

January/February 2020

Air Quality and Sustainable Transportation Highlights

Prepared by the Office of Natural Environment
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)



U.S. Department of Transportation
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Announcements and Recent Events

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) Emission Reductions Calculator Toolkit

The FHWA is continuing to develop a series of tools to provide technical support for the implementation of the CMAQ Program. This CMAQ Emission Reductions Calculator is offered as an additional resource to assist DOTs, MPOs, and project sponsors in the project justification process. All modules are available on the FHWA [CMAQ Emissions Calculator Toolkit](#) webpage. For more information, please contact Mark Glaze (Mark.Glaze@dot.gov or 202-366-4053).

Most recently, the *Managed Lane Facilities and Conversions* tool was updated. In addition, recorded training webinars have been posted for multiple transit bus, bicycle, and pedestrian project tools. FHWA also completed the extension of the project evaluation year to 2030, for all the tools. The toolkit is accessible [here](#).

The FHWA will host a webinar to demonstrate the use of both the *Alternative Fuels and Vehicles* and the *Dust Mitigation* Tools of the CMAQ Emissions Calculator Toolkit from 2:00 to 3:00 PM Eastern Time on March the 26th. Please take note of the following web link and call-in number for this upcoming webinar.

URL: <https://connectdot.connectsolutions.com/rcagt/>

Dial-in: (877) 873-8018 code: 2381602

FHWA Making the Connections: Transportation Outreach Brochures

Informed transportation decisions ensure safe and reliable transportation access for the entire community. Transportation investments that integrate community wellbeing, safe transportation options, and business interests tend to be more robust. The FHWA has created a series of short [outreach brochures](#) to communicate how the [Economic Benefits](#) are realized when transportation investment decisions support [Active Transportation](#), [Complete Streets](#), [Interagency Cooperation](#), [Public Transit](#) and [Rural and Small Town](#) transportation connections. For more information, please contact Victoria Martinez at victoria.martinez@dot.gov or 787-771-2524.

US EPA MOVES Team Seeking Input on the Use of Custom Domains

As part of planning for future versions of MOVES, EPA is interested in feedback from modelers on how often they use Custom Domains, what types of modeling purposes this approach is used for, and perspectives on the advantages and limitations of this approach as compared to the more common county and project scale modeling. When modeling air pollution emissions from on road vehicles, MOVES users have the option of modeling a Custom Domain by defining a custom geographic area that may consist of multiple counties, parts of counties, or combinations of counties and partial counties that can be described using a single set of inputs. If you have experience running MOVES for Custom Domains, please email mobile@epa.gov with “Custom Domain” in the subject line, and let the team know why you selected this approach and how it worked for you.

CDC Publishes Active Communities Tool

The US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released a new tool, [*The Active Communities Tool* \(ACT\): An Action Planning Guide and Assessment Modules to Improve Community Built Environments to Promote Physical Activity](#). The tool helps committed, cross-sector teams create an action plan for improving community built environments that promote physical activity consistent with their community context. The ACT has two parts: an action planning guide and a series of assessment modules. It is designed to inform steps of the action planning and assessment process specific to improving community built environments for physical activity.

CDC Launches Active People, Healthy Nation Initiative

The US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is launching a new initiative, dubbed [Active People, Healthy NationSM](#), to help 27 million Americans become more physically active by 2027 and promote effective strategies to increase physical activity at the State and local level. The goal of the Active People, Healthy Nation Initiative is to build a national movement of individuals, organizations, and champions that support [strategies that work](#) to support physical activity. The initiative is based on a foundation of inclusion and health equity where everyone regardless of age, race, income, socio-economic status, disability status, and geographic location has an opportunity to be physically active.

As the CDC’s Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd Edition, notes, physical activity is one of the most beneficial things people can do to improve their health and quality of life. If everyone met the Physical Activity Guidelines, the nation could save \$117 billion in health care costs a year.

TRB Webinar: Intersection Between Transportation and Health

TRB is hosting a webinar on the [Intersection Between Health and Transportation](#), Monday, April 27 from 1:00 to 2:30 PM Eastern that will explore how transportation networks impact public health. The presenters will discuss how the health impacts of transportation investments. They will also address planning decisions, including how programming analyses and design considerations can encompass more than air emissions, noise, and water quality. This webinar will identify how improving transportation needs of a community can increase safety, enhance accessibility, and advance health outcomes.

Meetings, Conferences, and Workshops

Call for Presentations for TRB Transportation, Environment, and Energy: An Integrated Research Symposium Summer Meeting

Transportation Research Board (TRB) committees on Environmental Analysis in Transportation, Transportation and Air Quality, Ecology and Transportation, Transportation-Related Noise and Vibration, Resource Conservation and Recovery, Transportation Energy, and Alternative Transportation Fuels and Technologies announce the call for abstracts for the July 12 – 15, 2020 Summer Meeting in Denver, CO. Those interested in presenting at the Symposium should review the [Call for Presentations](#) and submit an abstract by **April 1st**. Instructions for submitting your abstract are detailed at the top of the [Call for Presentations](#) page.

Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) Annual Conference

The Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations announces their Annual Conference to be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota on October 26 – 30, 2020. AMPO's [Call for Proposals](#) for the 2020 Annual Conference is now open. Presentation proposals are due by April 13, 2020, 11:59pm EST. If you have any questions on the call for presentation proposals, please contact Sarah Hicks at shicks@ampo.org or 202-624-3682.

Sustainability and Emerging Transportation Technology (SETT) 2020: *Shaping the Future of Mobility*, August 31-September 2, 2020, Irvine, CA

The SETT 2020 conference will bring together researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers to discuss and debate the intersection of *sustainability* and *emerging transportation technologies* with a focus on solutions. The conference will address questions around how academics, policy-makers, the private sector, NGOs, and others can work together to shape new mobility solutions to benefit all users of our transportation systems. For more information about the conference is available [via the conference website](#).

Training Opportunities

Introduction to Transportation Conformity: In-Person Trainings

The National Transit Institute (NTI) is offering in-person training opportunities covering its “Introduction to Transportation Conformity” course. This 2.5 day course will present basic information about conformity requirements and the relationship of the transportation and air quality planning processes in order to prepare agency staff (Federal, State and local) to participate in interagency consultation and work effectively in resolving conformity issues. For more information, please visit [the NTI registration website](#).

FHWA Resource Center Training Activities

FHWA’s Resource Center Air Quality Technical Services Team is available to offer MOVES and other trainings. Please contact Mike Claggett, at Michael.Claggett@dot.gov, for additional information or to discuss scheduling a training.

Project Level Training for Quantitative PM Hot-Spot Analyses

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed a three-day training course on completing quantitative PM hot-spot analyses according to EPA's "[Transportation Conformity Guidance for Quantitative Hot-spot Analyses in PM2.5 and PM10 Nonattainment and Maintenance Areas](#)" (PM Hot-spot Guidance). This course is geared towards State and local agency staff who will be completing these analyses, as well as those who may be reviewing, approving, or otherwise assessing hot-spot analyses. Previous modeling experience is not necessary, although familiarity with MOVES and air quality dispersion modeling may be helpful. There is no registration fee for this course. Details are available on [the EPA website](#).

Additional Web-Based Transportation Conformity Training

As a reminder, several web-based transportation conformity training opportunities are available on-demand from [FHWA's conformity training website](#) (under "Web-based Training"). These training opportunities range in level of detail from a short 27-minute video providing a high-level basic overview of transportation conformity to a detailed set of 32 self-directed training modules. Recordings of two webinars are available: basic transportation conformity overview (June 12, 2018, 70 minutes) and basic MOVES emissions model training (June 18, 2018, 42 minutes).

The target audience for these training materials are FHWA staff and State and local transportation partners (MPOs and State DOTs) who are either new to or would like a refresher training on the conformity process. For questions, please contact David Kall, at david.kall@dot.gov, or 202-366-6276.

CMAQ 101 Training

The FHWA posted a 27-minute YouTube video on the CMAQ program. The video provides a basic introduction to the program, how CMAQ funds are distributed to States, and the types of projects eligible for the CMAQ program. The training is available via the [FHWA's YouTube channel](#). For more information about the CMAQ program, please contact Mark Glaze at mark.glaze@dot.gov or (202) 366-4053.

FHWA NEPA Air Quality Analysis for Highway Projects

The FHWA Resource Center Environment and Air Quality team will be conducting a series of training sessions on NEPA Air Quality Analysis for Highway Projects. The training includes sessions on project-level applications appropriate for managers and practitioners, as well as hands-on sessions intended for modelers. Please note this is not a general MOVES training course, but is focused on project-level applications. It is not intended to address regional applications, such as SIP emissions inventories or regional (plan and TIP) conformity analyses. If you are interested in this training, please contact Michael Claggett at michael.claggett@dot.gov.

Air Quality Planning Web Course Available at No Cost

The National Highway Institute (NHI) Air Quality Planning web-based training series is designed for transportation practitioners. It includes four modules: Clean Air Act Overview (FHWA-NHI-142068), State Implementation Plan (SIP) and Transportation Control Measure (TCM) Requirements and Policies (FHWA-NHI-142069), SIP Development Process (FHWA-NHI-142070), and Transportation Conformity (FHWA-NHI-142071). All courses are free. For more information, visit the [NHI website](#) and search "Air Quality Planning," or look for the specific course number. Please contact Karen Perritt at (202) 366-9066, or Karen.Perritt@dot.gov with any questions or comments.

Reminders

- **Mid-Point Applicability Determination for the CMAQ Traffic Congestion and CMAQ On-Road Mobile Source Emissions Measure.** FHWA published the [Mid-Point Applicability Determination for the CMAQ Traffic Congestion and CMAQ On-Road Mobile Source Emissions Measures](#). As required in 23 CFR Part 490.105(e)(8)(iii) and (e)(9)(v), FHWA published the updated October 1, 2017 applicability tables to reflect changes that occurred after October 1, 2017 and on or before October 1, 2019, as of the mid-point of the first performance period. The next applicability determination will be made on October 1, 2021.
- **FHWA Implementation Guide on Nature-Based Solutions for Coastal Resilience.** FHWA's [Implementation Guide: Nature-Based Solutions for Coastal Highway Resilience](#) is designed to help transportation practitioners understand how and where nature-based solutions can be used to improve the resilience of coastal roads and bridges. It summarizes the potential flood-reduction benefits and co-benefits of these strategies. The guide also provides recommendations on how to consider nature-based solutions in each step of the project delivery process, from the planning process to project monitoring and maintenance.
- **FHWA Pilot Reports on Asset Management and Risk to Extreme Weather.** FHWA published the first three reports (of five total) on [Asset Management and Risk to Extreme Weather](#), summarizing pilot studies with the State Departments of Transportation in Kentucky ([pdf](#)), Maryland ([pdf](#)) and Texas ([pdf](#)). The reports are part of a pilot program, announced in May 2017, which aims to help States incorporate information on resilience into asset management programs and their Transportation Asset Management Plans. To stay up-to-date on additional reports and studies, visit the [FHWA Asset Management and Extreme Risk website](#).
- **Materials from TRB 2nd International Conference on Resilience to Natural Hazards and Extreme Weather Events.** All materials from the [2nd International Conference on Transportation System Resilience to Natural Hazards and Extreme Weather](#) (Transportation Resilience 2019) are now [available via TRB](#). The conference took place from November 13-15, 2019 in Washington, DC, and brought together over 300 attendees.
- **NCHRP Tool to Estimate Emission Reductions.** The National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) released a spreadsheet-based tool to estimate emissions reductions for 16 CMAQ project types (NCHRP 25-25, Task 108). The tool is intended to simplify the process of estimating emission reductions for users with limited air quality modeling experience or limited availability of data. The [project report](#) and the [tool itself](#) are available via TRB.

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Past issues of the *Air Quality and Sustainability Highlights* are available on FHWA's website:

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/conformity/highlights/ or
<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sustainability/newsletter/>.

Please e-mail Victoria.Martinez@dot.gov with any suggestions for future issues.