

Introduction

This pamphlet was developed by the Florida Department of Transportation, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), for transportation managers to promote the importance of *Community Impact Assessment* (CIA) in transportation decisionmaking within their respective organizations. The pamphlet contains the principles behind community impact assessment, and outlines main focus areas, program benefits, and methods to integrate and institutionalize this key component of transportation decisionmaking. Other community impact assessment resource documents, available through FHWA, are also referenced in the pamphlet. This document serves to strongly encourage managers to put CIA into practice within their organizations and to actively partner with FHWA in such efforts. The benefits to the organization and the citizenry will be self-evident. FHWA will continue to work closely with states that embrace and practice this concept. CIA must become a way of doing business for transportation decisions to fully meet the needs of communities. As a manager, your response to this initiative is a key element to program development. *Come and join us in this effort!*



U.S. Department
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What is CIA?

CIA stands for Community Impact Assessment, and includes **the process to evaluate the effects of a transportation action on communities and their quality of life - the human environment.** Its focus is on the early and continuous gathering of information from the community and other sources. This information is used as input into transportation decisionmaking throughout the planning, project development, design, mitigation, and construction of a project.



What are the Main Focus Areas of CIA?

► **Early Identification of Community Issues**

The CIA process identifies community values, issues, problems, and affordable solutions in concert with other programs *early* in transportation decisionmaking.

Community values have been defined as:

“A set of ideals, which are openly practiced or hidden, that are shared among individuals that identify themselves as a group. Community values are often expressed in written, oral, ritual or symbolic forms to communicate these ideals to the group or others. These values, which may evolve over time, may relate to family, education, government, economy, natural resources, religion, recreation, social class, communication networks, health and general welfare.”
(FDOT, 1999)



► **Proactive, Inclusive Problem Solving and Collaborative Decisionmaking**

Networking with the community, the process promotes the early and

continual involvement of community groups through proactive outreach initiatives. Provide for open access to decisionmakers and share information between the transportation organization and the various communities, groups, and agencies. Collaborate in decisionmaking to mutually solve community problems.



► **Continuous Process that Transitions Throughout Project Development**

The CIA process begins in transportation planning and ultimately continues throughout the life of the project.

► **Community-based Decisionmaking**

The CIA process contributes to and strengthens transportation decisionmaking, formulating plans and programs that are based on community values. Potential problems and solutions can be brainstormed with the communities and evaluated early in the process so that concerns are recognized and addressed. This approach creates a broad decisionmaking framework for problem solving and a positive, enabling environment for meeting community goals.

Why is CIA Important to a Transportation Organization?

▶ **Good Business Practice**

Transportation organizations gain support for transportation improvements which are based on community values. This enables the organization to more effectively and efficiently meet its mission. Thus, the improvement becomes a “positive” contribution to the well-being of the community. As a result, the organization attains its goals and gains the respect, credibility, and trust of the community.

▶ **Stabilizes Work Program**

An informed public and open-participatory process reduces uncertainty and provides a high degree of project success.

▶ **It's the Right Thing to Do!**

CIA allows the transportation organization to best serve the community, solve problems, and improve the quality of life, while meeting its mission.

What are the Benefits of CIA?

▶ **Increased Efficiency and Effectiveness**

- Time and resources are wisely spent.
- Conflicts are reduced.
- The timing from concept to completion can be reduced.
- Resources can be diverted from dead-end, doomed projects.

▶ **Promotes Partnering and Program Integration**

- Jointly identifies solutions to common problems.
- Integrates partnering and streamlining into daily activities.
- Provides opportunities for mutual goal attainment, reducing duplication of effort and additional expenditures.
- Builds strong consensus.

▶ **Addresses Environmental Justice Issues**

- Includes the “traditionally underserved” citizens in decisionmaking.
- Promotes equal and open access to information and decision-makers by all citizens.
- Heightens sensitivity toward civil rights and environmental justice considerations.

▶ **Enhanced Quality of Life**

- Transportation improvements reflect community values.
- Mobility needs are better met.
- Community issues are addressed.
- *Everybody wins!*

Additional information regarding CIA principles and practices can be obtained through:

**Federal Highway Administration
Office of Human Environment
HEPH-10
400 7th Street, SW., Room 3301
Washington, DC 20590
(202)366-0106
Web address:
WWW.FHWA.DOT.GOV**

How do I Implement CIA into My Organization?

The four key actions to successfully incorporating CIA into your organization are:

- 1 Champion
- 2 Institutionalize
- 3 Integrate
- 4 Engage

Through these four actions, CIA can be fully incorporated into your organization and a productive, responsive, community value-based way of “doing business” can be realized.

Champion

Managers must provide leadership by advocating CIA principles throughout all aspects of transportation decisionmaking.



- **Champion the cause, “talk-the-talk”** so that employees relate the importance of CIA to their day-to-day work.
- **Network, coordinate, partner,** conduct extensive interagency and community outreach, build consensus, and promote inter-

nally and externally collaborative problem solving and mutual understanding in mission accomplishment throughout transportation decisionmaking.

- **Promote and support public involvement as a continuous process** from planning through maintenance.
- **Encourage all organizational disciplines** to work more closely together.

Where to begin:

- ✓ Identify CIA advocates within the organization as resource staff
- ✓ Perform a self-assessment to determine where the organization stands on CIA
- ✓ Consult CIA reference materials:
U.S. Department of Transportation,
 - *Community Impact Assessment: A Quick Reference for Transportation*
 - *Community Impact Mitigation: Case Studies*
 - *Flexibility in Highway Design*
- ✓ Network with other transportation organizations engaging in CIA principles
- ✓ Network with Federal Highway Administration Resource Centers and the Office of Human Environment

Institutionalize

Managers must incorporate the CIA principles into the organization's day-to-day activities.

- **“Walk-the-walk”** through modifications of operational procedures and practices.

- **Identify common goals and objectives** with other agencies and communities, and develop processes to build on mutual goals.
- **Forge cooperative processes and integrated programs** by developing operational agreements with other agencies, local governments and advocacy organizations.
- **Accommodate community needs**, where reasonable, feasible, and within the organization's purview.
- **Facilitate dialogue between parties** where identified issues are outside the organization's purview to solve, so that issues are not dropped, but are addressed and resolved by others.
- **Formally document and track commitments** to ensure they are incorporated and fully implemented.
- **Leverage and pool funding resources** efficiently and effectively to solve community problems.



Where to begin:

- ✓ Assemble a CIA Steering Committee which is interagency in scope to guide the institutionalizing process
- ✓ Review policies, procedures, manuals, practices, and other

operational materials and update to include CIA principles

- ✓ Promote CIA principles through outreach with all organization staff
- ✓ Develop promotional materials highlighting CIA principles and related action items

Integrate

The integration of CIA must occur both within and outside the organization. There are a number of agencies and groups that should be involved in this process.



- **Metropolitan planning organizations and local governments begin the process** with early identification of community issues and establishing system improvements to address community issues through the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program.
- **Federal, State, and local resource agencies should be involved** in transportation planning. They bring to the table environmental requirements and issues that, if addressed early, can alleviate later conflicts and bring about mutual goal attainment in program development.

- **Advocacy groups, community stakeholder groups, and individual citizens must be involved.** They are the key to successfully determining the need of the project, and identifying the associated community value issues which need to be addressed and integrated into project planning.
- **As projects advance, all functional areas of the organization must be involved** to develop the cooperative, continuous relationship that will complete the improvement, integrate programs, and bring about resolution to many community problems along the way.

Where to Begin:

- ✓ Build positive resource-agency contact relationships
- ✓ Build CIA into resource allocation plans
 - Training
 - Staff resources
 - Time
- ✓ Link processes and procedures within and outside of the organization

Engage

Stakeholders, partners, local communities, and the public must be sought out and engaged in the transportation decisionmaking process.

- **Success with CIA will occur only if people within and outside of the organization participate** in the transportation decisionmaking process, beginning in planning and continuing beyond project development. This participation must include not just communities, but resources agencies,

governmental agencies, advocacy groups, and all disciplines of the organization.

- **Management should work to ensure that all parties understand the principles and benefits of CIA.**
- **Apply a shared-decisionmaking approach** to planning and project development that resolves conflicts. Once the potential of this approach is understood, all parties will *want* to actively take part in it!



Where to begin:

- ✓ Focus on the CIA process in existing projects
- ✓ Be proactive and seek input through cooperation and involvement
- ✓ Open the organizational processes by collaborating with others
- ✓ Establish training programs
 - Borrow from other organizations with successful programs and training courses
 - Train local, State and Federal participants
- ✓ Take a “do it right the first time” attitude

Community Impact Assessment:

- ★ Is community-based;
- ★ Is collaborative;
- ★ Is proactive;
- ★ Is a “win-win” for all;
- ★ Will improve the way business is conducted in the organization;
- ★ Improves the quality of life of a community; and
- ★ Is “the right thing to do...”
What could be better?!!!



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**Federal Highway
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Community Impact Assessment

Strategic Plan

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Community Impact Assessment

Strategic Plan

Florida Department of Transportation
in cooperation with
Federal Highway Administration

Community Impact Assessment

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