



**Decarbonizing the Nation: The Role of Pavement Life Cycle**

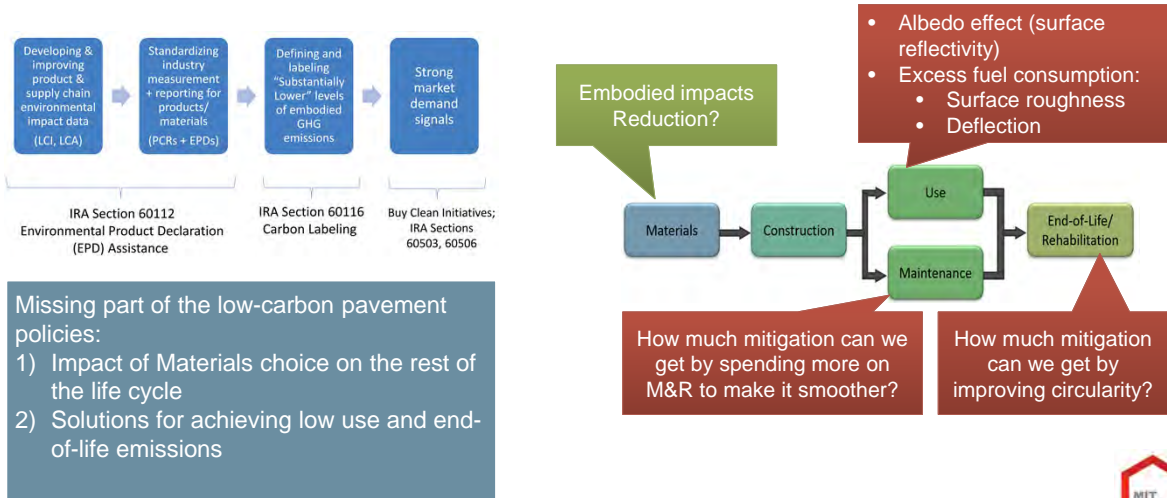
Hessam Azarijafari, Deputy Director

CSHub Pavement Team: Miaomiao Zhang, Haoran Li, Heng Liu, Fengdi Guo, Randolph Kirchain

Concrete Innovation Session

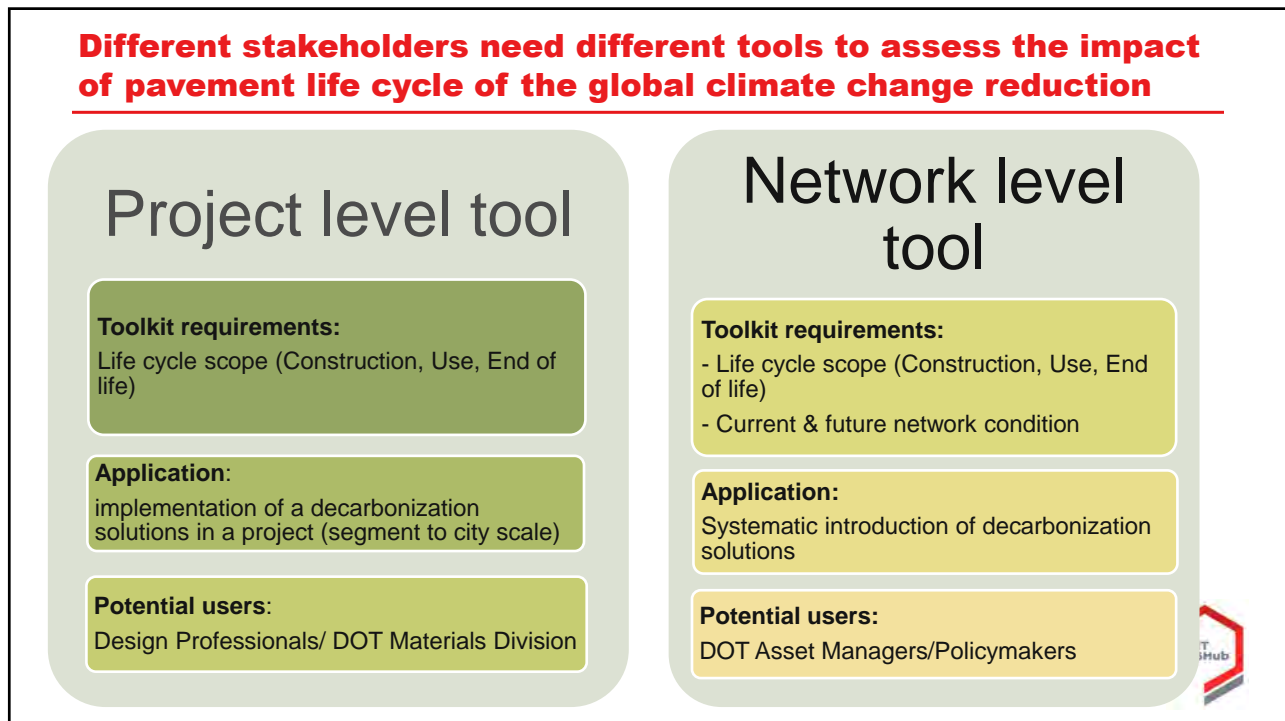
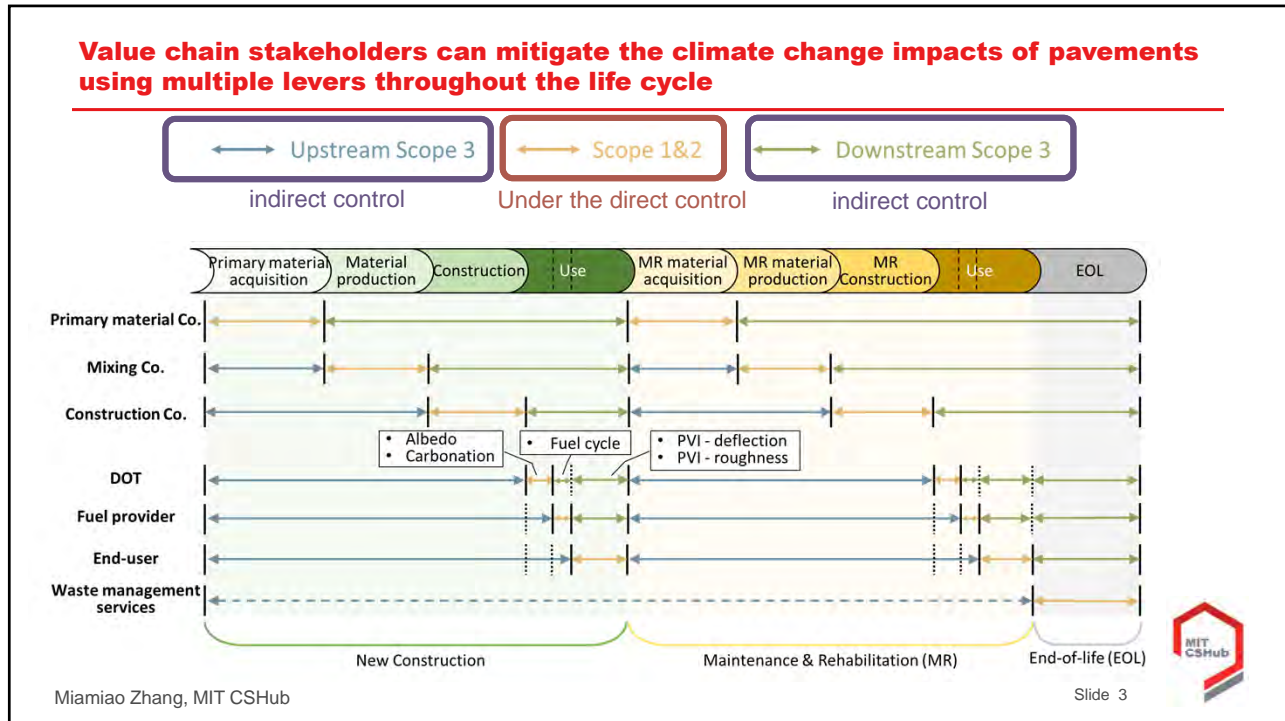
May 17, 2023

**Role of pavement life cycle impact in reducing the nation-wide GHG emissions remains unrecognized**



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## Project-level LCA tool should be able to run possible cases in a computationally efficient manner

### Gaps

Conducting pavement LCA is costly and labor intensive

Pavement LCA requires extensive data

The uncertainty associated with pavement LCA creates challenges in the decision-making process



### Proposed solutions

Develop a **universal and streamlined** pavement LCA method

Leverage **accessible data** and incorporate **uncertainty and variability analyses**

Employ **probabilistic comparative analysis** to attain high confidence in decision-making process

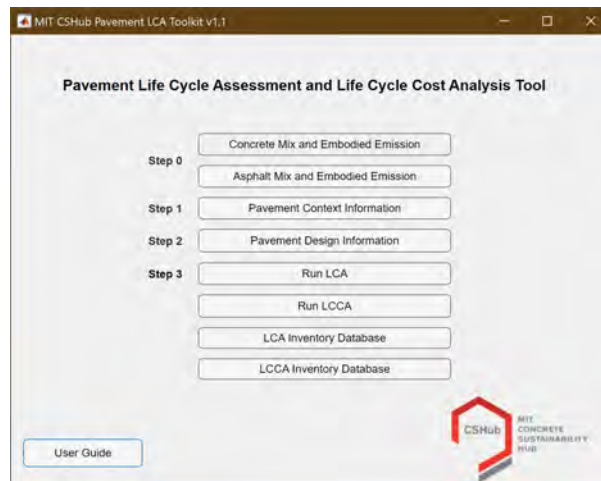
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## Run the LCA Tool



### Main User Interface



Haoran Li and Heng Liu, MIT CSHub

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## CSHub tool allows the detailed or high-level definition of mix data

The image shows two screenshots of the CSHub tool. The left screenshot is the main menu of the 'Pavement Life Cycle Assessment and Life Cycle Cost Analysis Tool', with the 'Concrete Mix and Embodied Emission' option highlighted. An arrow points to the right screenshot, which is a detailed input form titled 'Concrete Embodied Emission'. This form includes fields for 'State', 'PCC Compressive Strength (psi)' (set to 4000), and 'User Input'. It is divided into three sections: 'Material (A1)', 'Transportation (A2)', and 'Energy/Production (A3)'. Each section contains a list of materials or energy sources with input fields for quantity and units. A 'Total (A1+A2+A3)' field is at the bottom, along with 'Compute' and 'Save and Back to Main Menu' buttons.

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## CSHub tool Accommodates any level of information on the pavement design

Option 1:  
High Level Case

Traffic Context	Traffic Loads
Traffic Volume	High
Truck Percentage	High
Traffic Directions	Two-way
Traffic Speed	High
Number of Lanes	4
Pavement Length (mile)	1
Lane Width (ft)	12

Option 2:  
Detailed design &  
context information

Traffic Context	Traffic Loads	
Parameters	Min.	Max.
AADT per Lane	8298	11064
AADTT per Lane	1168	1558
Traffic Growth (%)	1	1
Traffic Speed (mph)	65	80
Reliability (%)	90	95
User Input		Override

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## Run LCA Tool: Step2 (Pavement Context)

**1. Click "Pavement Design Information"**

**3. Click "Save Back to Main Menu"**

**Design Specification**

**Run Pavement Design**

**Save and Back to Main Menu**

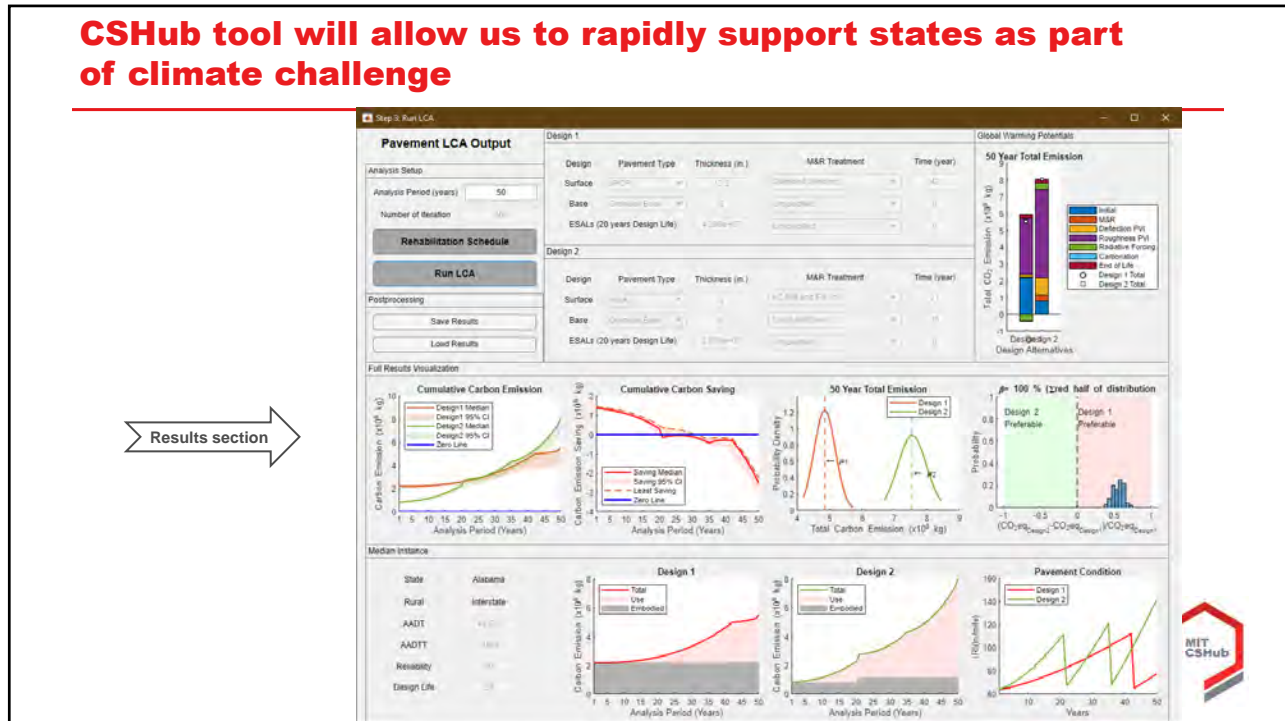
## Run LCA Tool: Step3 (Run LCA)

**Rehabilitation Schedule**

**Run LCA**

**Save and Back to Main Menu**

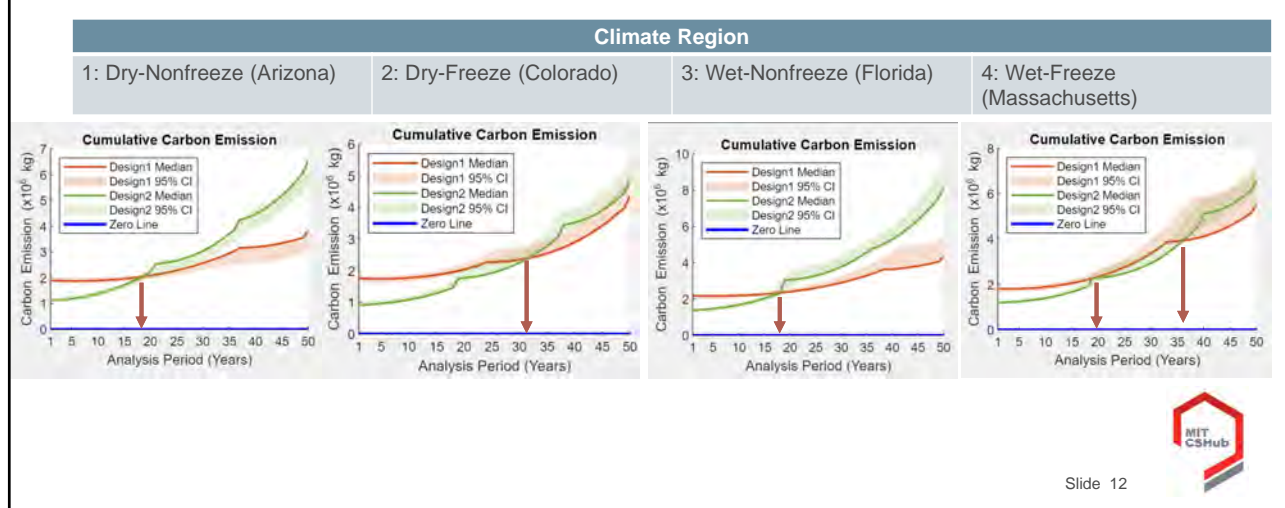
**CSHub tool will allow us to rapidly support states as part of climate challenge**



Results section

**Lessons learned: Payback period of using concrete pavement in warm region is faster**

Case study of Interstate highways



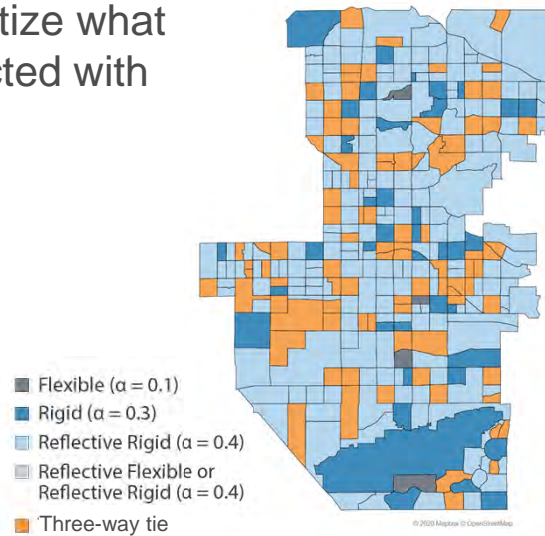
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**Lessons learned: cool pavements are the most preferred options in the majority of urban areas**

Objective: Identify and prioritize what segment should be constructed with cool materials

**For Phoenix**

- Rigid Pavement is the dominant low GHG solution
  - Reflective: 73% of lane-kms
  - Conventional: 9% of lane-kms
- More information needed to choose: 17% of lane-kms
- 1% of lane-kms should remain as flexible



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**Network level tools need to consider multiple criteria of performance, budget, and available treatment actions**

Segment D:  
Traffic: 15,000  
PCI: Fair  
Type: Concrete

Segment C:  
Traffic: 16,000  
PCI: Fair  
Type: Asphalt

Segment A:  
Traffic: 8,000  
PCI: Poor  
Type: Composite

Segment B:  
Traffic: 10,000  
PCI: Poor  
Type: Asphalt

Thought bubbles:  
 - How to prioritize which segments to repair?  
 - Will targets be met?  
 - Many short term fixes? Few long-term fixes?

Person at table:  
 Performance target: Good  
 Budget: \$\$\$\$\$

Action	Cost	Service life
Mill & Fill	\$\$	10
Asphalt overlay	\$	5
Concrete overlay	\$\$	20
Reconstruction	\$\$\$	25



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**Objective: To investigate the role of life cycle environmental performance of U.S. pavement in lowering GHG emissions**

Complexity of Evaluating Pavement Network Impacts in State-level



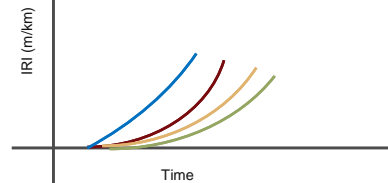
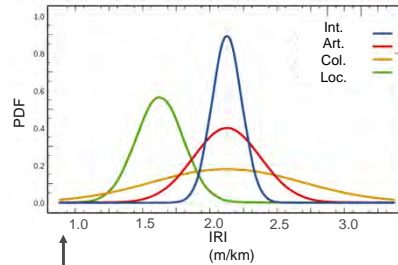
Road classes in states  
 (Interstate, Arterials,  
 Collectors, Locals)

Traffic is different

Surface condition is different

Deterioration rate is different

M&R is different

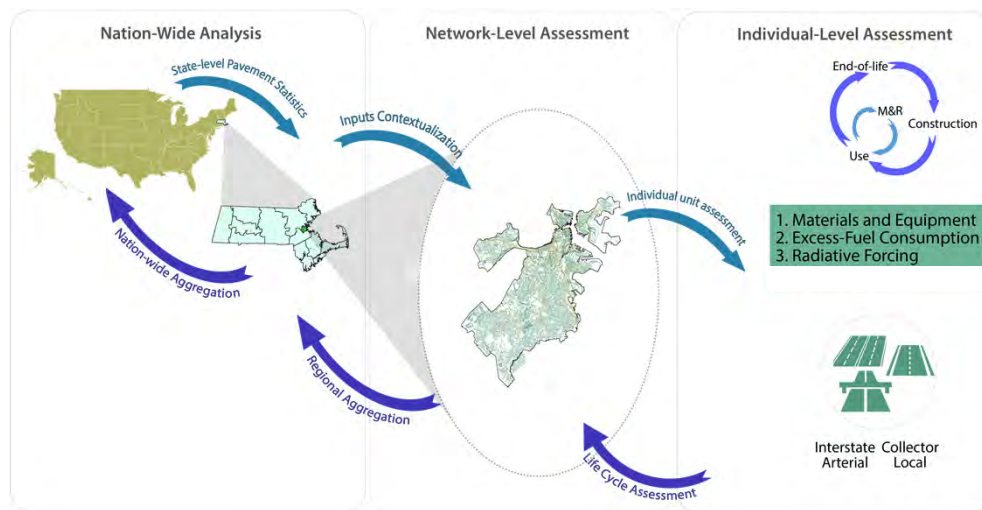


Budget for maintenance and repair is limited.



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**Objective: To investigate the role of life cycle environmental performance of U.S. pavement in lowering GHG emissions**



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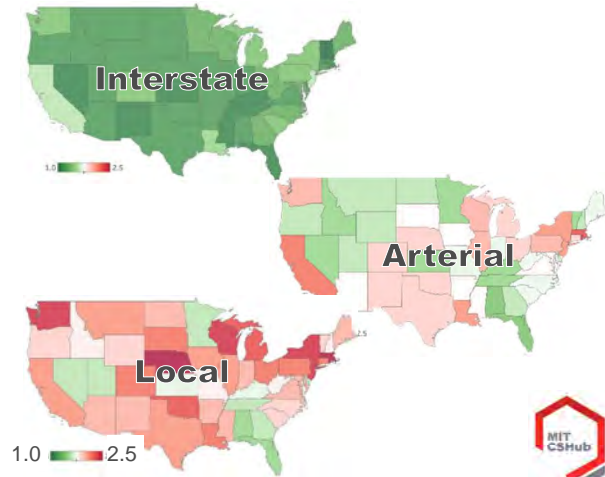


## Scaling CSHub Analyses to the National Scale

First step is Future of Concrete Analysis

- Current network condition data (IRA only) from FHWA by state
- Climate data:
  - NOAA
  - NWS
- Major Progress
  - Statistical characterization of all states
  - Climate zone proxy deterioration models
  - Calibrated decision trees for EVERY STATE

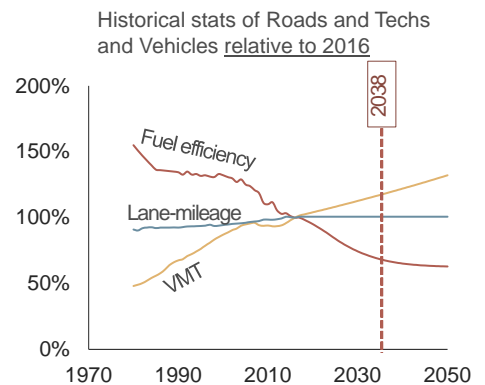
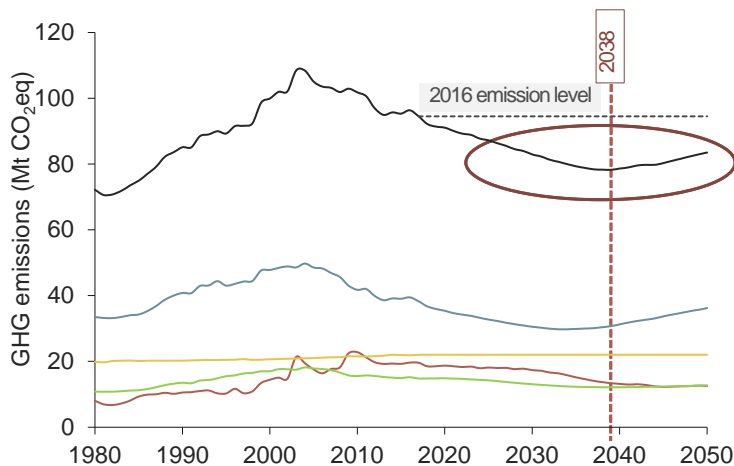
Average Condition of Pavements Varies Widely (IRI in/mile)



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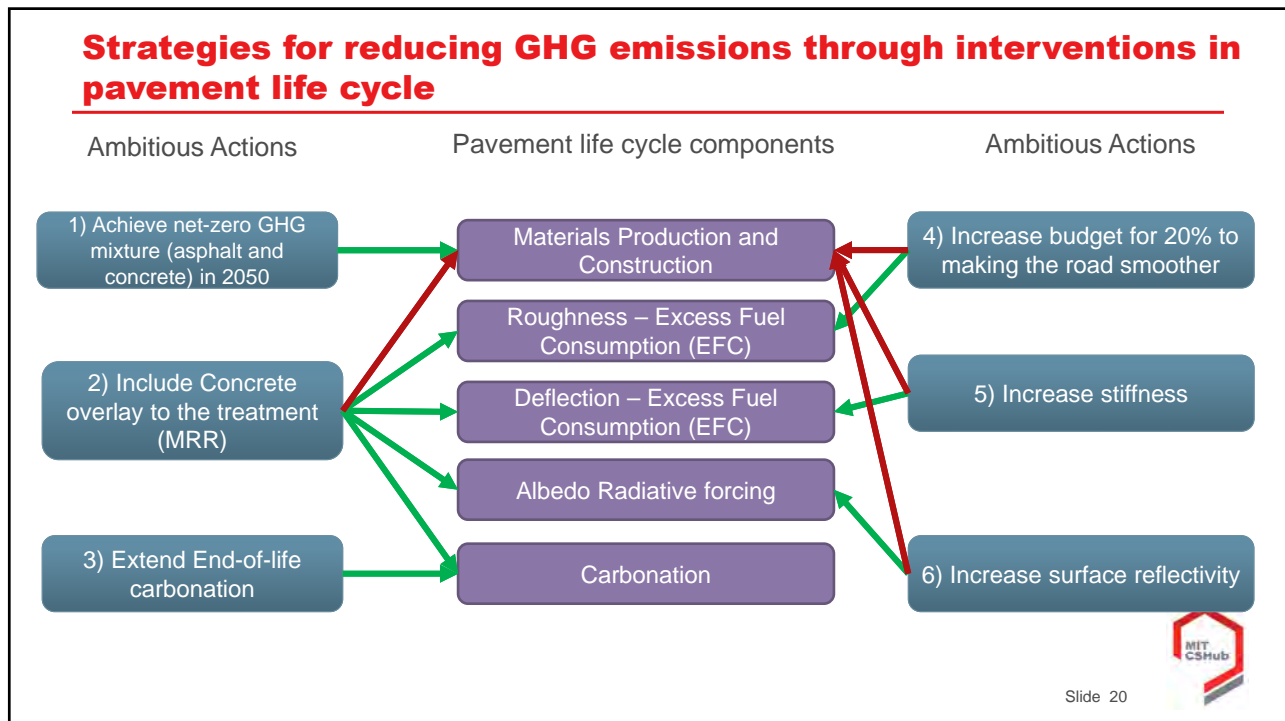
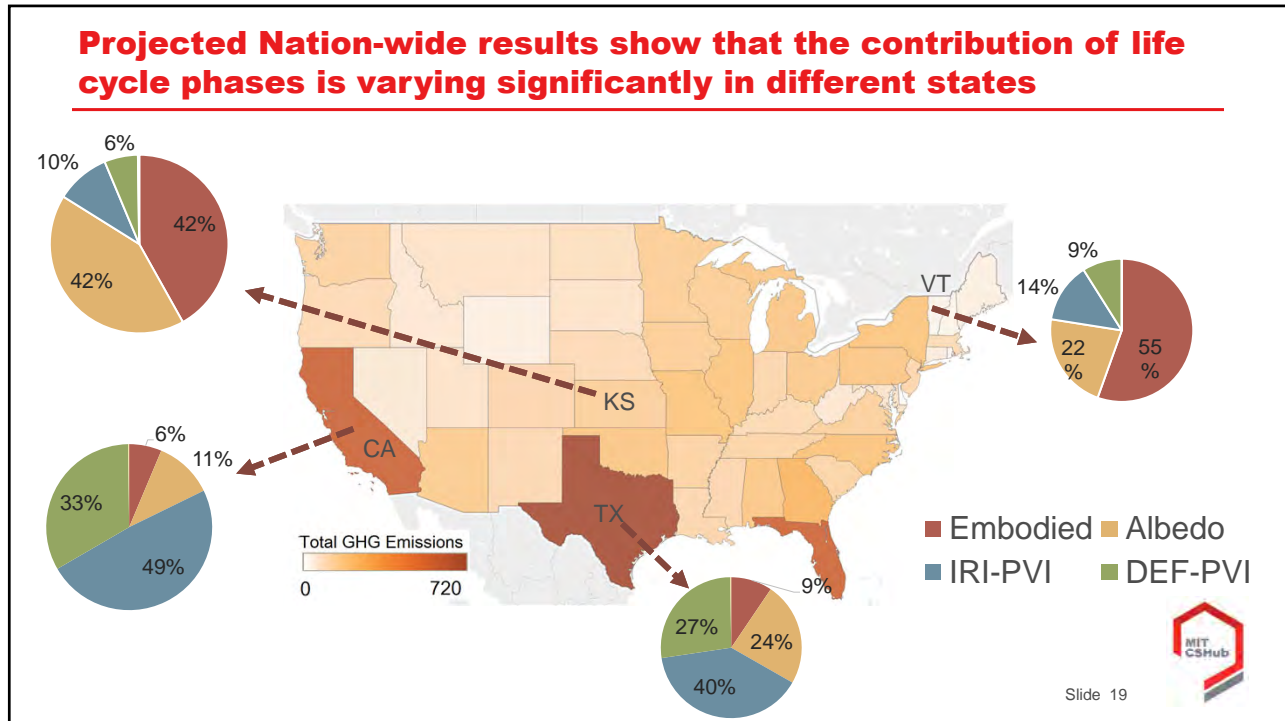
## After 2038, an increasing trend is expected for the U.S. road emissions

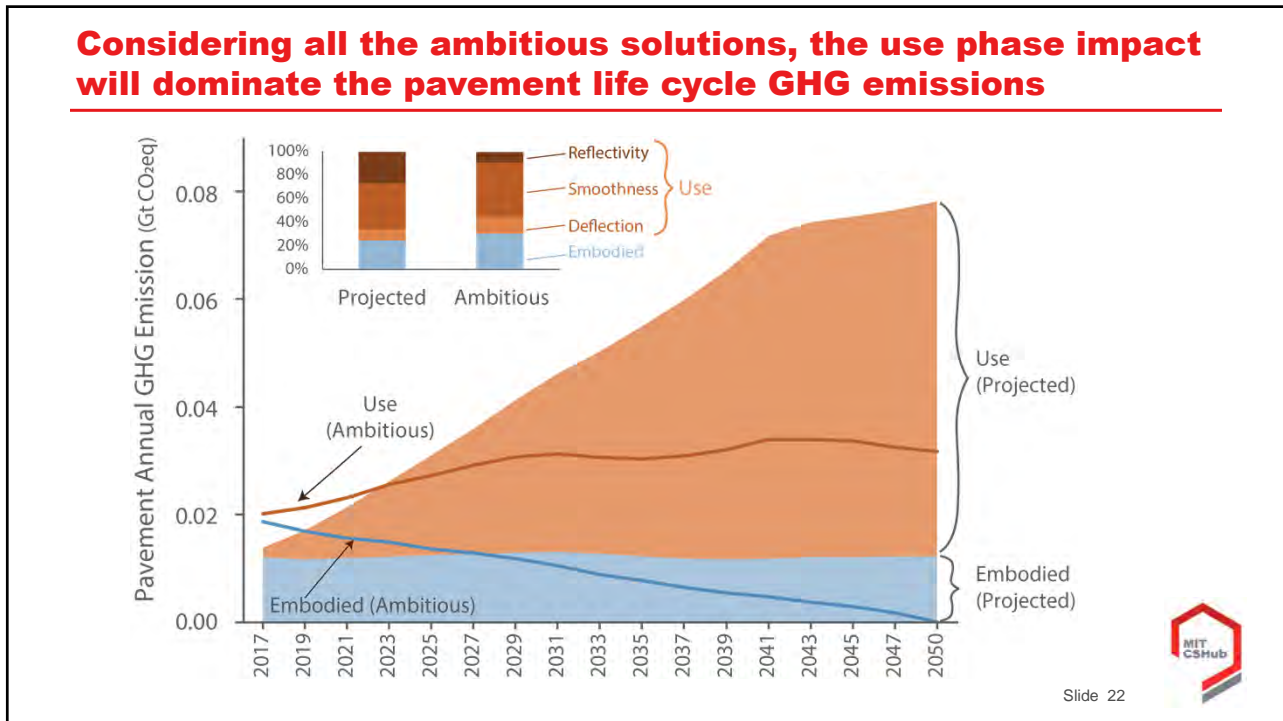
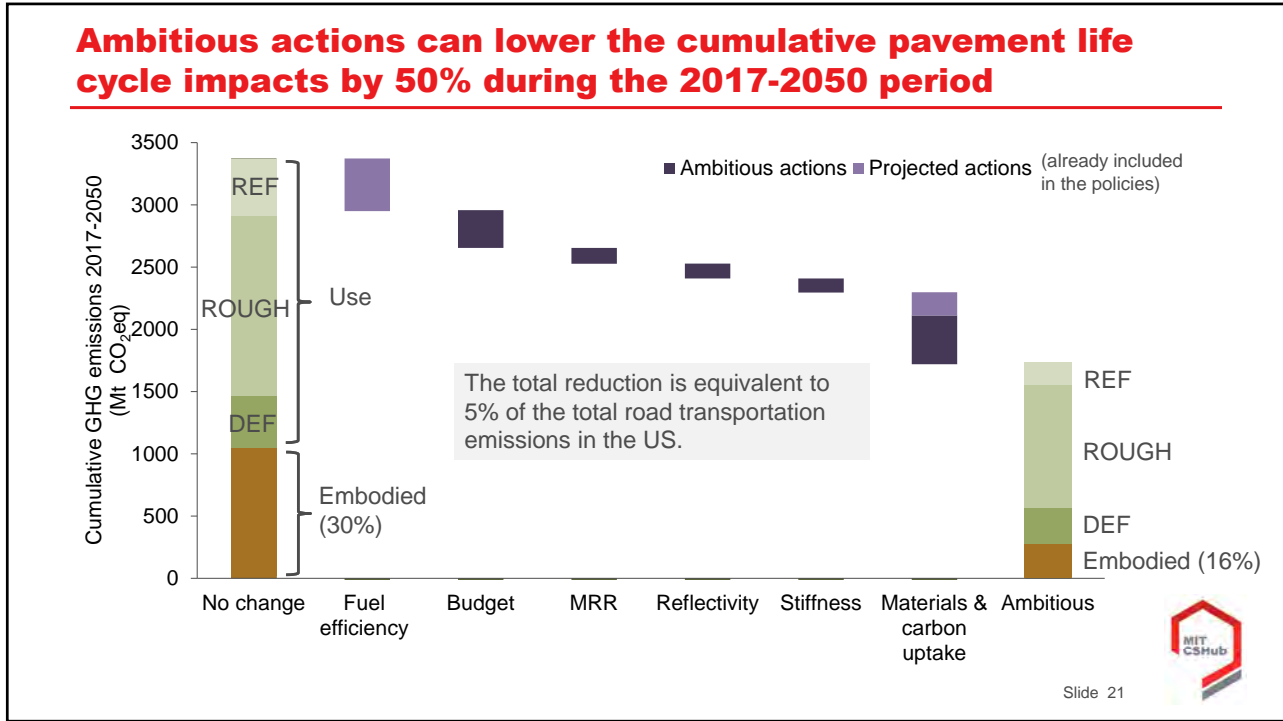
Life cycle GHG emissions of the pavement network will decrease but there is an increasing trend after 2038 (Action required!)



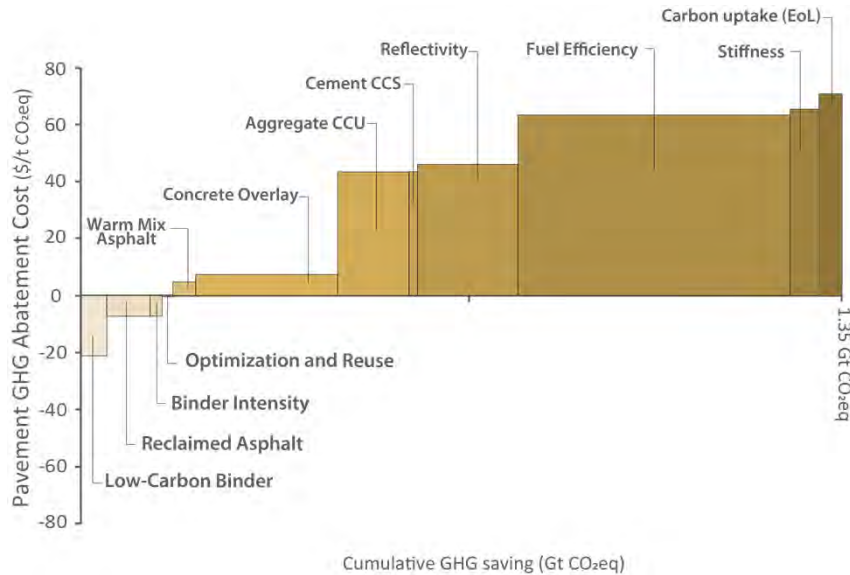
Sources: FHWA, US EIA, and BTS

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## Embodied impact solutions are among the lowest cost ones while opportunities for the use phase solutions are larger



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## Conclusions

- Pavement can be a significant enabler for decarbonizing the nation.
- Project-level tools can empower the decision makers on identifying and prioritizing the lowest GHG emissions alternative (from the segment to city level)
- Network-level tools need to be used by DOTs to assess their policy implication on pavement decarbonization.
- Embodied solutions owe the lowest abatement costs while the use phase solutions have larger saving potential.
- Proposed scenarios can offset 5% of the U.S. road transportation emissions (major contributor).



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**Thank you!**

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