ELEMENT 3
ASSESSING PARTICIPATION EQUITY

INTRODUCTION

To address the needs for EJ populations, regional planning investments must provide an equitable distribution of benefits and should not result in a disproportionate burden of adverse impacts on Minority and Low Income population groups. To monitor public participation endeavors and ensure that the goals established by this Participation Plan are met, OKI has developed an assessment process.

PARTICIPATION ASSESSMENT

The assessment process compares the impacts of the Plan and TIP recommendations on Minority and Low Income target areas with the entire region (target areas are defined in Element 2). The impacts are calculated by OKI's Regional Travel Demand Model for transportation mobility and accessibility.

In transportation planning, the Travel Demand Model is used to forecast travel patterns for different transportation scenarios and then calculate data for measuring the impacts of the different travel patterns, such as total vehicle-miles-of-travel and pollutant emissions. These impact measures are analyzed as a basis for recommending a plan or TIP.

In the Participation Plan assessment process, OKI uses the Travel Demand Model to estimate such things as traffic volumes, transit ridership and travel times as a basis for assessing the impact of transportation investments on EJ target and non-target areas. For assessing the Plan that includes a TIP, these EJ impact measures will be calculated for the following transportation scenarios:

1. The existing transportation system (base year)
2. The "existing plus committed" system (the existing system under future conditions modified only by project recommendations in the TIP)
3. The future transportation system as recommended in the Plan

OKI will use a variety of impact measures that relate to transportation mobility and accessibility. Some will be able to be estimated using the OKI Travel Model and others will require different approaches. Measures will be used from six general categories which are described on the following page. Each of these categories will be reported by mode (auto vs. bus) and/or travel time, where appropriate. The following measures have been identified as objectives to be evaluated:

Mobility/Congestion
- Travel Time
- Percentage of vehicle miles traveled in congestion

Accessibility
- Job opportunities within 20 minutes auto travel time
- Job opportunities within 20 minutes transit travel time
- Job opportunities within 40 minutes transit travel time
- Percentage of population within 40 minutes transit travel time of a college/university

Reliability
- Dependable transit service as measured by percent of on-time arrivals

Safety
- Transit safety as measured by the number of crashes

Equity
- Supply of transportation infrastructure and services
- Displacement of residents and business
- Social Structure
- Expenditures on highway projects
- Expenditures on transit projects

Other Regional Performance Measures
- Environmental Impacts
- Financial impacts
- System performance indicators

From the data developed in the assessment process, the transportation conditions for Minority and Low Income target areas will be compared with those of non-target areas. For three other population groups (i.e., Elderly population, People with Disabilities, and Zero-Car Households), OKI will define target areas and develop data, but is not required to conduct an EJ assessment. The significance of the comparative process for these groups is reduced by the relatively disbursed distribution of the Elderly population and People with Disabilities, for which the target areas contain less than half the group population, and by the strong correlation of the Zero-Car Household target area to the Minority and Low Income target areas.