



FDM 25-1-1 General

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The primary objective of this chapter is to provide a description of the socio-economic factors which can be affected by transportation improvements and the means by which to measure the resulting impacts. Under the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, Sec. 1508.14, "...economic or social effects are not intended by themselves to require preparation of an environmental impact statement." The regulations go on to state that social and economic impacts must be interrelated with the impacts of a project on the natural and physical environments. If a project results in purely social or economic effects, and they cause no impacts on the natural or physical environments, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required. However, the larger the transportation proposal, the greater the likelihood that socio-economic impacts will be interrelated with impacts on the natural and physical environments.

The Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA) requires that the economic advantages and disadvantages of a project be discussed. Similarly, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has adopted as Policy "L" of its 1980 State Transportation Policy Plan that all projects shall have a benefit/cost analysis performed prior to making a decision to proceed.

The techniques and areas of analysis described here are those most often encountered in reviewing socio-economic impacts in full-scale EIS's rather than in briefer environmental reports; however, preparers of Type II and III documents may well benefit from some of the information provided here. The areas to be reviewed in relation to these impacts are defined in the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Technical Advisory T6640.8A of October 30, 1987 (see [FDM 25-5-1](#)). The Bureau of Environmental and Data Analysis (BEDA) can be of assistance in establishing appropriate study contents and in helping to define and guide research efforts.

Census materials are available from the Planning Analysis and Data Section of the Division of Planning and Budget located in Room 901, Hill Farms Transportation Building in Madison. Additional demographic information is available from the Demographic Services Center of the Wisconsin Department of Administration located in the GEF I State Office Building in Madison.

In addition, several printed resources exist which can be of help. These include the U.S. Department of Transportation's Environmental Assessment Notebook Series. Of special interest are Volumes No. 2, "Social Impacts", and No. 3 "Economic Impacts." With the issuance of Technical Advisory T6640.8A, the Notebook series is no longer organized identically to the FHWA's list of categories ([FDM 25-5-1](#)); however the information supplied is still useful and should be consulted. These publications have been distributed to the District offices.