Health Impact Assessment: An overview
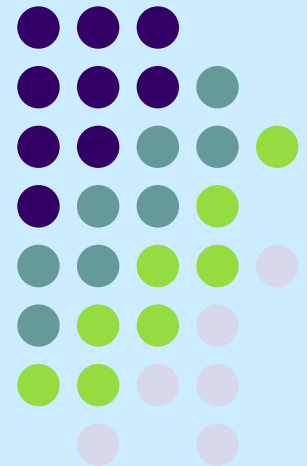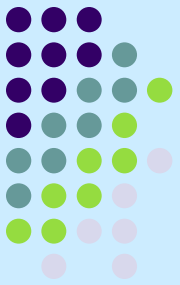
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- briefing for Multnomah County Commissioners, April 12, 2012 -

MULTNOMAH COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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The problem

Policy decisions have consequences.
Some may result in:

- negative health outcomes

- missed opportunities to improve health

- differential impacts across social groups

Part of the solution:
health impact assessment (HIA)

Presentation goals

- Describe HIA and how it's used

- Summarize the 5 steps of conducting an HIA

- Explain HIA's place in contemporary public health
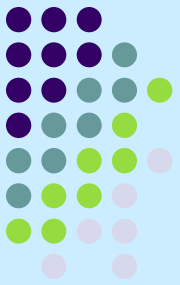
HIA is a decision-support tool

- Is a systematic process
- Uses an array of data sources and analytic methods
- Considers input from stakeholders
- Determines potential health effects and their distribution within the population
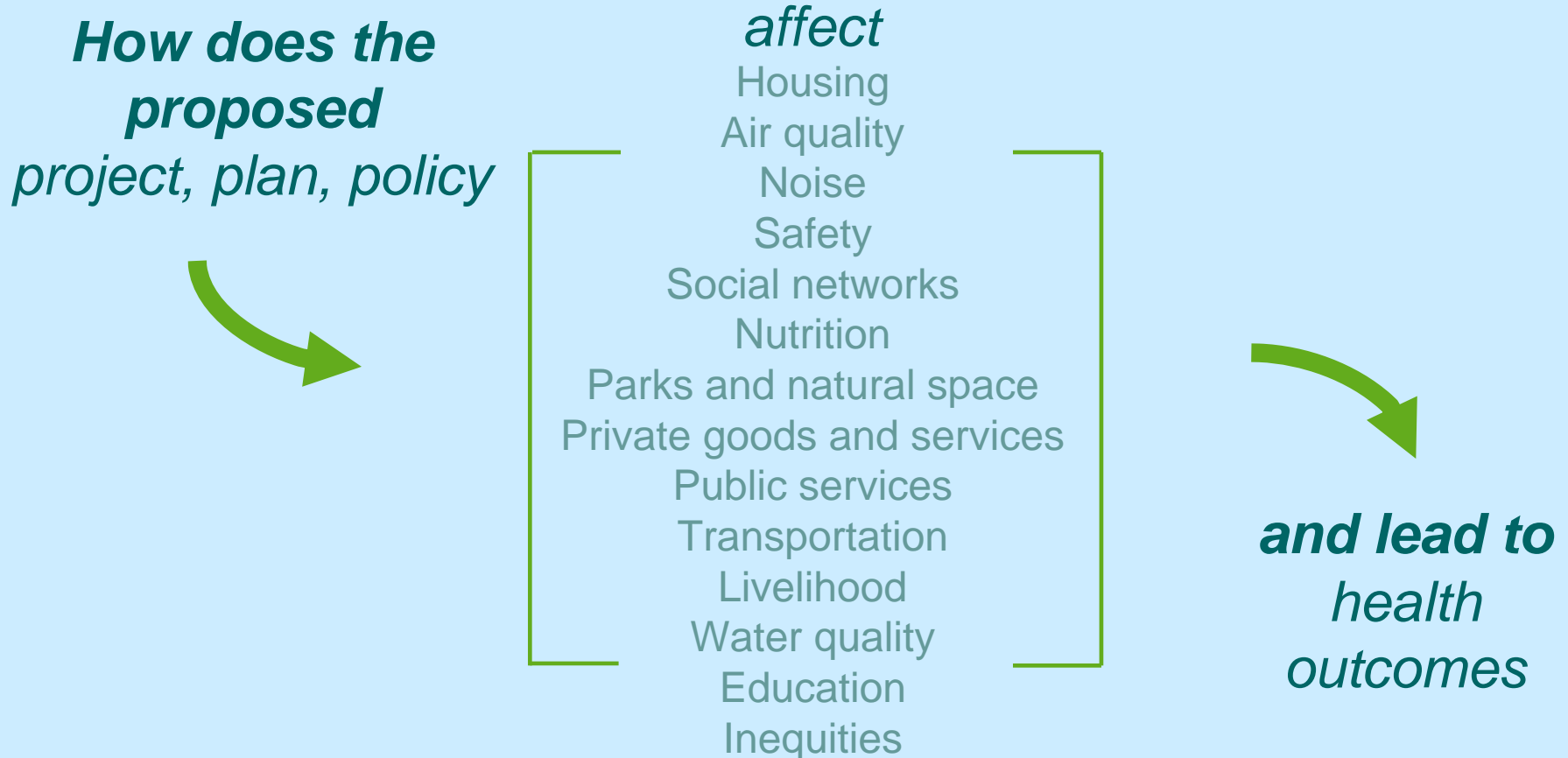- Suggests ways to monitor and manage those effects
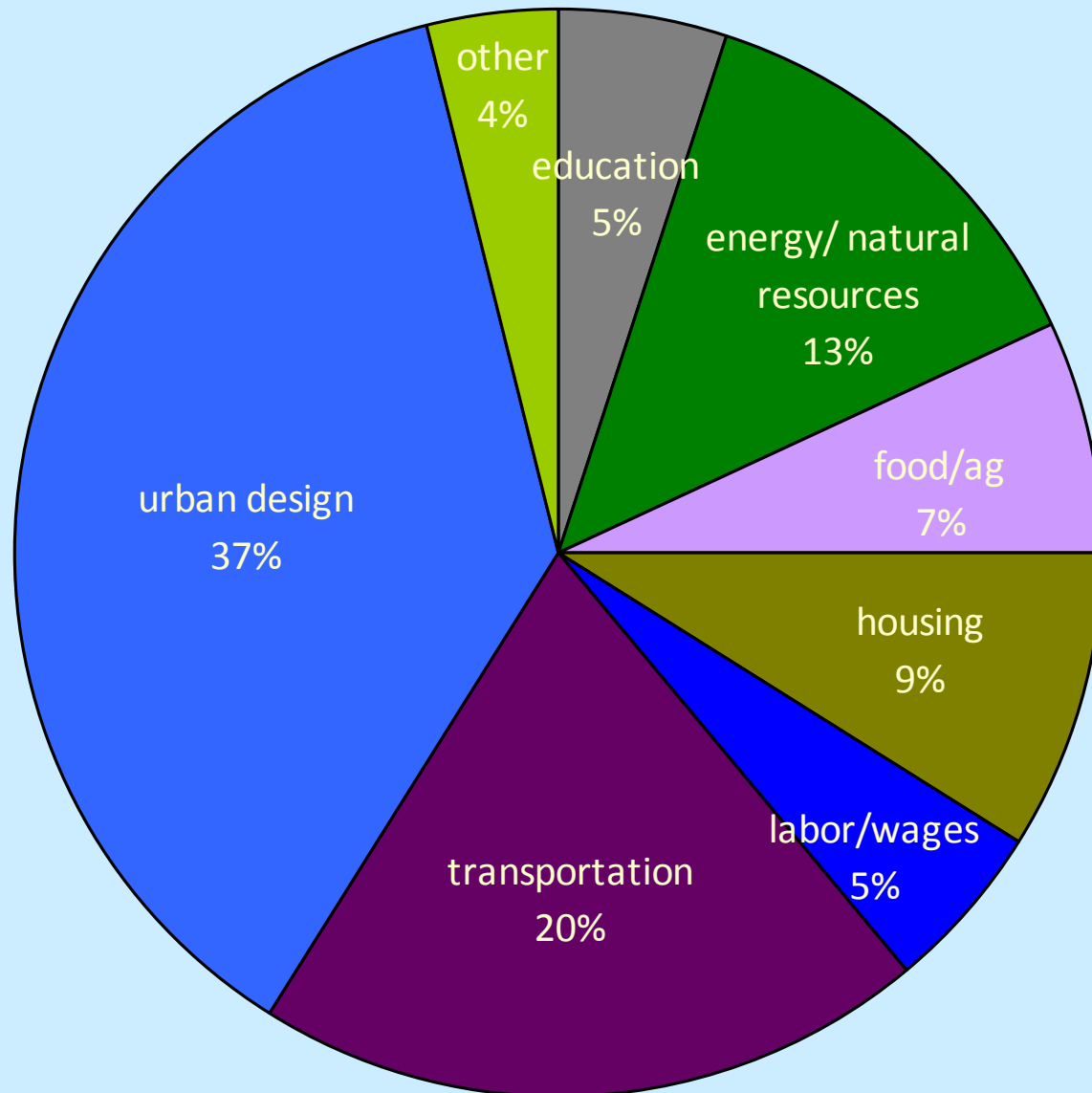
Influences on health outcomes

slide courtesy of Oregon Public Health Institute

Assessing health determinants

How does the proposed
project, plan, policy

affect
Housing
Air quality
Noise
Safety
Social networks
Nutrition
Parks and natural space
Private goods and services
Public services
Transportation
Livelihood
Water quality
Education
Inequities

and lead to
health
outcomes

slide courtesy of Human Impact Partners

Completed HIA's by sector (U.S.)

Pie chart: Completed HIA's by sector (U.S.)
- urban design 37%
- transportation 20%
- energy/ natural resources 13%
- housing 9%
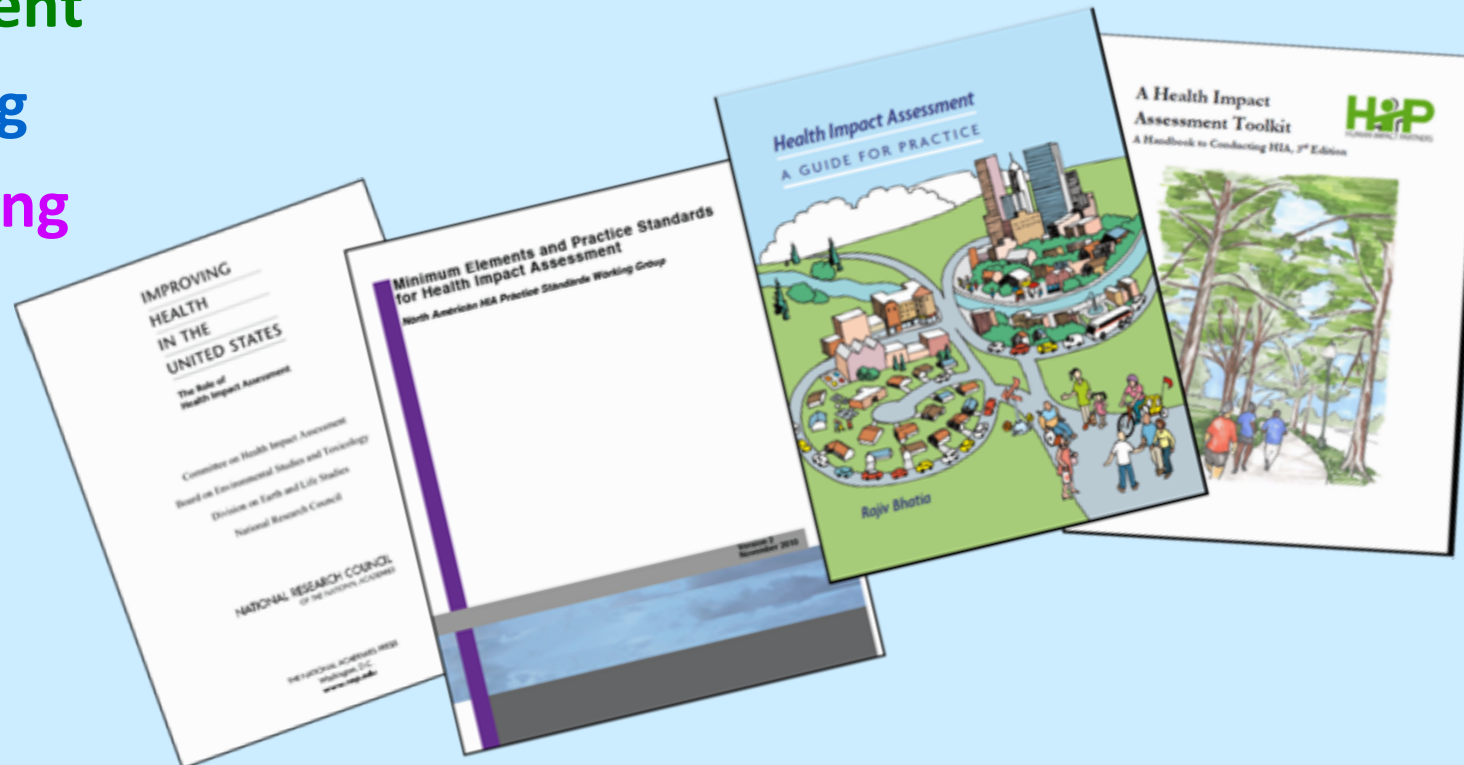- food/ag 7%
- education 5%
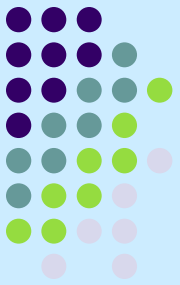- labor/wages 5%
- other 4%

data courtesy of Health Impact Project

5 Steps in the HIA process

1. **Screening**
2. **Scoping**
3. **Assessment**
4. **Reporting**
5. **Monitoring**

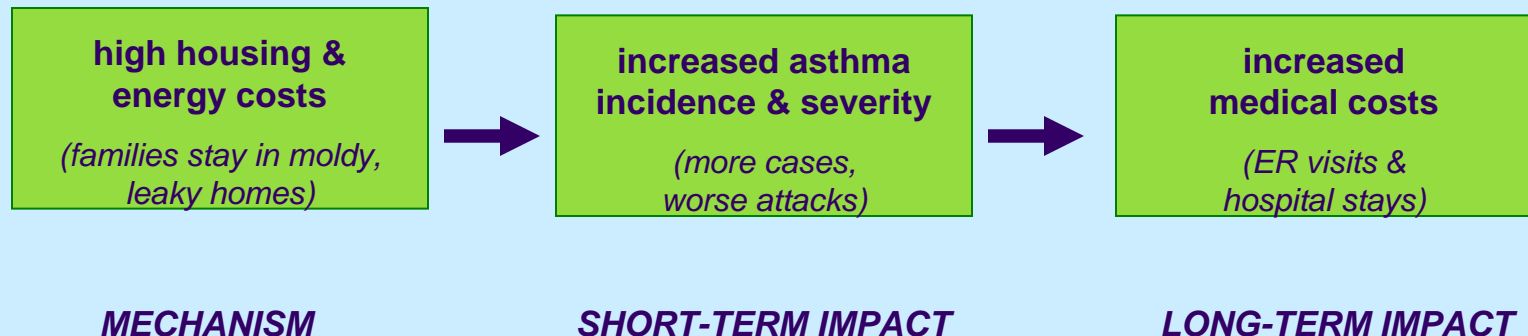# 1. Screening

Should an HIA be conducted?

- What decision will be influenced?
- Is the decision likely to affect health?
- Will the HIA be useful to decision-makers?
- Are resources available to conduct the HIA?
- Who should conduct the HIA?

2. Scoping

How will the HIA be conducted?

- Which health effects are the most important?
- Who will be most affected by the policy decision?
- What methods will we use to assess the impacts?

high housing & energy costs *(families stay in moldy, leaky homes)*	→	increased asthma incidence & severity *(more cases, worse attacks)*	→	increased medical costs *(ER visits & hospital stays)*
MECHANISM		*SHORT-TERM IMPACT*		*LONG-TERM IMPACT*

3. Assessment

How will the decision change things?

- What are the baseline conditions?

- How might the policy change them?

4. Recommendations

How could the decision best support health and equity?

- Are there ways to assure more equitable distribution of benefits and burdens?

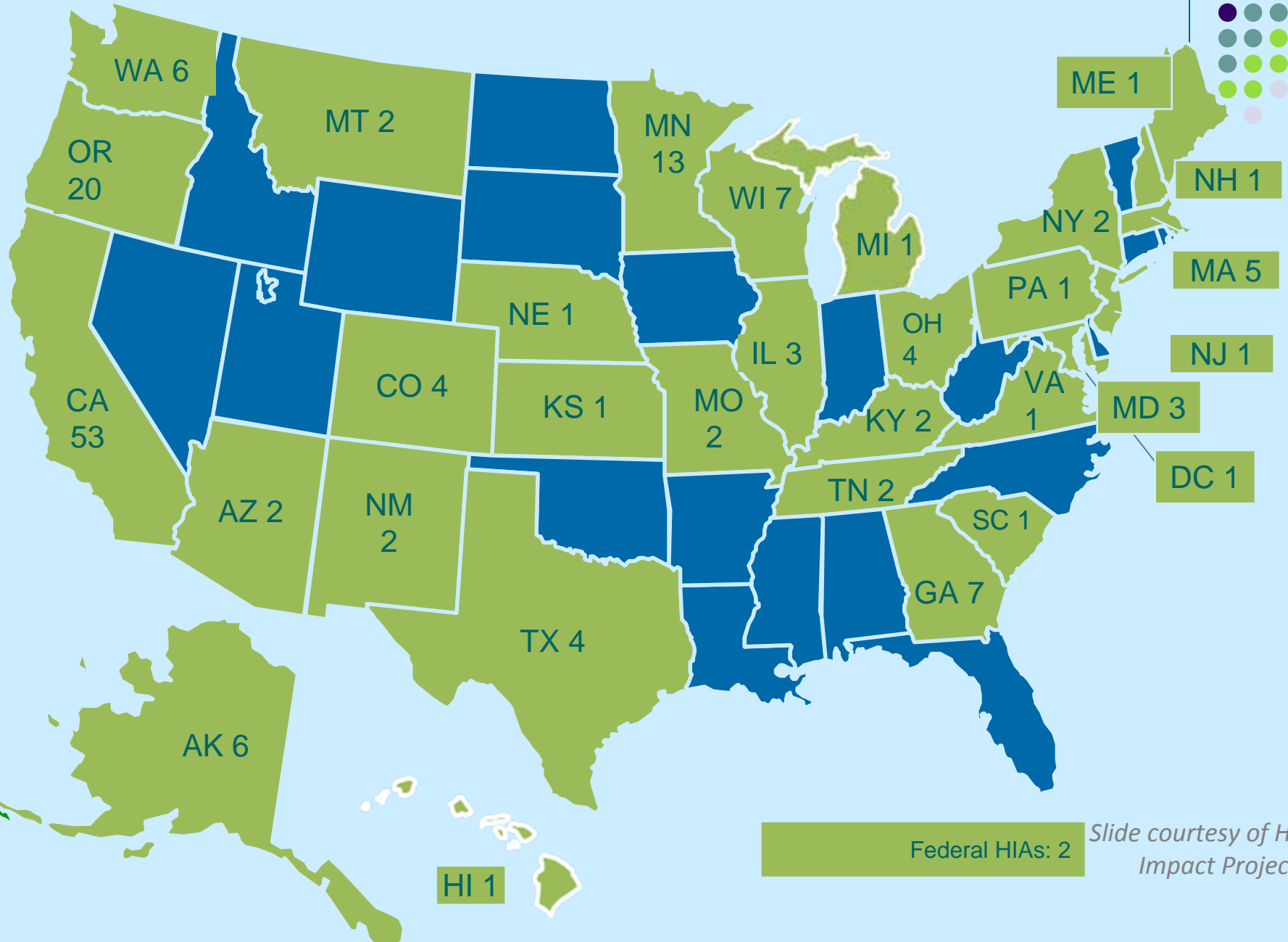- How can "co-benefits" be maximized?

5. Monitoring

How successful was the HIA?

- How did the HIA affect the decision-making process?

- What were the ancillary effects of the HIA?

  - Cross-sector relationships

  - New analytical methods

  - Lessons learned

HIA's completed or in progress

WA 6
OR 20
MT 2
MN 13
WI 7
MI 1
ME 1
NH 1
NY 2
PA 1
MA 5
NJ 1
MD 3
DC 1
CA 53
NE 1
IL 3
OH 4
VA 1
KS 1
MO 2
KY 2
CO 4
AZ 2
NM 2
TN 2
SC 1
TX 4
GA 7
AK 6
HI 1

Federal HIAs: 2

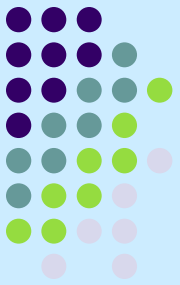*Slide courtesy of Health Impact Project*

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How projects come about

- Internal and external requests
- Key selection criteria
  - Adds unique value to decision-making process
  - Benefits from specific Health Dept. technical expertise
  - Fits with Health Dept. program areas
  - Resources are available
  - Leverages partnerships
- Whether HIA is the tool is a separate question (HIA Step 1: Screening)

Choosing an appropriate tool

- Devised health and equity metrics for East Metro Connections Plan project selection criteria

- Developed Healthier People "measures of success" benchmarks for Portland Plan

- Advised on West Hayden Island ESEE scope

Online resources

- Human Impact Partners FAQ
  www.humanimpact.org/faq

- UCLA HIA Clearinghouse & Info Center (HIA-CLIC)
  www.hiaguide.org

- National Research Council
  "Improving health in the United States: The role of Health Impact Assessment"
  www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13229

Thank you!

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