

107 Outreach During PD&E



During the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) phase, FDOT works closely with federal agencies, state, local, and tribal governments, public and private organizations, and the public to understand the potential impacts of the project. This process requires a delicate balance between many important factors, including:

- Mobility needs,
- Economic prosperity,
- Health and environmental protection,
- Community and neighborhood preservation, and
- Quality of life for present and future generations.

Requirements for public involvement during the PD&E phase are found in the PD&E Manual, Part 1, Chapter 11.

The PD&E process is based on FHWA's requirements and FDOT's process for completing NEPA requirements; and therefore, the public involvement process outlined in the PD&E Manual, Part 1, Chapter 11 Public Involvement reflects FHWA's policies and guidance for

public involvement, as well as the Department's procedures.

During the PD&E phase, public involvement activities are undertaken with the goal of soliciting comments about the proposed project and then communicating the recommended alternative at the conclusion of the study. Depending on the Class of Action for the project, different public involvement actions are undertaken to meet federal and state requirements. Key activities may include the following:

- Preparation of a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) developed in accordance with state and federal requirements and reflecting the context and complexity of the proposed project
- Public Kickoff Meeting
- Alternatives Public Information Meeting(s)
- Newsletters
- Project website
- Public hearing with the preparation of a transcript

Not all projects require a PD&E study. For the ones that do, the project team often holds several public meetings, including kickoff meetings, information meetings and workshops, and public hearings. Other public involvement techniques include newsletters, brochures, and websites. Not every Class of Action requires a formal public hearing, but it should be noted that public hearings have specific legal requirements for how they are advertised and conducted. Refer to *Section 703 Notification Requirements*.

During the PD&E phase, the public involvement effort uses a variety of information to more clearly identify and delineate a project's stakeholders and affected communities. The scope of public involvement differs with each PD&E study and is adapted to the complexity of the project, as well as local area conditions. Input from the public helps engineering and environmental decisions and ensures an open and transparent decision-making process.