

COMPASS Environmental Review Process 2014-2022

Federal regulations require that metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) take a comprehensive approach to considering environmental and natural resource issues when developing long-range transportation plans, such as *Communities in Motion* (CIM). The 2012 Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), the 2015 Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, and the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) direct MPOs to consult with federal and state agencies to identify potential mitigation activities that can help restore and maintain environmental functions affected by the planⁱ.

COMPASS has collaborated with environmental and natural resource agencies, organizations, and other stakeholders through its Environmental Review Workgroupⁱⁱ since 2008 to address environmental issues relevant to long-range transportation planning. Details about the workgroup's earlier activities can be found in the [COMPASS Environmental Review Process, 2008-2013](#).ⁱⁱⁱ

Environmental Review Process 2014-2018

Following the adoption of CIM 2040 in July 2014, work began to develop CIM 2040 2.0 – the update to CIM 2040. As COMPASS updated the transportation system needs for CIM 2040 2.0, the environmental analysis for the resulting priority transportation corridors was also updated. The workgroup reviewed the results of this updated environmental suitability analysis, which assigned scores based on the number of environmental data layers a project overlaps, based on available data. An area with a high score contained more environmental elements that could be impacted by a transportation project than an area with a low score.

The following data categories were used in the analysis to catalog potential environmental impacts:

- Hydrological areas
 - water quality and quantity
 - runoff (stormwater)
 - floodplains and floodway areas
 - wetlands, streams, and canals
 - groundwater
- Habitat and wildlife areas
 - Boise foothills
 - wildlife management areas
 - aquatic and riparian habitats
 - endangered species
- Traffic noise
- Hazardous materials/contaminated sites
 - potential remediation sites
 - gas stations
- Cultural and historic resources
 - historic sites, trails, and/or structures
 - aesthetics

- Environmental justice consideration areas (areas with higher-than-average concentrations of low-income and/or minority populations)
- Open space, parks, and recreation areas
 - parks
 - cemeteries
- Agricultural and farmland
- Land use
 - existing residential neighborhoods
 - schools
 - railroads
 - National Guard “tank trail”
 - airports/private airstrips

The unfunded transportation needs were overlaid with the environmental data sets. The Regional Transportation Advisory Committee used the results to assist in the prioritization of unfunded corridors and projects for CIM 2040 2.0, which was adopted in December 2018.

Environmental Review Process 2019-2022

Work on CIM 2050 began in 2019. As COMPASS updated the transportation system needs for CIM 2050, the environmental analysis for the resulting priority transportation corridors was again updated. Environmental issues were grouped into nine categories (Figure 1) and mapped (Figure 2). Priority transportation corridors were then added to [the map^{iv}](#) to determine environmental suitability scores. As with CIM 2040 2.0, scores were based on the number of environmental data layers a project overlaps, based on available data. An area with a higher score contains more potential environmental issues that could be impacted by a transportation project than an area with a lower score. On the map the higher scores are depicted in darker color. This same information was also displayed in a matrix, organized by priority roadway corridors (see appendix).

Hydrological areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ water quality and quantity ✓ runoff (stormwater) ✓ floodplains and floodway areas ✓ wetlands, streams, and canals ✓ groundwater 	Habitat and wildlife areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Boise foothills ✓ wildlife management areas ✓ aquatic and riparian habitats ✓ endangered species ✓ wildlife vehicle collisions 	Traffic noise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ traffic volume ✓ speed
Hazardous materials/contaminated sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ potential remediation sites ✓ gas stations 	Cultural and historic resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ historic sites, trails, and/or structures ✓ aesthetics 	Environmental justice consideration areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ areas with higher-than-average concentrations of low-income and/or minority populations
Open space, parks, and recreation areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ parks ✓ cemeteries 	Agricultural and farmland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ prime farmland 	Land use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ existing residential neighborhoods ✓ schools ✓ railroads ✓ National Guard “tank trail” ✓ airports/private airstrips

Figure 1. Environmental Issues Included in Analysis

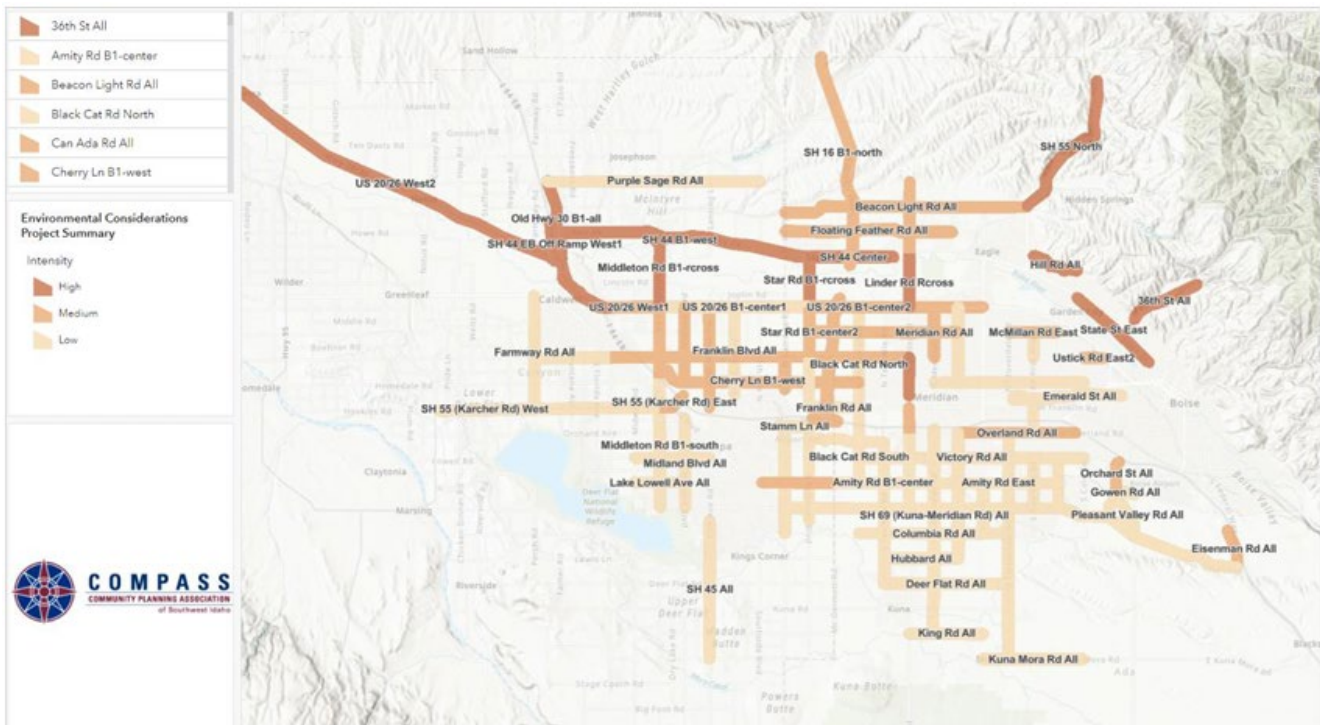


Figure 2. Potential Environmental Issues along Priority Corridors

The Regional Transportation Advisory Committee was provided with the results of this analysis for each priority corridor to assist in the [prioritization](#)^v of needed corridors and projects.

Mitigation Strategies

Mitigation strategies refer to actions that can avoid or lessen the environmental impact of a project. Participating environmental and resource agencies provided and reviewed general mitigation strategies for potential environmental impacts of transportation projects, based on the environmental suitability analysis conducted for CIM 2040 2.0 and CIM 2050.

COMPASS used the Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) [Eco-Logical: An Ecosystem Approach to Developing Infrastructure Projects](#)^{vi} framework, which encourages federal, state, tribal, and local partners involved in infrastructure planning, design, review, and construction to use flexibility in regulatory processes, integrate plans across agency boundaries, and endorse ecosystem-based mitigation of infrastructure impacts that cannot be avoided.

The recommended mitigation strategies and potential funding sources are described in detail in [CIM 2040 2.0](#)^{vii} and [CIM 2050](#)^{viii}.

ⁱ <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title23-section134&num=0&edition=prelim>

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https://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/reports/COMPASS%20Environmental%20Review%20Process%202008_2013.pdf

iv <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/06b44c3005564daeb2cb9b43602480b0>

v <https://cim2050.compassidaho.org/wp-content/uploads/Prioritization.pdf>

vi https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/eco-logical/report/eco_index.aspx

vii <https://compassidaho.org/CIM2040-2.0/>

viii <https://cim2050.compassidaho.org/>