Accelerating project delivery has been a longstanding priority for the Department of Transportation (DOT) and a key part of the most recent reauthorization for surface transportation programs—the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act.¹ The FAST Act includes a number of provisions intended to streamline the environmental review process for transportation projects. In particular, section 1313 of the act requires DOT to undertake several actions to align Federal environmental reviews for transportation projects with major actions that significantly affect the quality of the human environment.² The required actions include developing a coordinated and concurrent environmental review and permitting process, and a checklist to facilitate interagency collaboration.³

In section 1313, Congress also directed us to report on the progress and impact of DOT’s actions to align Federal environmental reviews. Accordingly, we are initiating an audit to (1) determine DOT’s progress in aligning Federal environmental reviews, and (2) assess the impact of DOT’s actions on accelerating the environmental review and permitting process.

We plan to begin the audit immediately and will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. We will conduct our work at DOT Headquarters

² The section exempts highway, railroad, transit, and multimodal projects subject to environmental review requirements under 23 U.S.C. 139.
³ The National Environmental Policy Act requires Federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions for which multiple agencies can have substantive review or approval responsibilities.
and other sites as needed. If you have any questions, please contact me at (202) 366-5630, or Jaydeep Borwankar, Program Director, at (202) 493-0970.

cc: DOT Audit Liaison, M-1