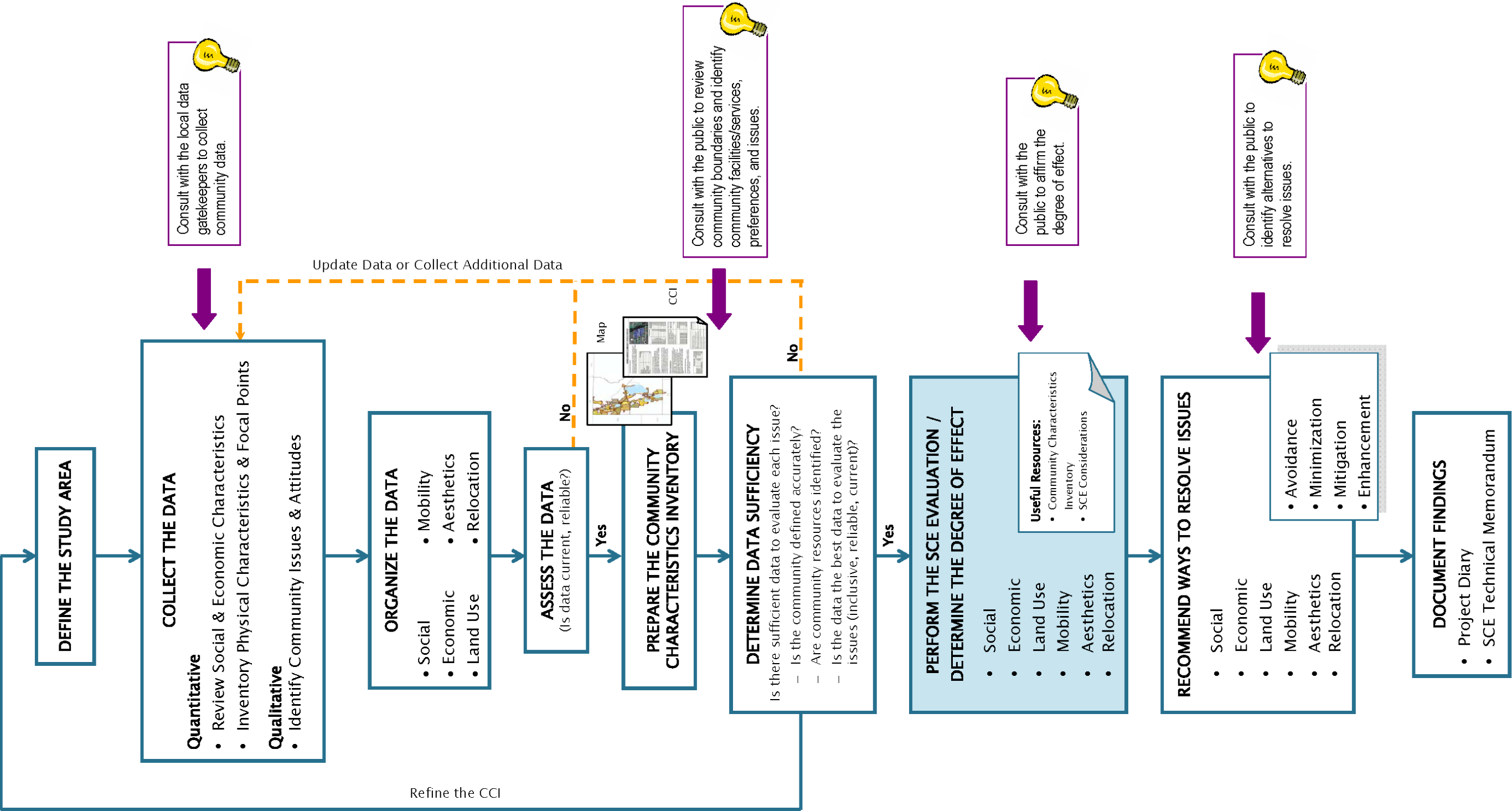


Figure 4-1 SCE Evaluation Process



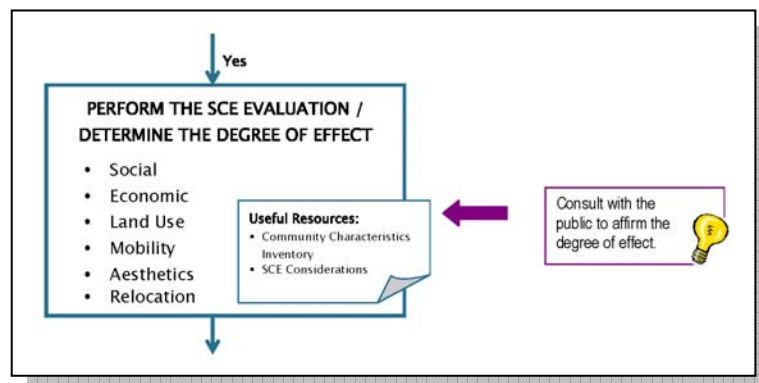
Unique characteristics of each community and each project can result in myriad of considerations of the sociocultural effects of a transportation action. The items listed under each of the six issues are not intended to be a comprehensive list but rather a generalized key to the most commonly evaluated effects. Public involvement is a key component of issues identification and evaluation.

Fifty-four (54) SCE considerations were developed incorporating the metropolitan transportation planning factors, federal guidelines, and standard analysis techniques used by community analysts. The 54 considerations provide a basis to address social, economic, land use, mobility, aesthetic, and relocation issues (Appendix D).

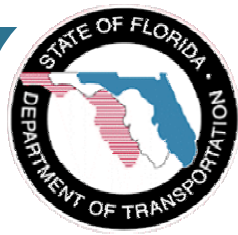
The evaluation of the SCE issues in conjunction with the 54 considerations will allow the community analyst to determine the degree of effect of a project on community resources. Each issue is examined using the available data and supplemental information collected during public involvement activities. There should be a balance between public input (qualitative data) and statistical information (quantitative data) regarding potential effects on a community.

4.1 PERFORM THE SCE EVALUATION

Once all relevant and necessary data is collected, assessed, and deemed sufficient for the evaluation, the information is summarized and mapped in the CCI. The community analyst now has more specific knowledge of the community and its boundaries.



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Using the SCE Considerations and the CCI, including the community map(s), the community analyst can evaluate the effects for each identified SCE issue while considering the following:

- Positive and negative effects;
- Short-term and long-term effects;
- Secondary and cumulative effects;
- Community goals;
- Effects identified by the community; and
- Level of controversy.

SCE effects are interconnected and it is important that the community analyst recognize the relationship of effects. The interrelationship of effects varies with the type of transportation action and the affected community. The community analyst should not focus on the considerations separately. Examining how effects relate to each other and counterbalancing effects of various considerations is critical to the resolution of issues.

The community analyst should carefully document all identified effects, the data and data sources used to determine the effects, as well as the degree of effect.

4.1.1 Social Issues

Figure 4–2 illustrates the *Process for Evaluating Social Issues in SCE*. Using the SCE Considerations, the community analyst should analyze the primary and secondary data sources to document potential social effects. The evaluation objectives provide necessary guidance to the community analyst.

SOCIAL ISSUES

- Demographics
- Community Cohesion
- Safety/Emergency Response
- Community Goals
- Quality of Life

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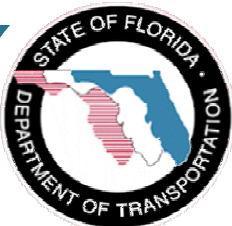
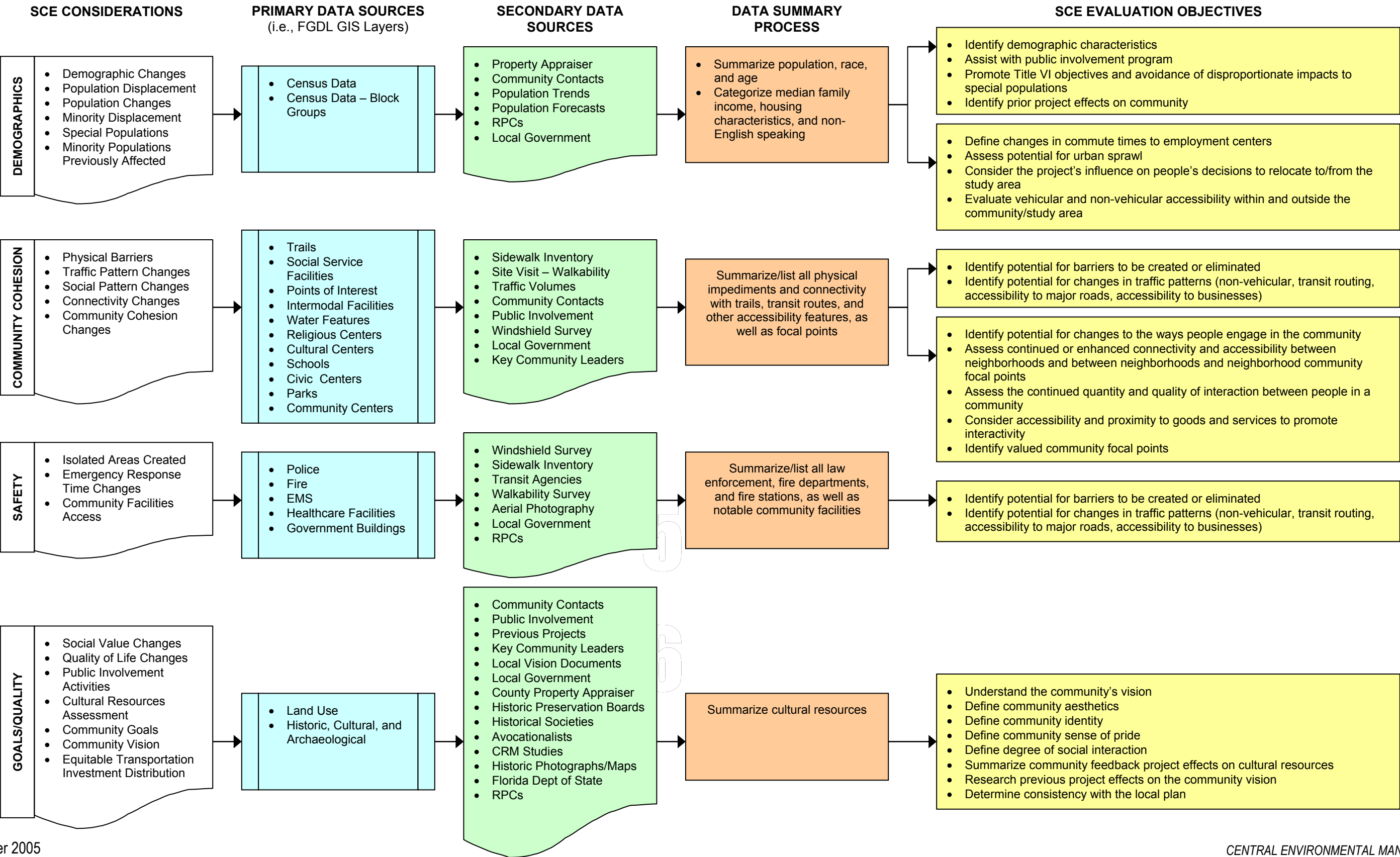
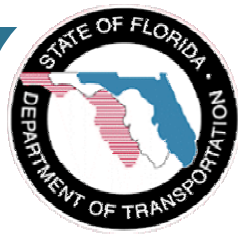


Figure 4-2 Process for Evaluating Social Issues in SCE





Social Issues: Demographics

Demographic data describes the population of the community. It is primarily collected by local, state, or federal agencies such as the Census Bureau and other government departments. It covers a range of topics about people in communities: population size, gender, age composition, ethnic backgrounds, household characteristics, and geographic distribution.

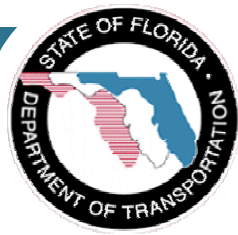
Demographic data assists in designing public participation, outreach, and education strategies that reflect the various age, educational, and economic backgrounds present in the community. For example, different ethnic groups might indicate the need for developing communication materials in additional languages.

The community analyst should use the following SCE Considerations as a starting point for evaluating potential social issues and documenting effects on demographics:

- 1.1 What are the demographics of the potentially affected population?
- 1.2 What displacements of population, if any, would be expected as a result of the project?
- 1.3 Would any increases or decreases in population be expected as a result of the project?
- 1.4 Would any displacement of minority populations be expected as a result of the project?
- 1.5 Are there any disproportionate effects on special populations?
- 1.6 Have minority populations previously been affected by other public projects in the area?

Use demographic information to identify a specific subgroup within a community (e.g., a particular ethnic group, elderly) that might warrant more intensive investigation and targeting of resources. Should the community analyst find community demographic information suggesting

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that Title VI/Civil Rights issues may occur, further evaluation is needed to resolve these issues.

Social Issues: Community Cohesion

Community cohesion is the degree to which residents have a sense of belonging to their neighborhood or community, including commitment to the community or level of attachment to neighbors, institutions in the community, or particular subgroups. Community Cohesion includes the degree of social networking in a community, including the degree to which residents cooperate and interact.

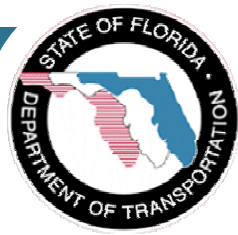
The community analyst should use the following SCE Considerations as a starting point for evaluating potential social issues and documenting potential effects on community cohesion:

- 1.7 Would the project result in any barriers dividing an established neighborhood(s) or would it increase neighborhood interaction?
- 1.8 What changes, if any, in traffic patterns through an established neighborhood(s) would be expected as a result of the project?
- 1.9 Would any changes to social relationships and patterns be expected as a result of the project?
- 1.10 Would the project result in any loss, reduction or enhancement of connectivity to a community or neighborhood activity center(s)?
- 1.11 Would the project affect community cohesion?

Is there evidence of community cohesion in the project study area? Review the CCI for factors suggesting community cohesion (e.g., active community groups and local meeting places). Consult with community leaders and service providers at recreation centers, social services, and community centers.

Cultural Resource Management Investigations can provide information regarding community cohesion. This is particularly true in urban areas that have already been affected by transportation projects. By focusing on

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the historic context and interviewing members of the previously affected community who remain, historic resource studies can uncover focal points not recognizable by any other methods or data.

Does the project include elements that may affect community cohesion? Review the project description to determine if there is a probability it will include physical barriers (e.g., noise walls, fencing, or grade-separated elements) or psychological barriers (e.g., wider roads or higher traffic volumes).

Social Issues: Safety/Emergency Response

SCE requires a broad definition of safety that includes the effects of the transportation project on neighborhood safety. In this context, the evaluation of safety considers whether residents feel safe in their neighborhood and includes issues ranging from emergency services to bicycle/pedestrian safety.

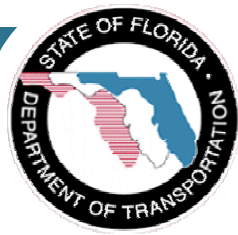
The community analyst should use the following SCE Considerations as a starting point for evaluating potential social issues and documenting potential effects on safety/emergency response:

- 1.12 Would the project result in the creation of isolated areas?
- 1.13 Would any increase or decrease in emergency services response time (fire, police, and EMS) be expected as a result of the project?
- 1.14 Does the project affect safe access to community facilities?

Will the project increase emergency services response time? Consult with local service providers to determine if project elements (e.g., potential barriers or increased traffic volumes) could affect emergency response times.

Will the project reduce travel safety for non-motorists? Review the project description to determine if project elements enhance or decrease pedestrian and bicycle safety. Consider whether traffic volumes and

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speeds increase or decrease. Determine if there are design elements to address safety (e.g., sidewalks, bicycle paths, or crosswalks).

Social Issues: Compatibility with Community Goals and Issues

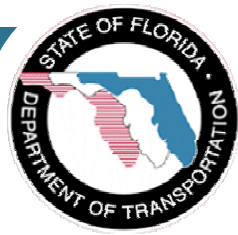
All local governments in Florida are required to adopt a Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan includes goals relative to future land use, transportation, housing, recreation, and capital improvements. In addition to the Comprehensive Plan, many communities have more detailed small area plans, neighborhood plans, vision statements or other documents that include goals and issues of the residents of smaller segments of the community.

Pertinent cultural resource issues are also considered in community goal statements. Historic preservation often plays an integral role in neighborhood or vision plans. Historic residential, cultural, and business districts and historic landscapes play an important role in defining community character and shaping future goals. Preservation of cultural resources is important to promoting the quality of life in many communities. Historic resources serve as tangible expressions of shared community values and help define the character of a community or neighborhood. The presence of archaeological resources also fosters a sense of community identity and pride.

The community analyst should use the following SCE Considerations as a starting point for evaluating potential social issues and documenting potential effects on community goals and quality of life:

- 1.15 Would any changes in social value be expected as a result of the project?
- 1.16 Would the project be perceived as having a positive or negative effect on quality of life?
- 1.17 Have community leaders and residents had opportunities to provide input to the project decision-making process in the present and/or past?

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- 1.18 Have previous projects in this area been compatible with or conflicted with the plans, goals and objectives of the community?
- 1.19 Is the proposed project consistent with the community vision?
- 1.20 Are transportation investments equitably serving all populations?

Should the community analyst determine issues regarding incompatibility with the community's quality of life or goals/objectives, more extensive public involvement may be needed to determine the level of controversy and the community's preferences.

4.1.2 Economic Issues

Figure 4-3 illustrates the *Process for Evaluating Economic Issues in SCE*. Using the SCE Considerations, the community analyst should analyze the primary and secondary data sources to document potential social effects. The evaluation objectives provide guidance to the community analyst for performing the evaluation.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

- Business and Employment
- Tax Base
- Traffic Patterns
- Business Access
- Special Needs Patrons

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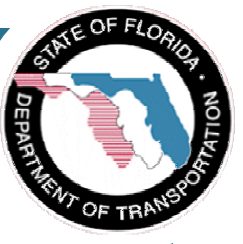
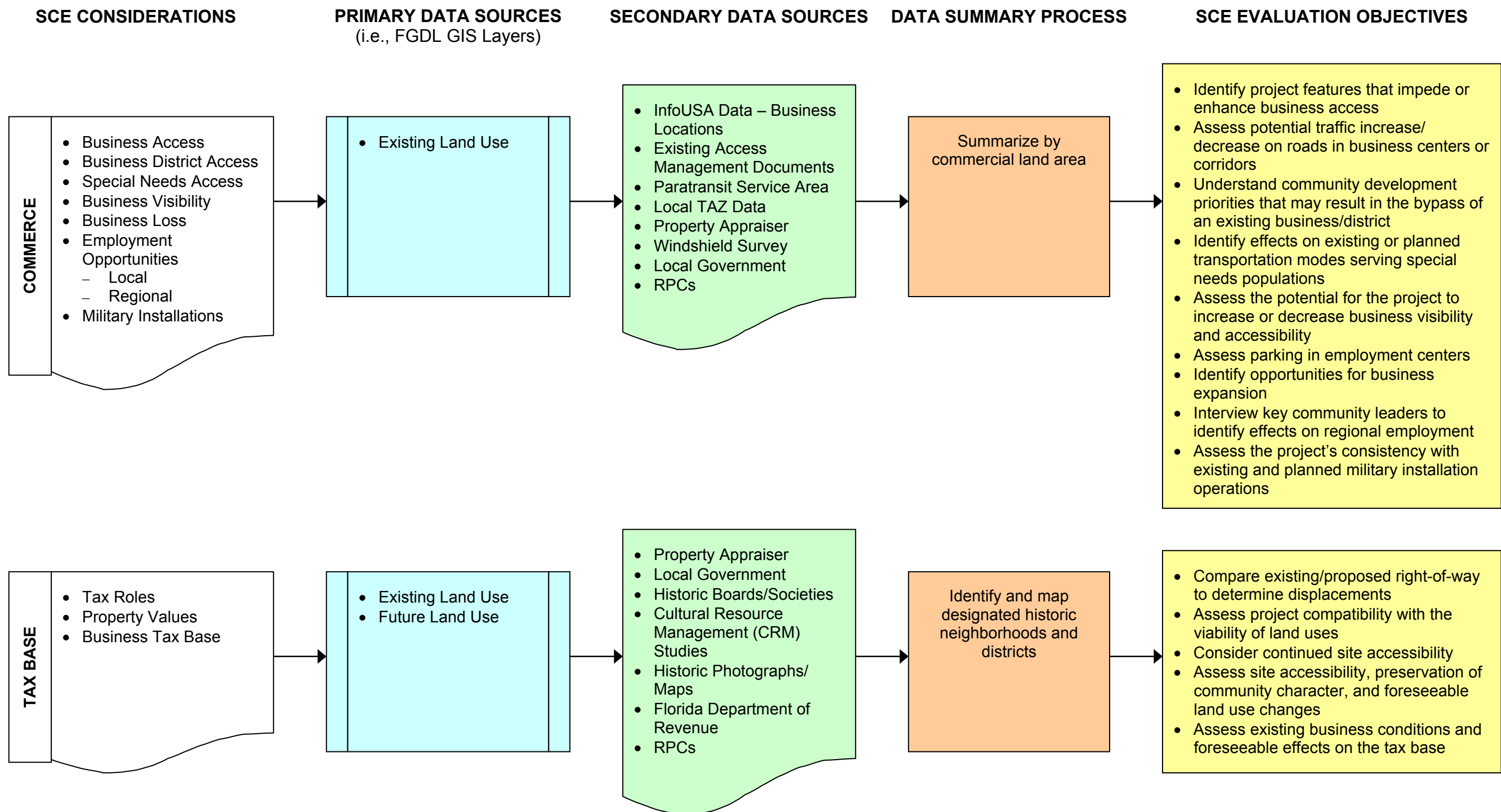
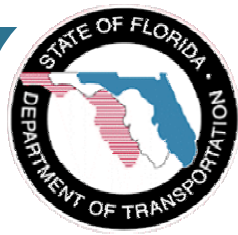


Figure 4-3 Process for Evaluating Economic Issues in SCE



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Economic Issues: Business and Employment

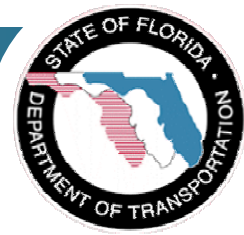
Economic conditions and employment describes a community's economic history, current economic well-being, and future potential. This information takes into account employment levels, types of jobs, per capita income, poverty, unemployment rates, the range of incomes in the community, and trends in employment opportunities (e.g., family-owned businesses versus national chain businesses).

Information about a community's economy can determine employment conditions and help the community analyst anticipate important changes in the employment base, and identify how employment activities might affect or be affected by the local business climate.

The community analyst should use the following SCE Considerations as a starting point for evaluating potential economic issues and documenting potential effects on business/employment:

- 2.1 Would any changes to travel patterns be expected that would eliminate or enhance access to any businesses?
- 2.2 Would any increases or decreases in traffic through traffic-based business areas be expected?
- 2.3 Would any changes in travel patterns be expected that would result in a business or district being bypassed?
- 2.4 Would access for special needs patrons increase or decrease as a result of the project?
- 2.5 Would any increase or decrease in business visibility for traffic-based businesses be expected as a result of the project?
- 2.6 Would the loss of any businesses be expected as a result of the project?
- 2.7 Would any increases or decreases in employment opportunities in the local economy be expected as a result of the project?
- 2.8 Would regional employment opportunities be enhanced or diminished as a result of the project?
- 2.9 What is the effect of the project on military installations?

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Should the community analyst determine that access by special needs patrons is affected; further analysis is needed to determine any Title VI/Civil Rights implications.

Economic Issues: Tax Base

The effect of a project on the tax base of a community may range from negligible to significant. When considering effects on the tax base, many variables are reviewed. These variables include property values, the millage rate of a community, total ad valorem revenue collected by the community, the percentage of the budget of the community that is funded by ad valorem revenue, the percentage of the total ad valorem revenue collected in the study area, and the effect of the project on property values in the study area.

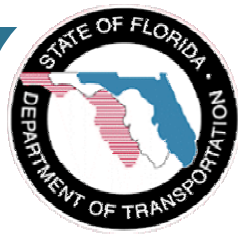
These numbers give the community analyst some perspective on the relative effect an increase or decrease in the tax base may have on the community. An important point to consider is that the tax base is derived from property values of an entire county and/or city.

Generally a study area will be a small percentage of the jurisdiction wide tax base. Effects of an increase or decrease in the tax base will also be jurisdiction wide.

The community analyst should use the following SCE Considerations as a starting point for evaluating potential economic issues and documenting potential effects on business/employment:

- 2.10 Would any real property be removed from the tax roles as a result of the project?
- 2.11 Is it likely that taxable property values would increase or decline as a result of the project?
- 2.12 Would changes in business activities increase or decrease the tax base?

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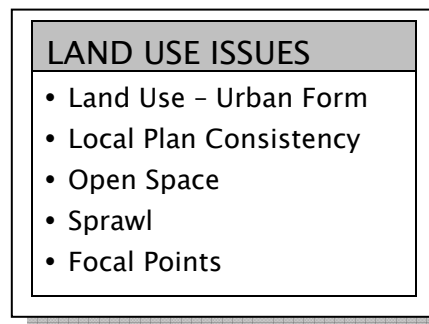
Additional considerations include the land use classification affected by the project. Traditionally, property classified as industrial, commercial or higher density residential has the highest property value. If a community has limited amounts of land in these classifications and large amounts of rural and low density residential land, then projects affecting the industrial, commercial and high density land can have more significant effects on the tax base.

Historic neighborhoods and business districts, particularly those designated as local historic districts or officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places, represent important economic assets to a community. A study of the Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation conducted by the Florida Department of State and the University of Florida demonstrated that historic preservation and rehabilitation help maintain property values. It also showed that historic properties often appreciate at a higher rate than similar non-historic properties. Consequently, the loss of individual historic resources and districts may negatively impact property values and should be considered as part of the SCE evaluation.

Historic sites that are open to the public and serve as *tourist attractions* also need to be considered as part of SCE evaluations. Examples of such places include historic house museums, historic villages, military forts or battlefields, archaeological parks, and roadside attractions.

4.1.3 Land Use Issues

Figure 4-4 illustrates the *Process for Evaluating Land Use Issues in SCE*. Using the SCE Considerations, the community analyst should analyze the primary and secondary data sources to document potential social effects. The evaluation objectives provide guidance to the community analyst for performing the evaluation.



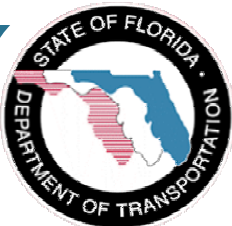
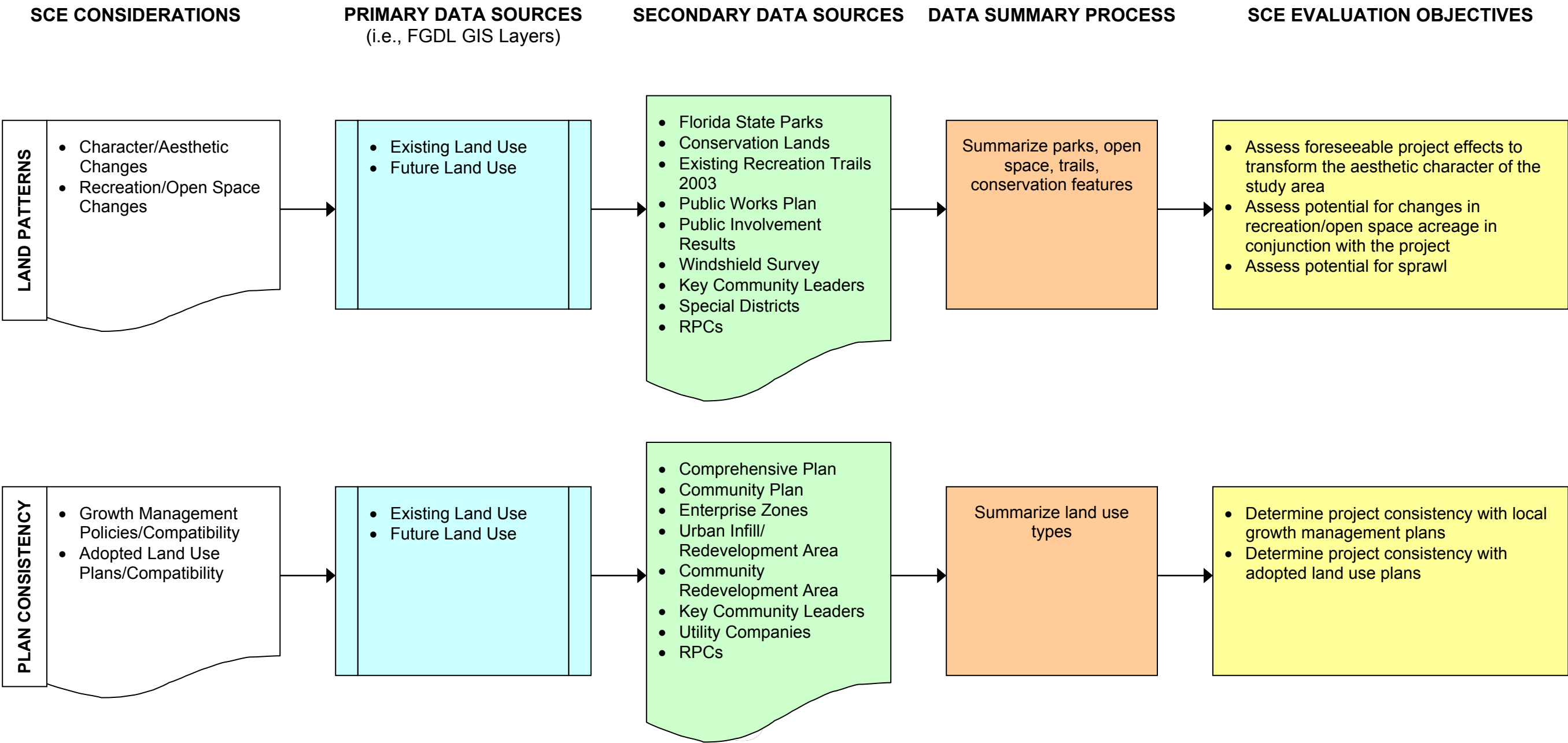
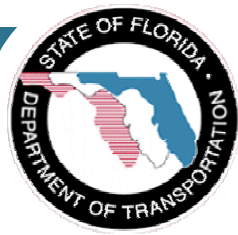


Figure 4-4 Process for Evaluating Land Use Issues in SCE





Land Use Issues: Land Use Patterns

Information about land use and planning describes who owns and manages land (e.g., private land owners, state or federal agencies) as well as who is responsible for land use planning within the community (e.g., the city or county planning agency). This information might also indicate how long landowners and managers have controlled use of the land; what types of development occupy tracts of land; and whether tenants rent, lease, or own the property.

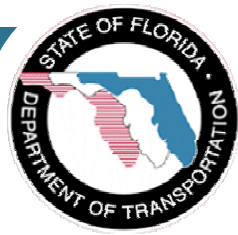
This information describes a community's sense of place and empowerment in terms of ownership and control over current and future land use planning decisions. This information identifies those responsible for managing the land, what types of restrictions limit land use, and whether community members feel a sense of ownership and accountability for the land and resources in the community. This information can also indicate trends in land use over time, as well as the various factors that have contributed to such changes (e.g., economic growth, the urban core, increases in light industrial, commercial, or residential development).

The community analyst should use the following SCE Considerations as a starting point for evaluating potential land use issues and documenting potential effects on land use issues:

- 3.1 Would the project result in a change in the character or aesthetics of the existing landscape?
- 3.2 Would the amount of recreation/open space be expected to increase or decrease as a result of the project?
- 3.3 Would the project be compatible with local growth management policies?
- 3.4 Would the project be compatible with adopted land use plans?

Should the community analyst determine the project is incompatible with adopted land use plans, further analysis is necessary to resolve these issues.

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4.1.4 Mobility Issues

Figure 4–5 illustrates the *Process for Evaluating Mobility Issues in SCE*.

Using the SCE Considerations, the community analyst should analyze the primary and secondary data sources to document potential social effects. The evaluation objectives provide guidance to the community analyst for performing the evaluation.

MOBILITY ISSUES

- Modal Choices
 - Pedestrian
 - Bicyclists
 - Transit
 - Transportation Disadvantaged
- Connectivity
- Traffic Circulation
- Public Parking

Mobility is defined as the ability of local residents to move freely about their community. This definition incorporates all modes of transportation and places special emphasis on the ability of non-driving populations (disabled, low-income, elderly, and children) to move freely about the neighborhood and carry out normal daily activities. It is determined by the degree of accessibility of various areas and land uses within a neighborhood.

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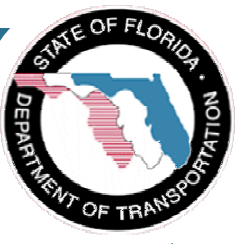
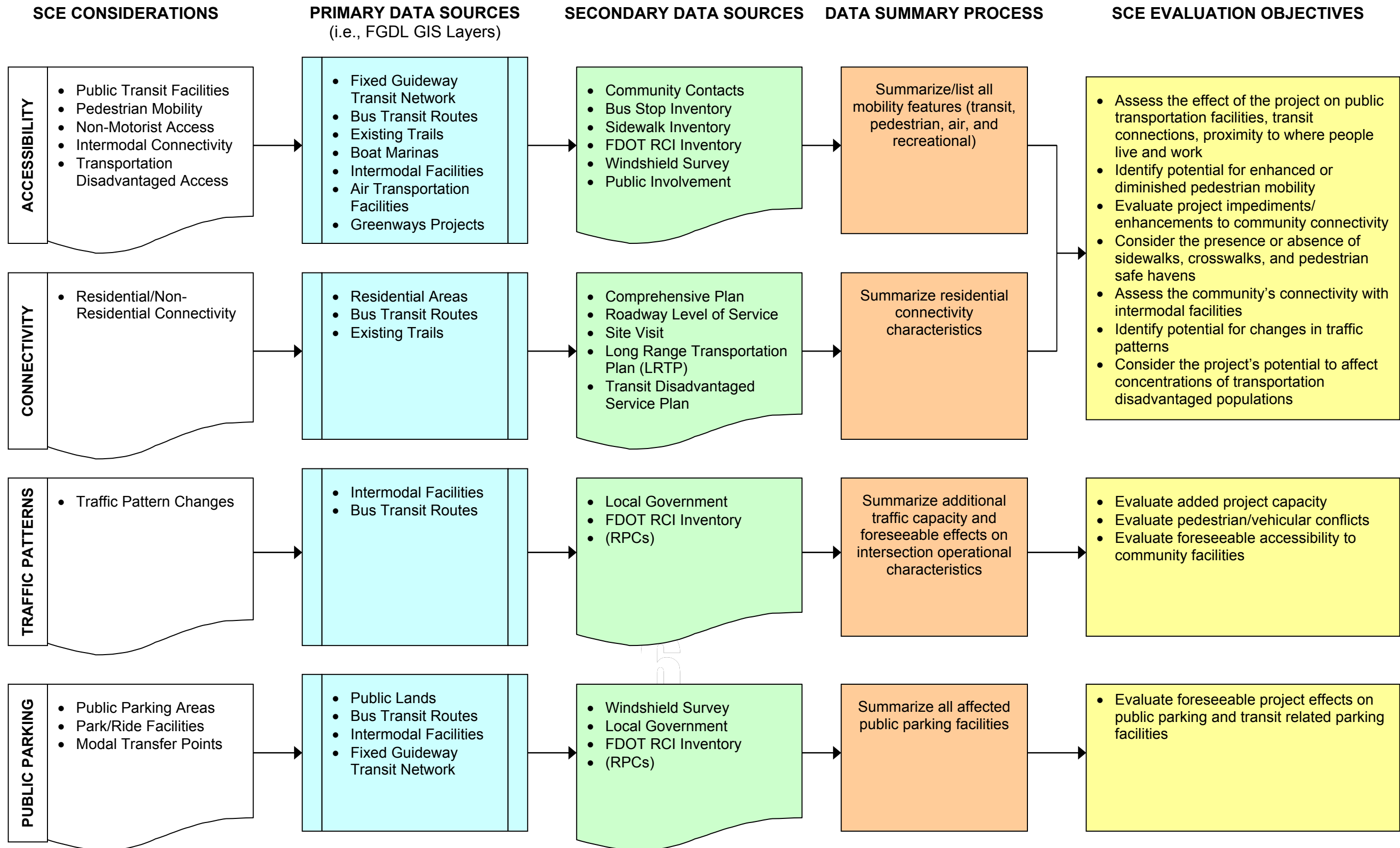
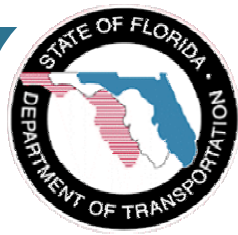


Figure 4-5 Process for Evaluating Mobility Issues in SCE



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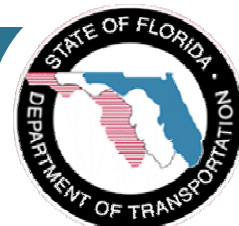
How does the project affect short-term and long-term vehicular access to businesses, public services, and other facilities? Does it affect parking availability? How does the project affect non-motorist access to businesses, public services, schools, and other facilities? Does the project impede or enhance access between residences and community facilities and businesses? Does it shift traffic to streets used by pedestrians? How does the project affect access to public transportation?

The community analyst should use the following SCE Considerations as a starting point for evaluating potential mobility issues and documenting potential effects:

- 4.1 Would access to public transportation facilities be increased or reduced as a result of the project?
- 4.2 Would pedestrian mobility be increased or decreased as a result of the project?
- 4.3 Would non-motorist access to business and service facilities be increased or reduced as a result of the project?
- 4.4 How does the project affect intermodal connectivity?
- 4.5 Would any change in connectivity between residential and non-residential areas be expected as a result of the project?
- 4.6 What are the expected changes to existing traffic patterns as a result of the project?
- 4.7 Would a change in any public parking areas be expected as a result of the project?
- 4.8 Would access for transportation disadvantaged populations be affected?

Should the community analyst determine that access for the transportation disadvantaged population is an issue, further analysis is needed to determine any Title VI/Civil Rights implications (Appendix C).

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4.1.5 Aesthetic Issues

Figure 4–6 illustrates the *Process for Evaluating Aesthetic Issues in SCE*. Using the SCE Considerations, the community analyst should analyze the primary and secondary data sources to document potential social effects. The evaluation objectives provide guidance to the community analyst for performing the evaluation.

AESTHETICS ISSUES

- Noise/Vibration
- Viewshed
- Compatibility

For the purposes of an SCE evaluation, aesthetics refers to the collective community vision of what constitutes a pleasing environment. Aesthetic qualities make a community unique among its neighbors and special to its residents.

The community analyst should use the following SCE Considerations as a starting point for evaluating potential aesthetic issues and documenting potential effects:

- 5.1 Are there noise or vibration sensitive sites near the project?
- 5.2 Is the project likely to affect a vista or viewshed?
- 5.3 Does the project blend visually with the area?
- 5.4 Is the project adjacent to any community focal point?
- 5.5 Is the project likely to be perceived as being compatible and in character with the community's aesthetic values?
- 5.6 What feature(s), if any, of the project might be perceived by the community as inconsistent with the character of that community?

Opinions regarding aesthetic qualities are highly subjective and vary within the community. Resources that are generally considered to contribute to the aesthetic quality of a community include tree-lined streets, scenic views, parks, green spaces, water features, historic structures, and local landmarks. Those structures or features that elicit negative reaction generally include landfills, auto salvage yards, abandoned buildings and deteriorating structures.

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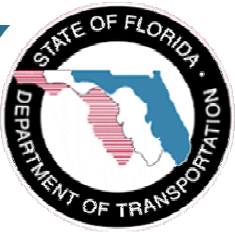
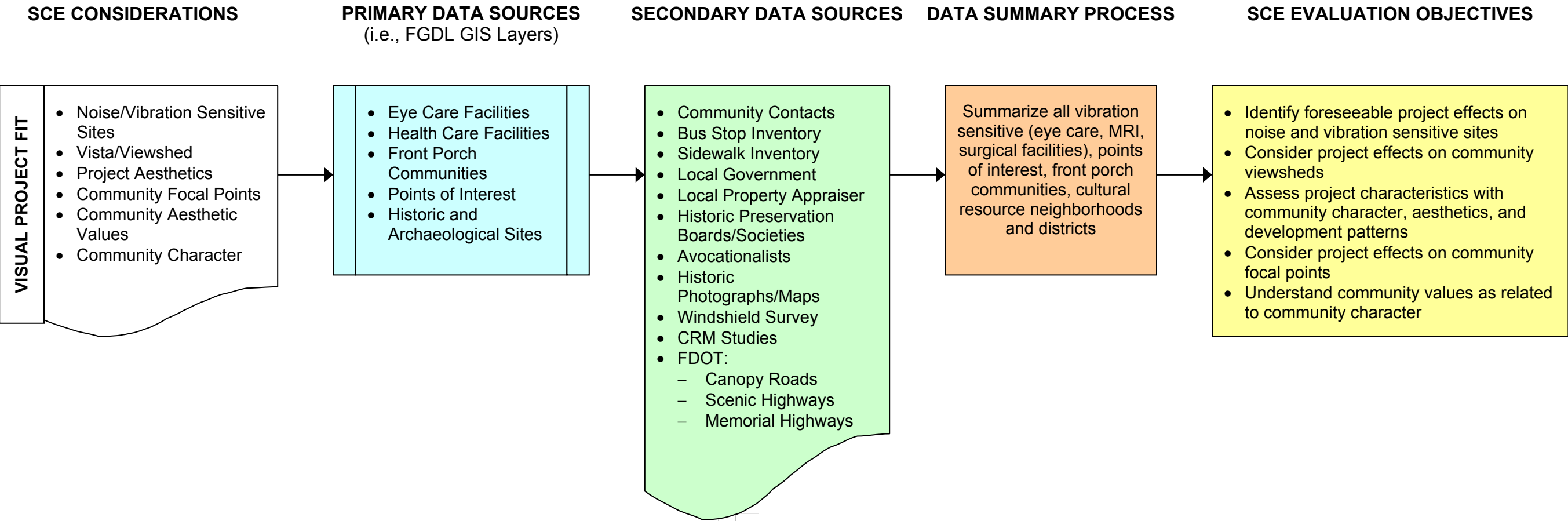
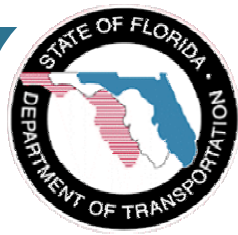


Figure 4-6 Process for Evaluating Aesthetic Issues in SCE





Aesthetics play a prominent role in the community perception of livability. At its most basic level, livability is a measure of the fitness of a place for habitation. In the context of SCE, it refers to the collective qualities of a community that make it a desirable place to live. The placement and design of a transportation facility can diminish the aesthetic character of the surrounding area due to contrasts between natural landforms or existing structures. Engineered roadway elements, blocked views, or a scale that is out of proportion to the surrounding landscape elements are other factors that can interfere with the aesthetic character of an area.

Should the community analyst determine aesthetic issues are present, more extensive public involvement may be needed to determine the level of controversy and the community's preferences.

4.1.6 Relocation Issues

Figure 4-7 illustrates the *Process for Evaluating Relocation Issues in SCE*. Using the SCE Considerations, the community analyst should analyze the primary and secondary data sources to document potential social effects.

The evaluation objectives provide guidance to the community analyst for performing the evaluation.

RELOCATION ISSUES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residential• Non-Residential• Public Facilities

Relocation and displacement in the context of SCE evaluation refers to the action of being removed from an existing location and being re-established in a new place. This action involves modifying the complex spatial relationships between residents, businesses and community facilities, and can involve financial as well as social and psychological considerations.

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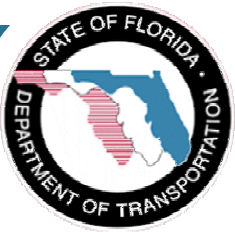
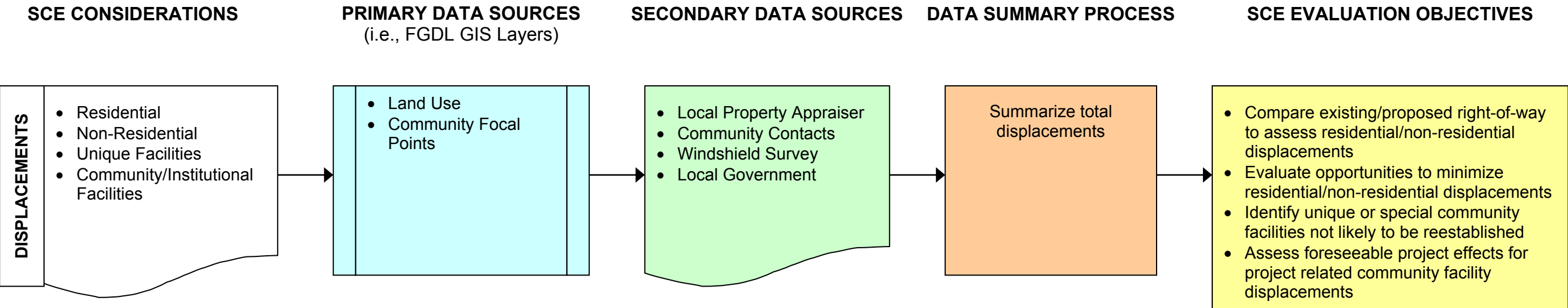
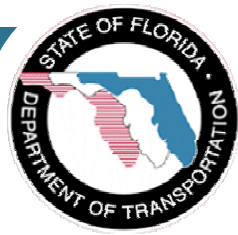


Figure 4-7 Process for Evaluating Relocation Issues in SCE





The community analyst should use the following SCE Considerations as a starting point for evaluating potential relocation issues and documenting potential effects:

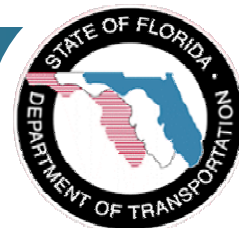
- 6.1 Would any displacement of residences and/or dwellings be expected as a result of the project?
- 6.2 Would any displacement of non-residential land uses be expected as a result of the project?
- 6.3 Do any potentially displaced non-residential uses have any unique or special characteristics that are not likely to be reestablished in the community?
- 6.4 Would any displacement of community or institutional facilities be expected as a result of the project?

For example, the community analyst must ensure that the selection of a roadway alignment does not intentionally follow the path of the lowest property values which take principally low-income or minority neighborhoods, without adequate study and reasonable engineering, economic, and social justification. Should the community analyst identify a specific subgroup within the community disproportionately affected further analysis is needed to determine any Title VI/Civil Rights implications (Appendix C).

4.2 DETERMINING THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF EVALUATION

Common sense and logic will guide the determination of the level of evaluation that is needed, how best to approach the evaluation, and what degree of mitigation is appropriate. The level of evaluation and documentation that is reasonable for a project will vary depending upon the size and complexity of the project, the level of controversy involved, and the potential for significant community effects.

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Scenarios that may warrant a more extensive SCE evaluation include transportation projects that:

1. Require large amounts of right of way (ROW) or displace large numbers of people;
2. Cause a substantial increase or decrease in traffic through an area;
3. Conflict with local comprehensive plans;
4. Affect community facilities (e.g., schools, parks, churches);
5. Affect historic districts or community landmarks;
6. Affect aesthetic features (e.g., canopy roads, scenic vistas); or
7. Disrupt or divide an established or cohesive neighborhood.

Recent major shifts in the demographics of a region or the introduction of a community planning initiative (e.g. sustainable development, community redevelopment areas, or Main Street program) may also indicate the need for a more extensive analysis.

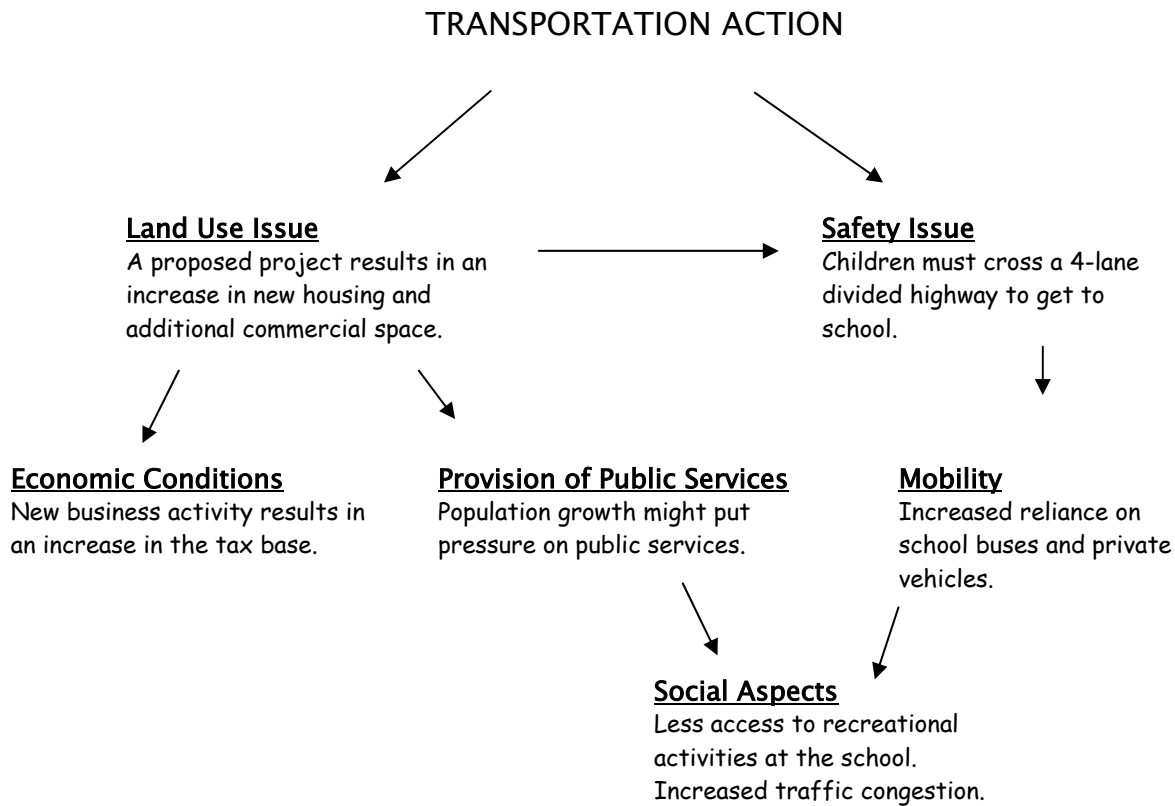
Case law has established guidelines for use in determining whether an effect warrants further exploration. Legal principles call for analysis of only those effects that are “reasonably foreseeable.” This has been defined as effects that are both (1) probable, and (2) significant. Guidelines from the environmental evaluation case law include the following questions:

1. With what confidence can you say that the effect is likely to occur?
2. Is there sufficient knowledge about the effect to make its consideration useful?
3. Is there a need to know about the effect, due to controversy or other reasons?

Figure 4–8 illustrates an example of the relationship between sociocultural effects as developed by the Federal Highway Administration in *The Community Impact Assessment A Quick Reference for Transportation*. Sociocultural effects may be interconnected and the community analyst must recognize these relationships.

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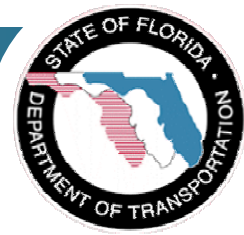
Figure 4-8 Relationship of Effects



A proposed project may result in changes in land use, such as an increase in housing development or commercial space in certain locations. As a result, enhanced business activity along the corridor may increase the local tax base and create jobs; however, population growth might put additional pressure on public services leading to overcrowding at public facilities.

The project might create safety problems if children now must cross a wider highway to reach parks or schools, leading to increased reliance on school buses and private vehicles. Overcrowded schools and reduced mobility might create other social problems.

The Community Impact Assessment A Quick Reference for Transportation



4.3 DETERMINE THE DEGREE OF EFFECT

It is important to recognize the various types of effects that may result from transportation projects. Direct project effects are changes in the community that principally occur as a result of implementing a transportation project (e.g., acquisition of right of way and business displacement). Indirect effects occur over time and often extend beyond the boundary of a community. Indirect and cumulative effects are much less obvious and can be easily overlooked if the community analyst is not careful. Examples of this type of effect are:

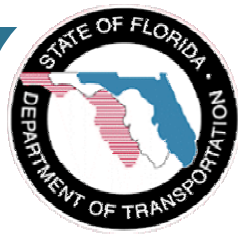
1. The project improves access to a relatively undeveloped area.
2. The improved access stimulates development.
3. The population increases.
4. Nearby schools become overcrowded.

The degree of effect should be affirmed through public involvement activities. The relative magnitude of social and economic effects can vary across communities, neighborhoods, and stakeholder groups due to differing degrees of sensitivity toward a particular issue or impact. An effect that is perceived by one community as significantly adverse might be widely tolerated or even desirable to another. Such variation can make determining the importance of an effect both challenging and unpredictable.

Guidance to making this determination is gained through adaptation of criteria established by the CEQ Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1500–1508), including:

1. Probability of the effect occurring;
2. Number of individuals affected;
3. Likely duration of the effect;
4. Relative value of benefits or costs to groups
5. Extent that negative effects can be mitigated;
6. Likelihood and nature of secondary effects;

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7. Relevance to present and future policy decisions;
8. Level of uncertainty over possible effects; and
9. Presence or absence of controversy.

Another consideration is the balancing of adverse and beneficial effects. For example, the additional lanes constructed as part of a widening project may reduce pedestrian mobility mid-block, but are offset by crosswalk facilities constructed as part of the same project.

The following questions are a useful guide in determining significance:

- What is the nature of the effect?
 - Would the change in the community occur without the project?
 - How many people are affected?
 - Are sensitive demographic groups (e.g., seniors, low-income, disabled) affected?
 - Is the change expected to be short term, long term, or permanent?
- What is the severity of the effect?
 - What is the magnitude of change from baseline conditions?
 - Does the community perceive the change as a threat to their cultural, social, or economic well being?
 - Does this perception vary by stakeholder groups?
 - Will secondary effects strain the capacity of other community resources (e.g., schools and emergency services)?
- What is the potential for mitigation?
 - Can the adverse effect be avoided? Minimized?
 - Is mitigation feasible?
 - What is the cost of mitigation and how soon will funding be needed?
 - Who will bear the cost of mitigation (e.g., state or local government)?

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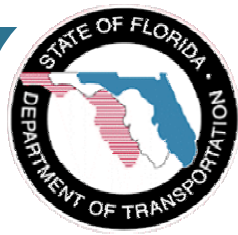


Table 4-2 Degree of Effect provides guidance to the community analyst in determining the degree of effect.

Table 4-2 Degree of Effect

DEGREE OF EFFECT	SOCIOCULTURAL RESOURCES
Not Applicable/No Involvement	There is no presence of the issue in relationship to the project or the issue is irrelevant in relationship to the proposed transportation action.
Enhanced	Project has positive effect on community. Affected community supports the proposed project.
None	Project has no effect on the affected community.
Minimal	Project has minimal adverse effect on elements of affected community. Minimal community resistance to the planned project. Little or no mitigation is needed.
Moderate	Project has adverse effect on some elements of the affected community. There is moderate community resistance to the planned project. Public involvement is needed to seek alternatives more acceptable to the community. Moderate community involvement is required during project development. Some mitigation or minimization is needed to gain support from the community.
Substantial	Project has substantial adverse effects on the affected community and faces substantial community resistance. Intensive community interaction with focused public involvement is required during project development to address community concerns. Project will need substantial mitigation to gain public acceptance.
Potential Dispute (Coordination Required)	Project is not in compliance with approved local government comprehensive plans, and/or affects Title VI compliance.

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