

401 Identifying the Public

To achieve inclusive public engagement, the plan/project outreach strategy must consider the full range of individuals and organizations who would have an interest in or could be affected by the transportation action. Taking steps to engage with these stakeholders will bring diverse knowledge, opinions, and concerns to light for developing recommendations that are most suitable for the purpose and context.

The Department's public involvement activities must be accessible to any person regardless of race, color, national origin (English language proficiency), physical ability, and income status. Effectively engaging with different population groups may call for different approaches or techniques. Understanding who lives, works, studies, shops, and plays in a plan/project area is fundamental to tailoring outreach to their needs and preferences as well as complying with federal and state nondiscrimination laws and directives.

Steps to identifying the public include:

- Identifying representatives of stakeholder organizations for inclusion in the plan/project contacts list
- Identifying property interests, including property owners and tenants, located within a minimum of 300 feet of the centerline of any project alternative for inclusion in the project contacts list
- Performing a focused demographic analysis to identify populations, communities, and organizations whose involvement will be necessary to achieve inclusive public involvement

