

SH 82

GRAND AVENUE BRIDGE

Environmental Assessment

**Appendix C:
Mobile Source Air Toxics
and
Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Mobile Source Air Toxics

This information was taken from the Federal Highway Administration Mobile Source Air Toxics website (http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/air_toxics/), accessed May 2013.

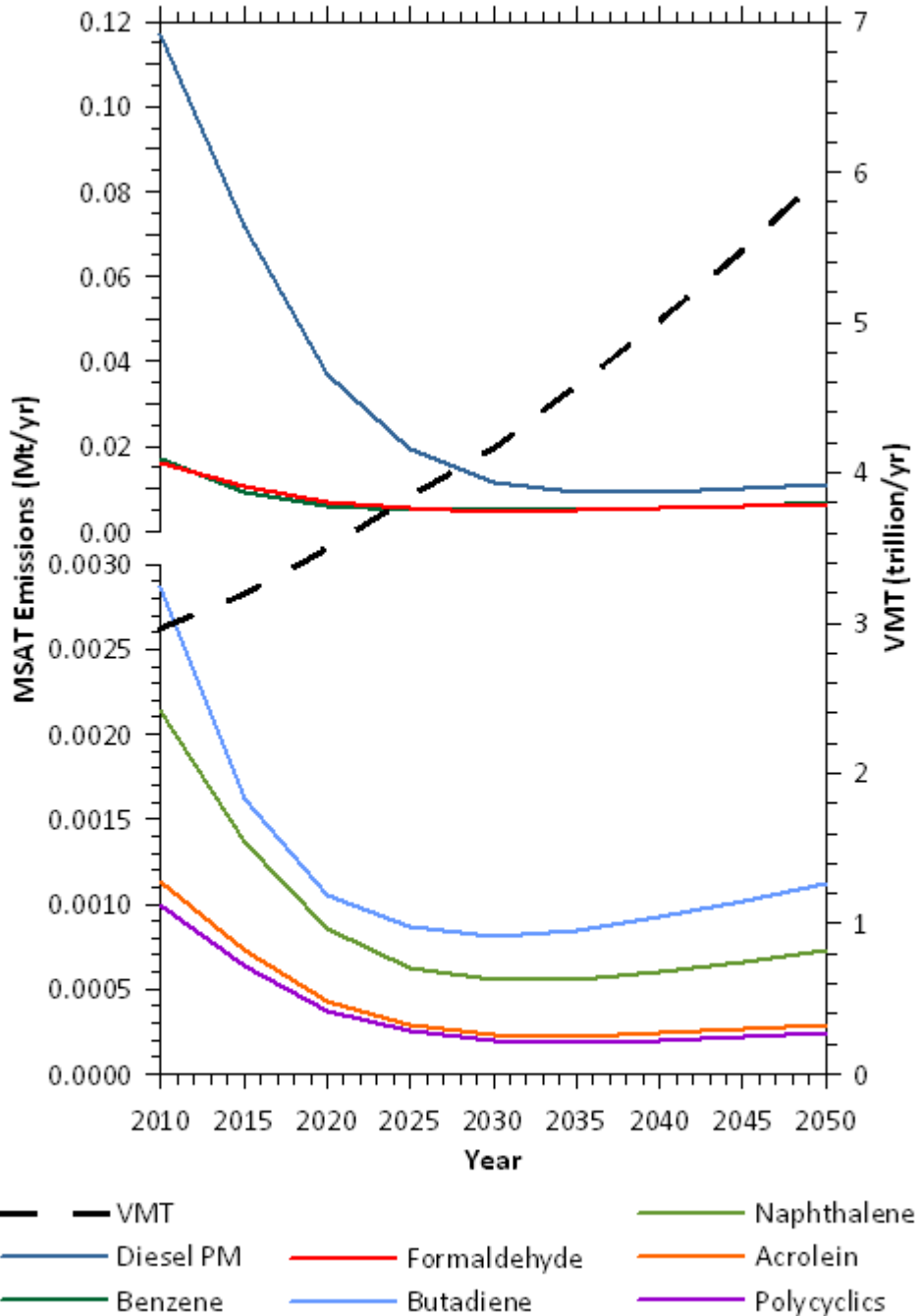
Controlling air toxic emissions became a national priority with the passage of the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990, whereby Congress mandated that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulate 188 air toxics, also known as hazardous air pollutants. The EPA has assessed this expansive list in their latest rule on the Control of Hazardous Air Pollutants from Mobile Sources (Federal Register, Vol. 72, No. 37, page 8430, February 26, 2007), and identified a group of 93 compounds emitted from mobile sources that are listed in their Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) (<http://www.epa.gov/iris/>). In addition, EPA identified seven compounds with significant contributions from mobile sources that are among the national and regional-scale cancer risk drivers from their 1999 National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA) (<http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/nata1999/>). These are acrolein, benzene, 1,3-butadiene, diesel particulate matter plus diesel exhaust organic gases (diesel PM), formaldehyde, naphthalene, and polycyclic organic matter. While FHWA considers these the priority mobile source air toxics, the list is subject to change and may be adjusted in consideration of future EPA rules.

The 2007 EPA rule mentioned above requires controls that will dramatically decrease MSAT emissions through cleaner fuels and cleaner engines. According to an FHWA analysis using EPA's MOBILE6.2 model, even if vehicle activity (vehicle-miles travelled, VMT) increases by 145 percent as assumed, a combined reduction of 72 percent in the total annual emission rate for the priority MSAT is projected from 1999 to 2050, as shown in Figure 1.

According to EPA, MOVES improves upon the previous MOBILE model in several key aspects: MOVES is based on a vast amount of in-use vehicle data collected and analyzed since the latest release of MOBILE, including millions of emissions measurements from light-duty vehicles. Analysis of this data enhanced EPA's understanding of how mobile sources contribute to emissions inventories and the relative effectiveness of various control strategies. In addition, MOVES accounts for the significant effects that vehicle speed and temperature have on PM emissions estimates, whereas MOBILE did not. MOVES2010b includes all air toxic pollutants in NATA that are emitted by mobile sources. EPA has incorporated more recent data into MOVES2010b to update and enhance the quality of MSAT emission estimates. These data reflect advanced emission control technology and modern fuels, plus additional data for older technology vehicles.

Based on an FHWA analysis using EPA's MOVES2010b model, as shown in Figure 1, even if vehicle-miles travelled (VMT) increases by 102 percent as assumed from 2010 to 2050, a combined reduction of 83 percent in the total annual emissions for the priority MSAT is projected for the same time period.

**Figure 1: NATIONAL MSAT EMISSION TRENDS 1999 - 2050
FOR VEHICLES OPERATING ON ROADWAYS
USING EPA'S MOVES2010b MODEL**



Note: Trends for specific locations may be different, depending on locally derived information representing vehicle-miles travelled, vehicle speeds, vehicle mix, fuels, emission control programs, meteorology, and other factors

Source: EPA MOVES2010b model runs conducted during May - June 2012 by FHWA.

The implications of MOVES on MSAT emissions estimates compared to MOBILE are: lower estimates of total MSAT emissions; significantly lower benzene emissions; significantly higher diesel PM emissions, especially for lower speeds. Consequently, diesel PM is projected to be the dominant component of the emissions total.

INCOMPLETE OR UNAVAILABLE INFORMATION FOR PROJECT-SPECIFIC MSAT HEALTH

IMPACTS ANALYSIS

In FHWA's view, information is incomplete or unavailable to credibly predict the project-specific health impacts due to changes in MSAT emissions associated with a proposed set of highway alternatives. The outcome of such an assessment, adverse or not, would be influenced more by the uncertainty introduced into the process through assumption and speculation rather than any genuine insight into the actual health impacts directly attributable to MSAT exposure associated with a proposed action.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for protecting the public health and welfare from any known or anticipated effect of an air pollutant. They are the lead authority for administering the Clean Air Act and its amendments and have specific statutory obligations with respect to hazardous air pollutants and MSAT. The EPA is in the continual process of assessing human health effects, exposures, and risks posed by air pollutants. They maintain the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS), which is "a compilation of electronic reports on specific substances found in the environment and their potential to cause human health effects" (EPA, <http://www.epa.gov/iris/>). Each report contains assessments of non-cancerous and cancerous effects for individual compounds and quantitative estimates of risk levels from lifetime oral and inhalation exposures with uncertainty spanning perhaps an order of magnitude.

Other organizations are also active in the research and analyses of the human health effects of MSAT, including the Health Effects Institute (HEI). Two HEI studies are summarized in Appendix D of FHWA's Interim Guidance Update on Mobile source Air Toxic Analysis in NEPA Documents. Among the adverse health effects linked to MSAT compounds at high exposures are; cancer in humans in occupational settings; cancer in animals; and irritation to the respiratory tract, including the exacerbation of asthma. Less obvious is the adverse human health effects of MSAT compounds at current environmental concentrations (HEI, <http://pubs.healtheffects.org/view.php?id=282>) or in the future as vehicle emissions substantially decrease (HEI, <http://pubs.healtheffects.org/view.php?id=306>).

The methodologies for forecasting health impacts include emissions modeling; dispersion modeling; exposure modeling; and then final determination of health impacts - each step in the process building on the model predictions obtained in the previous step. All are encumbered by technical shortcomings or uncertain science that prevents a more complete differentiation of the MSAT health impacts among a set of project alternatives. These difficulties are magnified for lifetime (i.e., 70 year) assessments, particularly because unsupportable assumptions would

have to be made regarding changes in travel patterns and vehicle technology (which affects emissions rates) over that time frame, since such information is unavailable.

It is particularly difficult to reliably forecast 70-year lifetime MSAT concentrations and exposure near roadways; to determine the portion of time that people are actually exposed at a specific location; and to establish the extent attributable to a proposed action, especially given that some of the information needed is unavailable.

There are considerable uncertainties associated with the existing estimates of toxicity of the various MSAT, because of factors such as low-dose extrapolation and translation of occupational exposure data to the general population, a concern expressed by HEI (<http://pubs.healtheffects.org/view.php?id=282>). As a result, there is no national consensus on air dose-response values assumed to protect the public health and welfare for MSAT compounds, and in particular for diesel PM. The EPA (<http://www.epa.gov/risk/basicinformation.htm#g>) and the HEI (<http://pubs.healtheffects.org/getfile.php?u=395>) have not established a basis for quantitative risk assessment of diesel PM in ambient settings.

There is also the lack of a national consensus on an acceptable level of risk. The current context is the process used by the EPA as provided by the Clean Air Act to determine whether more stringent controls are required in order to provide an ample margin of safety to protect public health or to prevent an adverse environmental effect for industrial sources subject to the maximum achievable control technology standards, such as benzene emissions from refineries. The decision framework is a two-step process. The first step requires EPA to determine an "acceptable" level of risk due to emissions from a source, which is generally no greater than approximately 100 in a million. Additional factors are considered in the second step, the goal of which is to maximize the number of people with risks less than 1 in a million due to emissions from a source. The results of this statutory two-step process do not guarantee that cancer risks from exposure to air toxics are less than 1 in a million; in some cases, the residual risk determination could result in maximum individual cancer risks that are as high as approximately 100 in a million. In a June 2008 decision, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit upheld EPA's approach to addressing risk in its two step decision framework. Information is incomplete or unavailable to establish that even the largest of highway projects would result in levels of risk greater than deemed acceptable.

Because of the limitations in the methodologies for forecasting health impacts described, any predicted difference in health impacts between alternatives is likely to be much smaller than the uncertainties associated with predicting the impacts. Consequently, the results of such assessments would not be useful to decision makers, who would need to weigh this information against project benefits, such as reducing traffic congestion, accident rates, and fatalities plus improved access for emergency response, that are better suited for quantitative analysis.

A qualitative analysis provides a basis for identifying and comparing the potential differences among MSAT emissions, if any, from the various alternatives. The qualitative assessment presented below is derived in part from a study conducted by the FHWA entitled *A Methodology for Evaluating Mobile Source Air Toxic Emissions Among Transportation Project Alternatives*, found at:

www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/air_toxics/research_and_analysis/methodology/methodology00.cfm

The amount of MSAT emitted would be proportional to the vehicle miles traveled, or VMT, assuming that other variables such as fleet mix are the same for each alternative. Because the VMT estimated for the No Action Alternative (20,092 daily VMT) is higher than the Build Alternative (16,091 daily VMT), higher levels of MSAT are not expected from the Build Alternative compared to the No Action Alternative. Emissions would likely be lower than present levels in the design year as a result of EPA's national control programs that are projected to reduce annual MSAT emissions by over 80 percent from 2010 to 2050. Local conditions may differ from these national projections in terms of fleet mix and turnover, VMT growth rates, and local control measures. However, the magnitude of the EPA-projected reductions is so great (even after accounting for VMT growth) that MSAT emissions in the study area are likely to be lower in the future in virtually all locations.

There may be localized areas where VMT would increase, and other areas where VMT would decrease. Therefore, it is possible that localized increases and decreases in MSAT emissions may occur. The localized increases in MSAT emissions would likely be most pronounced along the new SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge alignment. However, even if these increases do occur, they, too, would be substantially reduced in the future due to implementation of EPA's vehicle and fuel regulations.

In summary, under the Build Alternative in the design year, it is expected there would be reduced MSAT emissions in the immediate area of the project, compared to the No Action Alternative. This is because of the reduced VMT associated with more direct routing, and because of EPA's MSAT reduction programs.

Mitigating for Construction MSAT Emissions

Significant MSAT levels are not anticipated post-construction. Therefore, project specific mitigation after the project is constructed is not required. However, post-construction programmatic mitigation will include the introduction of Engines Off! Colorado, an idling reduction program offered to local schools and communities to help educate parents, school bus drivers and students about the health benefits of engine idling emissions reduction at a grass roots level. The program has been initiated in several Garfield County schools in 2012 in cooperation with Garfield County Department of Public Health, CDOT, EnCana Natural Gas, and Clean Energy Economy for the Region (CLEER).

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Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Climate Change)

Greenhouse Gas Emissions documentation was provided by the Colorado Department of Transportation, 2013.

Climate change is an important national and global concern. While the earth has gone through many natural changes in climate in its history, there is general agreement that the earth's climate is currently changing at an accelerated rate and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Anthropogenic (human-caused) greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions contribute to this rapid change. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) makes up the largest component of these GHG emissions. Other prominent transportation GHGs include methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O).

Many GHGs occur naturally. Water vapor is the most abundant GHG and makes up approximately two thirds of the natural greenhouse effect. However, the burning of fossil fuels and other human activities are adding to the concentration of GHGs in the atmosphere. Many GHGs remain in the atmosphere for time periods ranging from decades to centuries. GHGs trap heat in the earth's atmosphere. Because atmospheric concentration of GHGs continues to climb, our planet will continue to experience climate-related phenomena. For example, warmer global temperatures can cause changes in precipitation and sea levels.

To date, no national standards have been established regarding GHGs, nor has EPA established criteria or thresholds for ambient GHG emissions pursuant to its authority to establish motor vehicle emission standards for CO₂ under the Clean Air Act. However, there is a considerable body of scientific literature addressing the sources of GHG emissions and their adverse effects on climate, including reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the US National Academy of Sciences, and EPA and other Federal agencies. GHGs are different from other air pollutants evaluated in Federal environmental reviews because their impacts are not localized or regional due to their rapid dispersion into the global atmosphere, which is characteristic of these gases. The *affected environment* for CO₂ and other GHG emissions is the entire planet. In addition, from a quantitative perspective, global climate change is the cumulative result of numerous and varied emissions sources (in terms of both absolute numbers and types), each of which makes a relatively small addition to global atmospheric GHG concentrations. In contrast to broad scale actions such as actions involving an entire industry sector or very large geographic areas, it is difficult to isolate and understand the GHG emissions impacts for a particular transportation project. Furthermore, presently there is no scientific methodology for attributing specific climatological changes to a particular transportation project's emissions.

Under NEPA, detailed environmental analysis should be focused on issues that are significant and meaningful to decision-making.¹ FHWA has concluded, based on the nature of GHG

¹ See 40 CFR 1500.1(b), 1500.2(b), 1500.4(g), and 1501.7

emissions and the exceedingly small potential GHG impacts of the proposed action, as discussed below and shown in Table 1, that the GHG emissions from the proposed action will not result in “reasonably foreseeable significant adverse impacts on the human environment” (40 CFR 1502.22(b)). The GHG emissions from the project build alternatives will be insignificant, and will not play a meaningful role in a determination of the environmentally preferable alternative or the selection of the preferred alternative. More detailed information on GHG emissions “is not essential to a reasoned choice among reasonable alternatives” (40 CFR 1502.22(a)) or to making a decision in the best overall public interest based on a balanced consideration of transportation, economic, social, and environmental needs and impacts (23 CFR 771.105(b)). For these reasons, no alternatives-level GHG analysis has been performed for this project.

The context in which the emissions from the proposed project will occur, together with the expected GHG emissions contribution from the project, illustrate why the project’s GHG emissions will not be significant and will not be a substantial factor in the decision-making. The transportation sector is the second largest source of total GHG emissions in the U.S., behind electricity generation. The transportation sector was responsible for approximately 27 percent of all anthropogenic (human caused) GHG emissions in the U.S. in 2010.² The majority of transportation GHG emissions are the result of fossil fuel combustion. CO₂ makes up the largest component of these GHG emissions. U.S. CO₂ emissions from the consumption of energy accounted for about 18 percent of worldwide energy consumption CO₂ emissions in 2010.³ U.S. transportation CO₂ emissions accounted for about 6 percent of worldwide CO₂ emissions.⁴

While the contribution of GHGs from transportation in the U.S. as a whole is a large component of U.S. GHG emissions, as the scale of analysis is reduced the GHG contributions become quite small. Using CO₂ because of its predominant role in GHG emissions, Table 1 below presents the relationship between current and projected Colorado highway CO₂ emissions and total global CO₂ emissions, as well as information on the scale of the project relative to statewide travel activity.

Based on emissions estimates from EPA’s Motor Vehicle Emissions Simulator (MOVES) model⁵, and global CO₂ estimates and projections from the Energy Information Administration, CO₂ emissions from motor vehicles in the entire state of Colorado contributed less than one tenth

² Calculated from data in U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Inventory of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks, 1990-2010.

³ Calculated from data in U.S. Energy Information Administration International Energy Statistics, Total Carbon Dioxide Emissions from the Consumption of Energy, <http://www.eia.gov/cfapps/ipdbproject/IEDIndex3.cfm?tid=90&pid=44&aid=8>, accessed 2/25/13.

⁴ Calculated from data in EIA figure 104: <http://www.eia.gov/forecasts/archive/ieo10/emissions.html> and EPA table ES-3: : <http://epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/downloads11/US-GHG-Inventory-2011-Executive-Summary.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/models/moves/index.htm>. EPA’s MOVES model can be used to estimate vehicle exhaust emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other GHGs. CO₂ is frequently used as an indicator of overall transportation GHG emissions because the quantity of these emissions is much larger than that of all other transportation GHGs combined, and because CO₂ accounts for 90-95% of the overall climate impact from transportation sources. MOVES includes estimates of both emissions rates and VMT, and these were used to estimate the Colorado statewide highway emissions in Table.

of one percent of global emissions in 2010 (0.0813%). These emissions are projected to contribute an even smaller fraction (0.0612%) in 2040⁶. VMT in the study area represents 0.020% of total Colorado travel activity; and the project itself would increase statewide VMT by 0.0000008%. As a result, based on the build alternative with the highest VMT⁷, FHWA estimates that the proposed project could result in a potential increase in global CO₂ emissions in 2040 of 0.00000001% (less than one thousandth of one percent), and a corresponding increase in Colorado’s share of global emissions in 2040 of 0.00000005%. This very small change in global emissions is well within the range of uncertainty associated with future emissions estimates.^{8,9}

TABLE 1. STATEWIDE AND PROJECT EMISSIONS POTENTIAL, RELATIVE TO GLOBAL TOTALS

	Global CO ₂ Emissions, MMT ¹⁰	Colorado Motor Vehicle CO ₂ Emissions, MMT ¹¹	Colorado Motor Vehicle Emissions, % of global total	Study Area VMT, % of Statewide VMT	Percent Change in Statewide VMT Due to Build Alternative
Current Conditions (2010)	29,670	24.1	0.0813%	0.020%	(None)
Future Projection (2040)	45,500	27.9	0.0612%	0.015%	0.00000005%

Sources: Global emissions estimates are from International Energy Outlook 2010, data for Figure 104, projected to 2040; Colorado emissions and statewide VMT estimates are from MOVES2010b. MMT = million metric tons.

Mitigation for Global GHG Emissions

To help address the global issue of climate change, USDOT is committed to reducing GHG emissions from vehicles traveling on our nation’s highways. USDOT and EPA are working together to reduce these emissions by substantially improving vehicle efficiency and shifting toward lower carbon intensive fuels. The agencies have jointly established new, more stringent fuel economy and first ever GHG emissions standards for model year 2012-2025 cars and light trucks, with an ultimate fuel economy standard of 54.5 miles per gallon for cars and light trucks by model year 2025. Further, on September 15, 2011, the agencies jointly published the first

⁶ Colorado emissions represent a smaller share of global emissions in 2040 because global emissions increase at a faster rate.

⁷ Selected to represent a “worst case” for purposes of this comparison; the Preferred Alternative may have a smaller contribution.

⁸ For example, Figure 114 of the Energy Information Administration’s *International Energy Outlook 2010* shows that future emissions projections can vary by almost 20%, depending on which scenario for future economic growth proves to be most accurate.

⁹When an agency is evaluating reasonably foreseeable significant adverse effects on the human environment in an environmental impact statement and there is incomplete or unavailable information, the agency is required make clear that such information is lacking (40 CFR 1502.22). The methodologies for forecasting GHG emissions from transportation projects continue to evolve and the data provided should be considered in light of the constraints affecting the currently available methodologies. As previously stated, tools such as EPA’s MOVES model can be used to estimate vehicle exhaust emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other GHGs.

However, only rudimentary information is available regarding the GHG emissions impacts of highway construction and maintenance. Estimation of GHG emissions from vehicle exhaust is subject to the same types of uncertainty affecting other types of air quality analysis, including imprecise information about current and future estimates of vehicle miles traveled, vehicle travel speeds, and the effectiveness of vehicle emissions control technology. Finally, there presently is no scientific methodology that can identify causal connections between individual source emissions and specific climate impacts at a particular location.

¹⁰ These estimates are from the EIA’s *International Energy Outlook 2010*, and are considered the best-available projections of emissions from fossil fuel combustion. These totals do not include other sources of emissions, such as cement production, deforestation, or natural sources; however, reliable future projections for these emissions sources are not available.

¹¹ MOVES projections suggest that Colorado motor vehicle CO₂ emissions may increase by 15.5% between 2010 and 2040; more stringent fuel economy/GHG emissions standards will not be sufficient to offset projected growth in VMT.

ever fuel economy and GHG emissions standards for heavy-duty trucks and buses.¹² Increasing use of technological innovations that can improve fuel economy, such as gasoline- and diesel-electric hybrid vehicles, will improve air quality and reduce CO₂ emissions future years.

Consistent with its view that broad-scale efforts hold the greatest promise for meaningfully addressing the global climate change problem, FHWA is engaged in developing strategies to reduce transportation's contribution to GHGs—particularly CO₂ emissions—and to assess the risks to transportation systems and services from climate change. In an effort to assist States and MPOs in performing GHG analyses, FHWA has developed a *Handbook for Estimating Transportation GHG Emissions for Integration into the Planning Process*. The Handbook presents methodologies reflecting good practices for the evaluation of GHG emissions at the transportation program level, and will demonstrate how such evaluation may be integrated into the transportation planning process. FHWA has also developed a tool for use at the statewide level to model a large number of GHG reduction scenarios and alternatives for use in transportation planning, climate action plans, scenario planning exercises, and in meeting state GHG reduction targets and goals. To assist states and MPOs in assessing climate change vulnerabilities to their transportation networks, FHWA has developed a draft vulnerability and risk assessment conceptual model and has piloted it in several locations.

At the state level, there are also several programs underway in Colorado to address transportation GHGs. The Governor's Climate Action Plan, adopted in November 2007, includes measures to adopt vehicle CO₂ emissions standards and to reduce vehicle travel through transit, flex time, telecommuting, ridesharing, and broadband communications. CDOT issued a Policy Directive on Air Quality in May 2009. This Policy Directive was developed with input from a number of agencies, including the State of Colorado's Department of Public Health and Environment, EPA, FHWA, the Federal Transit Administration, the Denver Regional Transportation District and the Denver Regional Air Quality Council. This Policy Directive and implementation document, the CDOT Air Quality Action Plan addresses unregulated MSATs and GHGs produced from Colorado's state highways, interstates, and construction activities.

As a part of CDOT's commitment to addressing MSATs and GHGs, some of CDOT's program wide activities include:

- ❖ Continue researching pavement durability opportunities with the goal of reducing the frequency of resurfacing and/or reconstruction projects.
- ❖ Developing air quality educational materials, specific to transportation issues, for citizens, elected officials, and schools.
- ❖ Offering outreach to communities to integrate land use and transportation decisions to reduce growth in VMT, such as smart growth techniques, buffer zones, transit-

¹² For more information on fuel economy proposals and standards, see the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Corporate Average Fuel Economy website: <http://www.nhtsa.gov/fuel-economy/>.

- oriented development, walkable communities, access management plans, etc.
- ❖ Committing to research additional concrete additives that would reduce the demand for cement.
 - ❖ Expanding Transportation Demand Management efforts statewide to better utilize the existing transportation mobility network.
 - ❖ Exploring congestion and/or right-lane only restrictions for motor carriers.
 - ❖ Funding truck parking electrification (note: mostly via exploring external grant opportunities)
 - ❖ Researching additional ways to improve freight movement and efficiency statewide.
 - ❖ Developing a low-VOC emitting tree landscaping specification.

Even though project-level mitigation measures will not have a substantial impact on global GHG emissions because of the exceedingly small amount of GHG emissions involved, the following measures during construction will have the effect of reducing GHG emissions. The above-identified activities are part of a program-wide effort by FHWA and CDOT to adopt practical means to avoid and minimize environmental impacts in accordance with 40 CFR 1505.2(c).

Summary

This document does not incorporate an analysis of the GHG emissions or climate change effects of each of the alternatives because the potential change in GHG emissions is very small in the context of the affected environment. Because of the insignificance of the GHG impacts, those impacts will not be meaningful to a decision on the environmentally preferable alternative or to a choice among alternatives. As outlined above, FHWA is working to develop strategies to reduce transportation's contribution to GHGs—particularly CO₂ emissions—and to assess the risks to transportation systems and services from climate change. FHWA will continue to pursue these efforts as productive steps to address this important issue. Finally, the CDOT policy generated practices described above represent practicable programmatic-level measures that, while not substantially reducing global GHG emissions, may help reduce GHG emissions on an incremental basis and could contribute in the long term to meaningful cumulative reduction when considered across the Federal-aid highway program.