Federal Highway Administration
Scenario Planning Workshop

Annual Michigan Transportation Planning Association Conference

Lansing, Michigan
July 13, 2010
Overview of Scenario Planning

What is Scenario Planning?

• Scenario planning is a technique to:
  • Assess and prepare for alternative futures
  • Improve strategic decision-making
  • Facilitate public stakeholder involvement in transportation planning
  • Integrate land use and transportation planning
Characteristics of Scenario Planning

- Some elements of scenario planning are similar to alternatives analysis and visioning exercises:
  - Comparing options and possible outcomes
  - Identifying future goals and aspirations through visualization

- Some elements of scenario planning differ from alternatives analysis and visioning exercises:
  - Examining interactions between multiple factors
  - Focus on public involvement to create and assess scenarios

- Scenario planning is a flexible approach that can be used at many scales and can support a range of planning activities
FHWA Scenario Planning Program

- FHWA scenario planning program provides:
  - Feedback on planned or current efforts
  - Scenario planning workshops
  - Information on innovative practices and lessons learned from around the country
  - Overview of scenario planning resources and tools
- FHWA scenario planning website available at www.fhwa.dot.gov/Planning/scenplan/index.htm
Policies/Programs Related to Scenario Planning

- SAFETEA-LU
- Clean Energy Jobs and American Power Act (S. 1733)
- USDOT/HUD/EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities
- Surface Transportation Environment and Planning Cooperative Research Program (STEP)
# FHWA Six-Phase Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Considerations</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>How should we get started?</td>
<td><strong>Scope the effort and engage partners.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Process objectives, goals, budget, and stakeholder roles and responsibilities.</td>
<td><strong>Output:</strong> Work plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Where are we now?</td>
<td><strong>Establish baseline analysis; identify factors and trends that affect the region or study area.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Transportation and land supply, suitability, and demand; regional or study area trends.</td>
<td><strong>Outputs:</strong> Land suitability analysis, socioeconomic evaluation, and/or transportation systems assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Where do we want to go?</td>
<td><strong>Establish future goals and aspirations based on community values.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Key values and priorities for the community, region, or study area.</td>
<td><strong>Outputs:</strong> Set of working principles that document broad community, region, or study area goals and preferences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>What could the future look like?</td>
<td><strong>Create trend and alternative scenarios.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scenario types, analysis tools, travel demand model.</td>
<td><strong>Outputs:</strong> Identification of appropriate scenario analysis tool or refinement of travel demand model; trend and alternative scenarios.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>What impacts will scenarios have?</td>
<td><strong>Assess scenario impacts.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Indicators to help evaluate scenario performance.</td>
<td><strong>Outputs:</strong> Refined or calibrated analysis tool(s) or model(s) if necessary. List of indicators to compare scenario outcomes. Qualitative or quantitative assessment of scenario impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>How will we reach our desired future?</td>
<td><strong>Craft the comprehensive vision; identify strategic actions and performance measures.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Stakeholder feedback on scenarios and the future blueprint; potential actions, investments, or policies to lead the region or study area towards the future blueprint.</td>
<td><strong>Outputs:</strong> Comprehensive vision; action steps; performance measures to assess progress; plan for monitoring progress.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Potential Challenges

- Finding time and resources
- Capturing the public’s attention over an extended period of time
- Difficulty defining the core issues
- Building consensus and compromise
Benefits and Possible Outcomes

- Promotes a greater interest from a broader set of the population
- Improves consensus building around common vision
- Builds a framework to help update long-range plans
- Identifies a preferred growth pattern and investment levels
- Helps integrate land use and transportation planning
- Develops an action plan and strategies for achieving the preferred future
Next Generation Scenario Planning

- Traditional scenario planning efforts focus on relationships between transportation, land use, and growth or declining growth.

- Next generation scenario planning efforts focus on a broader range of issues, such as:
  - Uses of alternative energy
  - Climate change
  - Economic shifts
  - Technological innovation
For Additional Information

FHWA Scenario Planning website
www.fhwa.dot.gov/Planning/scenplan/index.htm

Contacts
FHWA:
Fred Bowers (202-366-2374 or Frederick.Bowers@dot.gov)
Sharlene Reed (202-366-9629 or Sharlene.Reed@dot.gov)

USDOT Volpe Center:
Alisa Fine (617-494-2310 or Alisa.Fine@dot.gov)

FHWA Resource Center:
Jim Thorne (708-283-3538 or Jim.Thorne@dot.gov)
Brian Betlyon (410-962-0086 or Brian.Betlyon@dot.gov)