

PART 1, CHAPTER 11

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

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PART 1 CHAPTER 11

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

11.1 OVERVIEW

This chapter contains the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) procedure for public involvement during the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) phase of a transportation project and also provides some guidance on other phases of project development.

11.1.1 Definition of Public Involvement

Public involvement is the active solicitation of public participation in the development of transportation plans, programs and projects. The process offers the public a chance not only to be informed, but to participate in agency decision-making to address public needs and preferences. Various federal and state regulations require that state departments of transportation and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)/Transportation Planning Organizations (TPOs) proactively seek the involvement of all interested parties (see [Section 11.1.3](#)). Public input can be received via various forms of media or through participation in a public forum.

11.1.2 Intent of Public Involvement

The intent of public involvement is to engage the public, including property owners, tenants, business owners and operators, public officials and agencies, facility users, interested individuals, and special interest groups, during the development of transportation projects. Early and continuous public involvement provides FDOT an opportunity to understand potential topics/impacts early in the project development process so solutions can be considered prior to the completion of the Design phase.

FDOT has established procedures and agreements for coordinating public and agency participation in and comment on the environmental review process for transportation projects consistent with **23 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 139(g)**. This consists of the [PD&E Manual, Topic No. 650-000-001](#); [Efficient Transportation Decision Making \(ETDM\) Manual, Topic No. 650-000-002](#); ETDM interagency agreements; and project screening through the ETDM Environmental Screening Tool (EST).

Public involvement should:

1. Be inclusive of stakeholders, especially those who will be most affected.
2. Emphasize partnering and consensus.
3. Begin early in the project process, be proactive and ongoing.

4. Be defined, structured, transparent, and clearly delineated at the beginning of the project. Use the most appropriate tools for each audience, by identifying the audience and needs for each project and any potential barriers to communication.

While public involvement is an on-going process throughout project development, activities are most prevalent during the PD&E phase. Coordination during this phase allows the public the opportunity to provide input in transportation decisions resulting in the development of transportation systems that support community needs and desires. Through public involvement, FDOT can gain insight into an affected community and use this knowledge to evaluate the community effects of the project alternatives (see [Part 2, Chapter 4, Community Impact Assessment](#)). Public involvement, in conjunction with other sources of data, plays an essential role in the assessment of the social, cultural, natural and physical effects of transportation projects.

11.1.3 Federal and State Public Involvement Requirements

The public involvement procedure in this chapter is in compliance with federal and state requirements. This chapter was reviewed and approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for compliance with **23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 771.111** on January 26, 2026.

There are many laws and regulations that apply to the **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** process. Specifics on how regulations pertaining to public involvement are implemented during the PD&E phase are discussed within individual sections as they apply. The most relevant to public involvement activities include:

Title VI / Nondiscrimination

All FDOT project activities must comply with **Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act** and related statutes, as referenced in [Title VI/Non-Discrimination Program, Policy Number 001-275-006](#) and implementing procedure [Title VI Program and Related Statutes-Implementation and Review Procedure, Topic No. 275-010-010](#). This includes all federal and state programs administered by FDOT and its sub-recipients. All public meeting or hearing notifications must include the **Civil Rights Act of 1964** standard statement (see [Section 11.6.2](#)). At all public meetings and hearings, regardless of project phase, a board with the **Civil Rights Act of 1964** standard statement, along with the contact information for the District Title VI Coordinator and State Title VI Coordinator, must be displayed in the physical location and on a slide for the virtual component (see [Section 11.6.7](#)).

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

All FDOT project activities must comply with the **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)**. This Act prohibits the exclusion of persons with disabilities from participation

in services, programs, or activities of a public entity and requires public accommodations to provide equivalent access to individuals with disabilities. This is important for public involvement activities, as the locations of public meetings, workshops, and hearings should be accessible.

Other federal regulations that are applicable to public involvement activities are listed in [Table 11-1](#). State regulations that are applicable to public involvement activities are listed in [Table 11-2](#).

11.2 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT DURING THE EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION DECISION MAKING PROCESS

For FDOT projects that qualify for screening in the ETDM EST, project information is available to the public on the [ETDM Public Access Site](#). See [Part 1, Chapter 2, Class of Action Determination for Federal Projects](#) for a list of qualifying project types.

Through the [ETDM Public Access Site](#) the public is able to submit comments on the project through the EST to the project contact (i.e., ETDM Coordinator or Project Manager) providing the public an early opportunity to be involved in the identification of potential project impacts as well as defining the purpose and need and reasonable range of alternatives as required by **23 CFR § 771.111**.

Additional information regarding the ETDM process and access to the [ETDM Public Access Site](#) is available at FDOT's [Office of Environmental Management \(OEM\) Website](#) and in the [ETDM Manual, Topic No. 650-000-002](#).

11.3 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT BASED ON ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT TYPE

For projects with a PD&E phase, information from the Planning phase may be utilized to continue or enhance public involvement activities. For projects screened in the ETDM EST, information from the EST can be used to plan and implement **Public Involvement Plans (PIPs)** and public outreach activities. The ETDM Coordinator and Community Liaison Coordinator (CLC) can provide an understanding of the project's background, issues that were identified, and any public comments received during the EST screening events to help develop the **PIP**. The CLC can also assist with identifying audiences for PD&E outreach activities and provide any public feedback received during the screening events.

Public involvement activities vary by Environmental Document type.

11.3.1 Type 1 Categorical Exclusion and Non-Major State Action

Type 1 Categorical Exclusions (CEs) and Non-Major State Actions (NMSAs) do not typically require a public hearing, but may necessitate public involvement activities as determined by the District. A **Community Awareness Plan (CAP)** is typically prepared for these projects. See the [FDOT Design Manual, Part 1, Chapter 104, Public Involvement, Topic No. 625-000-002](#) for more information on preparing a **CAP**.

11.3.2 Type 2 Categorical Exclusion

Notification and public involvement activities for a Type 2 CE are outlined below:

- The District initiates a **PIP** or in some cases a **CAP**. See [Section 11.4](#) for guidance on determining which plan to prepare.
- The District **may** conduct a kick-off meeting for public engagement with elected officials/agencies and/or the public. A formal letter/email may be used in place of a meeting. See [Section 11.6.3](#) for more details.
- A public meeting/workshop **may** be held. See [Section 11.6](#) for more details.
- A public hearing may be required by **Section 339.155(5), Florida Statutes (F.S.)** (see [Section 11.6.9](#)).
- If a public hearing **is** required:
 - A notice of the public hearing is placed as a newspaper advertisement (newspaper ad) twice in the local newspaper(s) (see [Section 11.6.9.2.3](#)). The District obtains proof of publication or an **Affidavit of Publication**.
 - A similar notice is placed on the FDOT **Public Meeting Notices Website** ([Section 11.6.9.2.5](#)) and the **Florida Administrative Register (FAR)** ([Section 11.6.9.2.4](#)).
 - The public hearing is held. See [Section 11.6.9](#) for public hearing requirements.
- If a public hearing is **not** required by **Section 339.155(5), F.S.**, see [Section 11.6.10](#) for guidance on offering the public an opportunity to request a public hearing.
 - If it is determined to hold a public hearing after requests are received, see [Section 11.6.9](#) for details.

- After the Type 2 CE is approved, an Announcement of Location and Design Concept Acceptance (LDCA) is distributed as outlined in [Part 1, Chapter 5, Categorical Exclusion](#).
- The Announcement of LDCA is also published as a newspaper ad. See [Section 11.7.2](#) for details.
- A **Limitations on Claims Notice** may be published in the *Federal Register (FR)*. See [Section 11.7.3](#) for more details.

11.3.3 Environmental Assessment

Notification and public involvement activities for an Environmental Assessment (EA) are included in [Figure 11-1](#) and outlined below:

- The District initiates a **PIP**. See [Section 11.5](#) for guidance on preparing a **PIP**.
- The District **may** conduct a kick-off meeting for public engagement with elected officials/agencies and/or the public. A formal letter/email may be used in place of a meeting. See [Section 11.6.3](#) for details.
- A local advisory group **may** be established. See [FDOT Public Involvement Handbook](#) for details.
- A public meeting/workshop **may** be held. See [Section 11.6](#) for details.
- After the EA is approved by OEM for public notice it is distributed as outlined in [Part 1, Chapter 6, Environmental Assessment](#).
- The EA is made available for public inspection. See [Section 11.6.9.1](#) for details.
- A public hearing may be required by **Section 339.155(5), F.S.**, (see [Section 11.6.9](#)).
- If a public hearing **is** required:
 - The District places a notice of availability in the local newspaper(s) twice which includes advertisement of the public hearing. See [Section 11.6.9.2](#) for notification requirements. The District obtains proof of publication or an **Affidavit of Publication**.
 - A similar notice is placed on the FDOT **Public Meeting Notices Website** ([Section 11.6.9.2.5](#)) and the **FAR** ([Section 11.6.9.2.4](#)).

- The public hearing is held. See [Section 11.6.9](#) for public hearing requirements.
- If a public hearing is **not required** by **Section 339.155(5), F.S.**, see [Section 11.6.10](#) for guidance on a notice of opportunity to request a public hearing.
 - If it is determined to hold a public hearing after requests are received, see [Section 11.6.9](#).

11.3.4 Environmental Assessment with Finding of No Significant Impact

Final notification activities for an EA with Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) are included in [Figure 11-1](#) and outlined below:

- After the EA with FONSI is approved by OEM, it is distributed as outlined in [Part 1, Chapter 7, Finding of No Significant Impact](#).
- The EA with FONSI is made available to the public. See [Section 11.7.2](#) for details.
- An Announcement of LDCA is published as a newspaper ad. See [Section 11.7.2](#) for details.
- A **Limitations on Claims Notice** is published in the *FR*. See [Section 11.7.3](#) for details.

11.3.5 Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Notification and public involvement activities for a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) are included in [Figure 11-2](#) and outlined below:

- The District initiates a **PIP**. See [Section 11.5](#) for guidance on preparing a **PIP**.
- The District **may** conduct a kick-off meeting for public engagement with elected officials/agencies and/or the public. A formal letter/email may be used in place of a meeting. See [Section 11.6.3](#) for details.
- A local advisory group **may** be established. See the [FDOT Public Involvement Handbook](#) for details.
- Public meetings/workshops **may** be held. See [Section 11.6](#) for details.

- The District submits a **Notice of Intent (NOI)** to OEM to coordinate publication in the **FR**. See [Part 1, Chapter 8, Draft Environmental Impact Statement](#) for additional information on the **NOI**.
- The District **may** hold a formal scoping meeting with government agencies and other parties with an interest in or jurisdiction over the project area. For additional guidance, see [Figure 11-3](#).
- After the DEIS is approved by OEM for circulation, it is distributed as outlined in [Part 1, Chapter 8, Draft Environmental Impact Statement](#).
- The DEIS is made available to the public, see [Section 11.6.9.1](#) for details.
- A notice of public hearing is placed as a newspaper ad twice in the local newspaper(s) which mentions the availability of the DEIS for comment. See [Section 11.6.9.2](#) for notification requirements. The District obtains proof of publication or an **Affidavit of Publication**.
- A similar notice is placed on FDOT **Public Meeting Notices Website** ([Section 11.6.9.2.5](#)) and the **FAR** ([Section 11.6.9.2.4](#)).
- After distribution and public notice, the District submits a **Notice of Availability** of the DEIS to OEM to coordinate publication in the **FR**. The **Notice of Availability** establishes a 45-day comment period. See [Part 1, Chapter 8, Draft Environmental Impact Statement](#) for details on preparing and publishing the **Notice of Availability**.
- A public hearing is held to comply with **Section 339.155(5), F.S.**, see [Section 11.6.9](#) for public hearing requirements.

11.3.6 Final Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision or Final Environmental Impact Statement

Final notification activities for a Final Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision (FEIS/ROD) are included in [Figure 11-2](#). Notification activities for a separate FEIS, and final notification activities for a ROD are included in [Figure 11-4](#). Both are outlined below:

- If a FEIS/ROD:
 - After the FEIS/ROD is approved by OEM, it is distributed as outlined in [Part 1, Chapter 9, Final Environmental Impact Statement](#).
 - The FEIS/ROD is made available to the public (see [Section 11.7.2](#) for requirements).

- An announcement of LDCA is published as a newspaper ad. See [Section 11.7.2](#) for details.
- After the announcement of LDCA is published, the District submits a **Notice of Availability** of the FEIS/ROD to OEM to coordinate publication in the *FR* (see [Part 1, Chapter 9 Final Environmental Impact Statement](#)). The **Notice of Availability** may be combined with a **Limitations on Claims Notice** or it may be published separately in the *FR*. See [Section 11.7.3](#) for details.
- If the FEIS is approved separately from the ROD:
 - After the FEIS is approved by OEM, it is distributed as outlined in [Part 1, Chapter 9, Final Environmental Impact Statement](#).
 - The FEIS is made available to the public. See [Section 11.7.1](#) for details.
 - The District places a notice of availability as a newspaper ad and obtains proof of publication or an **Affidavit of Publication**. See [Section 11.7.1](#) for details.
 - After distribution and public notice, the District submits a **Notice of Availability** of the FEIS to OEM to coordinate publication in the *FR*. The **Notice of Availability** establishes a 30-day comment period (see [Part 1, Chapter 9, Final Environmental Impact Statement](#)).
 - The ROD is prepared and signed by OEM no sooner than 30 days after publication of the **Notice of Availability** in the *FR*.
 - After the ROD is approved by OEM, it is distributed as outlined in [Part 1, Chapter 9, Final Environmental Impact Statement](#).
 - The ROD is made available to the public. See [Section 11.7.2](#) for details.
 - An announcement of LDCA is published as a newspaper ad. See [Section 11.7.2](#) for details.
 - The District submits a **Limitations on Claims Notice** to OEM to coordinate publication in the *FR*. See [Section 11.7.3](#) for details.

11.3.7 State Environmental Impact Report

Public involvement activities for a State Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) are outlined below:

- The District initiates a **PIP**. See [Section 11.5](#) for guidance on preparing a **PIP**.
- The District **may** conduct a kick-off meeting for public engagement with elected officials/agencies and/or the public. A formal letter/email may be used in place of a meeting. See [Section 11.6.3](#) for more details.
- A local advisory group **may** be established. See the [FDOT Public Involvement Handbook](#) for details.
- A public information meeting/workshop **may** be held. See [Section 11.6](#) for more details.
- After the SEIR is approved for public availability, a notice of the public hearing is placed as a newspaper ad twice in the local newspaper(s). See [Section 11.6.9](#) for public hearing notification requirements. The District obtains proof of publication or an **Affidavit of Publication**.
- A similar notice is placed in the **FAR** ([Section 11.6.9.2.4](#)) and on the FDOT **Public Meeting Notices Website** ([Section 11.6.9.2.5](#)).
- The public hearing is held. See [Section 11.6.9](#) for public hearing requirements.

11.4 TYPES OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLANS

There are three types of plans for public engagement that are prepared in specific scenarios. As appropriate, these plans should be developed and implemented at the start of the applicable project phase.

A **Communication Plan** may be developed to provide the public engagement strategy during the Planning phase (work prior to the PD&E phase). This plan outlines the methods and timelines for engaging with the public, local agencies, and stakeholders.

A **Public Involvement Plan (PIP)** is the primary public engagement plan outlined in this Chapter. A **PIP** is prepared for transportation projects during the PD&E phase (typically a Type 2 CE, EA, EIS, or SEIR). The **PIP** defines affected communities and potential stakeholders, as well as details of the outreach methods and required notification timeframes to involve and gain their input. It may include any other public involvement strategies used to support a **NEPA** decision for an FDOT Federal Project. See [Section 11.5](#) for information on creating a **PIP**.

Planning activities and design projects with minor activities may follow a **PIP** outline. For example, a planning project may have a more fluid plan, focused on stakeholders, rather than a standard **PIP**.

A **Community Awareness Plan (CAP)** is developed for the design and construction phases of a project. It identifies appropriate outreach activities based on the type of project and potential community concerns about proposed construction impacts. For additional information, see the [FDOT Design Manual, Part 1, Topic No. 625-000-002](#). A **CAP** is typically prepared for Type 1 CEs, NMSAs, and sometimes Type 2 CEs that are not screened in EST. For format and content of the **CAP** see the [FDOT Design Manual, Part 1, Chapter 104, Public Involvement, Topic No. 625-000-002](#). In the case of overlapping PD&E and Design phases; either a **PIP** or a **CAP** is prepared depending on the needs of the project.

11.5 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

This section outlines the contents of the **PIP**. For additional information on strategies and best practices, see the [FDOT Public Involvement Handbook](#). A sample of the **PIP** is included in the FDOT [Public Engagement Resource Kit \(PERK\)](#).

The **PIP** is considered final after District-level review and approval and it is uploaded in the StateWide Environmental Project Tracker (SWEPT). This typically takes place before the kick-off of public engagement. As the PD&E phase continues, adjustments may be made to the public engagement strategies. Any changes to the approach as outlined in the **PIP**, along with the reasoning behind the changes, should be documented within a technical report called a **Summary of Public Involvement (SPI)**, see [Section 11.8](#).

A **PIP** should only be rewritten or updated under unusual circumstances as determined by FDOT. For example, if there is a substantial change in project scope or purpose and need or the project has been on hold for an extended period of time.

11.5.1 Project Overview

This section of the **PIP** includes a description of the project, its location, the history of any previous studies/engagement, and a discussion of what the project is trying to achieve.

11.5.2 Identification of Elected Officials and Local Agencies

This section of the **PIP** involves identification of elected officials and local agency representatives. These are city, county, state, and federal representatives, whose jurisdictional/political boundary intersects the project area. Local constitutional offices are a part of this group. A contact list of elected officials and local agencies is included as an Appendix. Elected official information is updated after every election cycle, and the local

agency representatives list is updated as appropriate. Any subsequent updates to these lists are included in the **SPI**.

Resource agency representatives, including local, state, regional, and federal agencies that were sent the Advance Notification (AN) (see [Part 1, Chapter 3, Preliminary Environmental Discussion and Advance Notification](#)), are referenced, but are not included in the **PIP** contact lists. Native American Tribes involved in coordination are also referenced but not included in the contact lists. Tribes must be contacted as specified on FDOT's [Native American Tribal Consultation Website](#). The District coordinates with OEM prior to any direct communication with a Tribe.

The **PIP** should include the following language to address this:

Federal and State agencies, as well as Native American Tribes, having an interest in this project due to jurisdictional review or expressed interest have been identified. These contacts can be found in the Advance Notification (AN) package in the Environmental Screening Tool, ETDM# (add ETDM number here). Visit <https://etdmpub.florida-transportation.com> to view the official transmittal list in the AN Package. Subsequent contact list updates can be obtained through the District Environmental Office.

Coordination with resource agencies and Native American Tribes should be documented in the SWEPT project file.

11.5.3 Identification of Affected Communities and Stakeholders

This section of the **PIP** involves identification of affected communities, property owners/tenants, business owners, community leaders, and other parties that may have a potential direct or expressed interest in the project. These affected stakeholders may be defined by geographic and political boundaries. They may or may not be self-identified as a community, meaning they may or may not have a shared cultural identity. The stakeholder contact list should include a wide cross-section of the project area and may be included as an Appendix in the **PIP**.

Adjacent property owners whose property lies, in whole or part, within at least 300 feet on either side of the centerline [or Right of Way (ROW) line for interstates] of each project alternative (**Section 339.155, F.S.**), as well as tenants of these properties, are considered stakeholders. An initial property owner contact list or map of the mailing area may be included as an Appendix in the **PIP**.

Interested parties are those who request placement on the project mailing list as the project progresses. This list may be included as an Appendix in the **PIP**.

11.5.4 Outreach Accommodations

A **Sociocultural Data Report (SDR)** provides a snapshot of the study area population, race, age, income, educational attainment, housing types, and language over the last three censuses and most recent American Community Survey. **SDRs** for projects screened in the EST are available on the [ETDM Public Access Site](#). If an **SDR** is not available, the ETDM Coordinator or Project Manager may be contacted to provide this information.

The **SDR** is reviewed and analyzed in coordination with the person overseeing the Community Impact Assessment (CIA). This analysis may be used to make preliminary determinations, such as when/where in-person versus virtual meetings may be appropriate, if meeting accommodations for an aging or transit-dependent population are needed, or if there are potential language barriers. This section of the **PIP** should include any identified public involvement opportunities to reach specific communities (i.e., relationships with community leaders within local health clinics, community centers, places of worship, advocacy groups, and schools). Additional information can be found in [Part 2, Chapter 4, Community Impact Assessment; FDOT's Public Involvement Handbook](#); and the [ETDM Manual, Topic No. 650-000-002](#). The **SDR** should be added as an Appendix to the **PIP**.

11.5.5 Outreach Activities

This section of the **PIP** defines the type and frequency of outreach that occurs during the PD&E Study, how the outreach will be conducted, how the public will be notified, whether newsletters will be distributed and when, and the overall public outreach schedule.

Public engagement activities should use appropriate approaches evaluated on a project-by-project basis, making sure that strategies are inclusive of all affected stakeholders. Non-traditional approaches should be considered to provide the opportunity for involvement of all parties. For more information about non-traditional approaches, as well as additional guidance on public involvement approach and optional activities (such as small group meetings or local advisory groups), see the [FDOT Public Involvement Handbook](#). For public meeting and public hearing requirements that are included in this section of a **PIP**, see [Section 11.6](#).

11.5.6 Public Involvement Summary

This section of the **PIP** defines how public involvement documentation will be organized in the **SPI**. For details on preparing a **SPI**, see [Section 11.8](#).

11.5.7 Final Notifications and Project Approval

This last section of the **PIP** defines how the final notification of project approval will occur as well as any final outreach to inform the public of the conclusion of the PD&E phase. For more details on project approval notification requirements, see [Section 11.7](#).

11.6 PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURE

This section describes FDOT requirements for various types of public meetings and public hearings as they relate to state and federal law (including advertisement and logistical requirements). For samples, see the [PERK](#) and for best practices see the [FDOT Public Involvement Handbook](#).

11.6.1 Selecting Dates and Locations

FDOT public meetings and public hearings (where the general public is invited to participate) must include both an in-person and virtual component. The two components can be separate events, but should be within 7 calendar days of each other. Small group and one-on-one meetings can be held in-person, virtually, or using both components.

In-Person Location

In-person meeting facilities are selected based on the anticipated number of attendees, proximity to the project, easy accessibility, safety, and public transportation availability. Justification for the facility selected should be included in the **SPI**. When choosing between multiple locations, publicly-owned facilities should take precedence over privately-owned facilities. However, privately-owned facilities can be considered if there are no other reasonable options.

Per the **ADA**, all public meeting facilities must be **ADA**-compliant and provide access for disabled persons wishing to attend. FDOT does not provide transportation for disabled persons or pay for transportation of disabled persons to attend public meetings.

Per the **Jessica Lunsford Act**, public school facilities, grades K-12, should not be used for public meetings while students are present.

A meeting facility should be approved by the FDOT Project Manager and reserved prior to advertising for a public meeting.

Virtual Broadcast Platform

There is no preferred virtual platform, but the platform chosen should be consistent with FDOT current practice.

Times

Both meeting and hearing times for the in-person and virtual components should be held during the work week, Monday through Friday, and at a time most accessible for the community. For additional information on recommendations and best practices, see the [**FDOT Public Involvement Handbook**](#).

Coordination with the District Environmental Office is needed if considering atypical times/days for a public meeting/hearing or for approval of any alternative virtual meeting platforms.

11.6.2 Standard Language for Notifications

To aid in demonstrating compliance with state and federal requirements, the following **Civil Rights Act of 1964** standard statement is included for all outreach and public involvement notification methods:

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status.

This is listed along with the District and State Title VI Coordinator contact information.

Event notifications also include the following statement:

Any person requiring special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or requiring translation services (free of charge) should contact _____ at _____ at least seven days prior to the public meeting.

Similarly, the **NEPA** Assignment standard statement is included for outreach and public involvement notification for FDOT Federal Projects.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 26, 2022, and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

If the project involves any wetland impacts, the following statement at a minimum must be included in the **FAR**, FDOT **Public Meeting Notices Website**, and newspaper ad per **Executive Order (EO) 11990, Protection of Wetlands**:

FDOT evaluated wetlands within the project limits in accordance with Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands. The proposed project will affect approximately ___ acres of wetlands. [include 'other surface waters' and acreage, if applicable]

If the project includes significant encroachment of floodplains, per **EO 11988, Floodplain Management**, the following language must at a minimum be included in **FAR**, **FDOT Public Meeting Notices Website**, and newspaper ad:

The project has been evaluated for potential floodplain involvement in accordance with Executive Order 11988 Floodplain Management and involves encroachments on base floodplains [include regulatory floodway, if applicable].

If the project includes *de minimis* impacts to **Section 4(f)** properties, per [Part 2, Chapter 7, Section 4\(f\) Resources](#), the following statements are included in the **FAR**, **FDOT Public Meeting Notices Website**, and newspaper ad:

The proposed project is subject to the requirements of Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act, and the project may result in a use within the meaning of Section 4(f). FDOT is seeking public review and comment on potential effects to protected activities, features, or attributes of Section 4(f) properties.

If the project includes impacts to **Section 106**, per [Part 2, Chapter 8, Archaeological and Historical Resources](#), the following statements are included in the **FAR**, **FDOT Public Meeting Notices Website**, and newspaper ad:

The proposed project is subject to the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and may result in effects to properties that are listed on, eligible, or potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. FDOT is seeking comments from the public on resource identification and evaluation, effect determinations, and resolution of adverse effects, if applicable.

If the project includes an access class change, per **Rule 14-97 of the Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)**, the following statement is included in the **FAR**, **FDOT Public Meeting Notices Website**, and newspaper ad:

Per Rule 14-97, Florida Administrative Code, FDOT is soliciting comments on the proposed access management classification changes for the_____ [name of project].

11.6.3 Types of Meetings

Scoping Meeting for Environmental Impact Statements

The Environmental Scoping Process is a required, formal process for projects requiring an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (see [Part 1, Chapter 8, Draft Environmental Impact Statement](#)). A scoping meeting **may** be held as a part of the Environmental Scoping Process. For guidelines on holding a scoping meeting for an EIS, see [Figure 11-3](#).

Kick-off Meeting

At the beginning of the PD&E phase, a meeting may be scheduled to acquaint the public and local officials with the proposed project and the study team. The format is typically an informal, open house with staff members available for discussion. Items usually covered at the meeting include purpose and need, project priority in local and regional plans, potential environmental and/or engineering issues, project schedule, and a request for comments and concerns. For other alternatives and best practices in place of a kick-off meeting, see the [FDOT Public Involvement Handbook](#).

Public Meetings/Workshops

For the purposes of this Chapter, the term ‘public meeting’ can be defined as a milestone meeting that invites the public at large (i.e., public workshop, public information meeting, public alternatives information meeting, alternatives public workshop, public alternatives workshop). A public meeting is an effective tool to provide and receive information, create an exchange of ideas, present multiple transportation alternatives, and build consensus. In the PD&E process, public meetings are held to inform the public of alternative designs and potential impacts, and to receive input. Access management components may require a public meeting, see [Section 11.6.8](#). Meetings are different than public hearings. For public hearing requirements, see [Section 11.6.9](#).

Small Group Meetings/Project Advisory Groups

Stakeholder or ‘small group’ meetings and Project Advisory Groups (PAGs) are considered meetings with a targeted invitation list and can include a statement inviting the public to observe. For notification requirements for stakeholder, small group, or PAG meetings, see [Section 11.6.6](#). For additional best practices, see the [FDOT Public Involvement Handbook](#).

11.6.4 Required Meeting Notices

The following notices are required for public meetings:

- Notification to Elected Officials and Agencies ([Section 339.155, F.S.](#))

- Notification to Property Owners/Tenants (**Section 339.155, F.S.**)
- Florida Administrative Register (**Section 120.525, F.S.**)
- FDOT **Public Meeting Notices Website** (**Section 120.525, F.S.**)

Compliance with **Florida's Government in the Sunshine Law, Section 286.011, F.S.**, and **Section 120.525, F.S.**, requires any public meeting or hearing to be noticed in the **FAR** and on the FDOT **Public Meeting Notices Website**.

Public notices should be drafted using plain language, per **EO 07-01** and should include the standard statements in [Section 11.6.2](#).

The public comment period for the meeting is listed in all notices. The comment period begins one calendar day after the last event and continues for at least 7 calendar days.

The [PERK](#) provides sample notifications and materials for use in preparing a public meeting.

11.6.4.1 Notification to Elected Officials and Agencies

Before holding a public meeting, an invitation is sent to the local governments and agencies **at least 25 but no more than 30 calendar days prior to the first public meeting event date**. The invitation should be distributed to the local governments and agencies before the public is notified. Invitations can be sent by first class mail or by email from a District designee. At minimum, the invitation should include the following, either in the body of the letter or in an attachment:

1. The purpose of the meeting
2. A description of the project
3. The in-person date, time, and location; and virtual broadcast date, time, and registration
4. Standard statements (e.g., **NEPA** Assignment standard statement, **Civil Rights Act of 1964** standard statement), Title VI contact information, and information for **ADA** requests as provided in [Section 11.6.2](#)
5. A copy of the invitation sent to property owners and tenants, if available

11.6.4.2 Notification to Property Owners and Tenants

Property owners, tenants, and leaseholders in whole or in part, within at least 300 feet of the centerline (or ROW line for interstates) of each proposed project alternative must be

notified of an upcoming meeting (**Section 339.155, F.S.**). The names and addresses of property owners are obtained from the property appraiser's office. Notification must be sent to all affected property owners by mail **at least 20 days prior to the first meeting event**. They are notified through the use of invitational letters, newsletters, or flyers and at a minimum should include the same elements as described in [Section 11.6.4.1](#).

11.6.4.3 Florida Administrative Register Notice

Section 120.525, F.S., requires that **notices for all public meetings, workshops, and hearings must be published in the FAR at least 7 calendar days before the first meeting event**. All notices to be published in the **FAR** must be submitted electronically through the Florida Department of State's e-rulemaking website at www.flrules.org.

See the [PERK](#) for sample **FAR** notices.

11.6.4.4 FDOT Public Meeting Notices Website

To comply with **Section 120.525, F.S.**, **notice of all public meetings, workshops, and hearings must be published on the FDOT [Public Meeting Notices Website](#) at least 7 calendar days before the first meeting event**.

The public notices submittal form is located on the [FDOT Employee Portal](#) under E-Forms. Once the form is submitted online by the appropriate FDOT employee, the District Communications Office will complete the review and approval, and publish it to the website.

11.6.5 Optional Meeting Notifications

The following notices are optional for public meetings:

- Newspaper Advertisement
- Press Release
- Website and Social Media Advertisements

These notices are described in the following sections, but for additional notification methods and best practices, please see the [FDOT Public Involvement Handbook](#).

11.6.5.1 Newspaper Advertisement

A newspaper advertisement (newspaper ad) for a public meeting is not required but may be used at the discretion of the project team. When used, newspaper ads should be published in the local newspaper(s) with general circulation in the vicinity of the project.

The ad should include the same information as the required notices (specifically the standard statements in [Section 11.6.2](#)), but arranged in a format that suits the visual medium and the ad size.

It is suggested that the ad be published a minimum of one time, 10 to 14 days prior to the first meeting event.

11.6.5.2 Press Release

Press releases may be used in appropriate circumstances and should be approved by the Communications Office. Coordination with the District Communications Office is recommended to receive current standards and letterhead, as well as preferred distribution and review timeframes.

11.6.5.3 Websites and Social Media

Project websites are cost effective means of reaching a broad cross section of the public. Website addresses should be included in printed and digital invitations. Project websites may contain information such as meeting announcements, presentations, project information, and study updates. For public hearings, project websites or other publicly accessible electronic means are typically used to make the Environmental Document and supporting information available (see [Section 11.6.9.1](#)).

The established FDOT-managed website for each District is used to house individual project webpages. For rare cases, information for creating a project website compatible with FDOT standards is found on FDOT's [Consultant Managed Web Sites](#) page.

District Communications Specialists can place notifications about project events and activities on FDOT social media accounts for team members and the public to reshare. Special interest groups may be willing to share updates and notifications about the project on their social media sites. The District Communications Office can provide current standards and preferred review and distribution procedures for FDOT social media.

11.6.6 Small Group Meetings and Project Advisory Group Notification Requirements

If the project includes small group meetings or the formation of a Project Advisory Group (PAG), certain notification requirements must be met when the public is invited to attend a meeting (including invitation as an observer).

Small Group/Stakeholder Meetings: If the project team/FDOT representatives are invited to attend a standing meeting (i.e., Homeowners Association, Civic Club) to discuss a project, then FDOT is not responsible for advertisement of the meeting. If FDOT hosts a group to meet for discussion including two or more members of the same board or

commission, per the ***Florida's Government in the Sunshine Law, Section 286.011, F.S.***, the meeting must be noticed in the ***FAR*** and on the ***FDOT Public Meeting Notices Website*** at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

Project Advisory Group Meetings: Other names for a PAG may include local advisory group or project advisory team. Since these meetings are organized and run by the project team, they must be noticed in the ***FAR*** and on the ***FDOT Public Meeting Notices Website*** at least 7 days prior to each meeting. If applicable, a statement that the public is invited to attend as observers may be included.

11.6.7 Public Meeting Layout and Format

For the in-person location, the layout of the meeting room is generally divided into three areas.

- Registration Area: Attendee names and preferred contact method are requested as part of the public record.
- Exhibit Area: This includes maps, exhibits to convey information about the project, and comment tables to allow participants an opportunity to sit and write their comments.
- Presentation Area: This area includes seating for presentation viewing, if a live or pre-recorded presentation is presented.

For the virtual broadcast, the same information is presented to online attendees. An FDOT project representative should open the meeting, then allow for any project presentations and opportunity to ask questions directly to the project team. For more information on how to conduct the virtual component of the meeting, see the [FDOT Public Involvement Handbook](#).

A board with the ***Civil Rights Act of 1964*** standard statement (see [Section 11.6.2](#)), along with the contact information for the District Title VI Coordinator and State Title VI Coordinator, must be displayed in the physical location and that board must be referenced in the virtual presentation. [FDOT Title VI Forms](#) should be available, if requested. The [PERK](#) includes a sample Title VI board.

11.6.8 Access Management

Access Management is the process used to plan the location, design, and operation of driveways, median openings, interchanges, and street connections. Per ***Section 335.199, F.S.***, FDOT must notify all affected property owners, municipalities, and counties of a proposed project that will divide a state highway, erect median barriers, or close/modify an existing access to an abutting property owner at least 180 days before

the Design phase of the project is completed. At least one public meeting must be held in the jurisdiction where the project is located and receive public input to determine how the project will affect access to businesses and the potential economic impact of the project on the local business community. Proposed access management changes that are included in the public hearing during the PD&E phase do not require a separate meeting during the Design phase. Additional information is available in [Median Openings and Access Management, Topic No. 625-010-021](#). Although access management meetings are a state requirement as opposed to a **NEPA** requirement, these meetings should still follow public meeting requirements detailed in [Section 11.6](#).

11.6.9 Public Hearings

While public involvement and participation is encouraged for all projects, public hearings are not required for all projects. Per **Section 339.155(5), F.S.**, a public hearing **is required** for a “Major Transportation Improvement”. This is defined in the Statute as projects:

- a. Increasing capacity through the addition of new lanes;
- b. Providing new access to a limited or controlled access facility (new interchanges); and
- c. Construction of a facility in a new location.

The primary difference between a public meeting and a public hearing is that a public hearing must meet formal requirements for the way it is conducted (including verbal testimony and formal transcription). Additionally, it has specific time frames associated with advertising, hearing notice, and a specific comment period.

Public hearings for Type 2 CEs are usually held prior to the submittal of the Environmental Document to OEM. EAs require OEM approval for public notice and DEISs require OEM signature before the public hearing.

11.6.9.1 Documents for Public Review

The Environmental Document (including Appendices) is typically made available for public review **within 21 calendar days prior to the first public hearing event**. This is to ensure that the documents are ready and available to the public when all notices are published. For an EA or a DEIS, the Environmental Document **must be** made available for a **minimum of 15 days in advance of the public hearing**.

Technical documents or supporting documents may be available in draft form. For a list of reports and design information typically completed during the PD&E phase, see [Part 1, Chapter 4, Project Development Process](#). Technical documents **may** be made available at the public hearing.

When preparing a **Cultural Resources Assessment Survey (CRAS) Report** or similar document for public review, particular care must be taken to comply with the confidentiality provisions of **Section 304 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)** and **Section 267.135, F.S.**, regarding the protection of archaeological site locations within the project documentation, as applicable. It is the District's responsibility to ensure that sensitivities for these properties are fully respected in the public involvement efforts. The Environmental Manager and/or Cultural Resource Coordinator (CRC) reviews all site information to ensure that FDOT does not inadvertently release information on sites that should remain confidential.

The **Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan**, if available, should **not** be placed on display due to sensitive information.

Locations where hard copies of the Environmental Document are displayed should be in proximity to the project, easily accessed, and with public transportation availability, if possible. All locations must be **ADA** compliant and provide reasonable accommodation and access to physically handicapped and disabled persons wishing to review the documents. Suggested locations may include public libraries, local MPO offices, local agency offices, and District offices. In addition, the District may provide other options including by mail or by appointment. Documents for public review should also be posted on the project website, or made available by other electronic means.

EAs and DEISs have specific federal requirements for making the Environmental Document available for public review.

An EA is made available for public inspection after OEM approves it for public notice:

- For a minimum of 15 days in advance of the public hearing (if applicable)
- At the District office for 30 days
- At the public hearing (if applicable)
- On the project website or using other publicly accessible electronic means

A DEIS is made available for public comment after OEM approves it for circulation:

- For a minimum of 15 days in advance of the public hearing
- For a 45-day comment period after publication of the **Notice of Availability** in the **FR** (see [Part 1, Chapter 6, Draft Environmental Impact Statement](#))
- At the public hearing
- In other formats when reasonably necessary and hard copies on request

- On the project website or using other publicly accessible electronic means

11.6.9.2 Public Hearing Notice Requirements

The following notices are **required** for public hearings:

- Notification to Elected Officials and Agencies
- Notification to Property Owners/Tenants (**Section 339.155, F.S.**)
- Two Newspaper Ads (**Section 339.155, F.S.**)
- **Florida Administrative Register (Section 120.525, F.S.)**
- FDOT **Public Meeting Notices Website (Section 120.525, F.S.)**

The public comment period should be included in all notifications announcing the hearing. The public hearing comment period remains open for **a minimum of 10 calendar days after the date of the last hearing event**. After the comment period, the public hearing is officially closed. All written comments received during that period become part of the public record associated with the hearing.

All notices should be drafted using plain language, per **EO 07-01** and all notices should include the standard statements in [Section 11.6.2](#).

When preparing a public hearing for an EA or DEIS, public notice of the availability of the Environmental Document is typically combined with the first public hearing notification.

Notifications for an EA must additionally:

- Announce the availability of the EA for public review for 30 days (start date being the newspaper ad publication date). Provide locations where the EA can be obtained or reviewed by the public (see [Section 11.6.9.1](#))
- Request comments during the 30-day availability period of the EA

Notifications for a DEIS must additionally:

- Mention of the availability of the DEIS
- Provide locations where the DEIS can be obtained and reviewed by the public (see [Section 11.6.9.1](#))
- Request comments submitted on the DEIS during the 45-day comment period (45 days from **Notice of Availability** publication)

For additional information, see [Part 1, Chapter 6, Environmental Assessment](#) or [Part 1, Chapter 8, Draft Environmental Impact Statement](#).

The [PERK](#) provides sample notifications and materials for use in preparing a public hearing.

11.6.9.2.1 Notification to Elected Officials and Agencies

Before holding a public hearing, a letter (or email) of invitation is sent to the local governments and agencies at least 25 but **no more than 30 calendar days prior to the first public hearing event**. The letter of invitation should be distributed to the public officials and agency representatives before the public is notified by letter or advertisement.

At a minimum, this notification should include the following, either in the body of the letter or in an attachment:

1. The purpose of the public hearing
2. An explanation of the format of the public hearing
3. The project description (the use of a project location map is suggested)
4. The date, in-person location, start times (in-person open house and in-person formal presentation), and how to participate in the virtual broadcast
5. A list of places, dates, and times where the Environmental Document and other materials will be available for public inspection
6. Standard statements (as provided in [Section 11.6.2](#))
7. Contact information for where written comments are to be sent
8. A copy of the invitation sent to property owners and tenants, if available

11.6.9.2.2 Notification to Property Owners

Section 339.155(5), F.S., directs FDOT to notify certain affected property owners prior to holding a public hearing. Specifically, all real property owners of record, in whole or in part, within 300 feet of the centerline of the proposed facility must be notified of the upcoming hearing. For interstates, within 300 feet of the ROW is used instead of the centerline. The names and addresses of property owners are obtained from the property appraiser's office. Notification must be sent to all affected property owners by mail **at least 20 calendar days prior to the first public hearing event**. Invitational letters are sent using the same elements as described in [Section 11.6.4.1](#).

Reasonable efforts are also made to notify and inform tenants and leaseholders.

11.6.9.2.3 Public Hearing Newspaper Ads

Per **Section 339.155(5), F.S.**, FDOT must publish the public hearing notice according to a specified schedule for public hearings, i.e., a minimum of two times with the first ad appearing **at least 15 days but no more than 30 days prior to the first public hearing event. The second ad should run 7-12 days prior to the first public hearing event.**

The content of advertisements should at a minimum include the same items in [Section 11.6.4.1](#).

An **Affidavit of Publication** or proof of publication should be obtained from the newspaper and included in the **SPI**.

11.6.9.2.4 Florida Administrative Register Notice

To comply with **Section 120.525, F.S.**, notice of all public hearings must be published in the **FAR** at least 7 calendar days prior to the first hearing event. See [Section 11.6.4.3](#) for additional information.

11.6.9.2.5 FDOT Public Meeting Notices Website

To comply with **Section 120.525, F.S.**, notice of all public hearings must be published on the FDOT [Public Meeting Notices Website](#) at least 7 days before the first hearing event. See [Section 11.6.4.4](#) for additional information.

11.6.9.3 Public Hearing Format

Public hearings should include an in-person and virtual component. These components may occur concurrently or separately (no more than 7 days apart).

A formal script should be followed to present the project and explain the ROW acquisition process to the public at public hearings. Required elements are discussed in [Section 11.6.9.4](#), and a sample script can be found in the [PERK](#).

In-Person Component

For the in-person component, there is generally an 'open house' period so that the public may review all information on display. Another part of the hearing is the formal presentation, moderated by an FDOT staff member. The third portion of the hearing is always the formal comment period where verbal statements can be recorded for the hearing record/transcription.

The venue is typically divided into three areas:

- Registration and sign-in: Attendee names and preferred contact method are requested as part of the public record. Attendees should be provided with a project handout, comment forms, and speaker cards, and instructed on how verbal and written comments may become part of the official public record.
- Hearing exhibits: The second area includes maps, exhibits, tables for special interests (such as ROW acquisition, noise, access management), and a printed copy of the Environmental Document, with appendices. The FDOT District Title VI Coordinator or designee should also be available to address questions on **Title VI Compliance** under the **Civil Rights Act of 1964** and related statutes. [FDOT Title VI Forms](#) should be available, if requested.
- Formal presentation: The third area includes seating for the formal presentation where the public can sit and watch a live or pre-recorded presentation.

Virtual Component

For the virtual broadcast, the same information is presented from the in-person component. Virtual participants must be given an opportunity to submit formal comments during the public testimony portion of the hearing, if they desire. Copies of the display boards and other materials should be posted to the project website prior to the start of the public hearing for virtual attendees to access and review. For more information on best practices and how to conduct the virtual component of the hearing, see the [FDOT Public Involvement Handbook](#).

Providing Comment

For participants interested in providing verbal comments, an opportunity to speak is provided. The length of time for the public comment period is at the District's discretion but is usually dependent on the anticipated number of people who wish to speak. The public also has the opportunity to provide their comments in writing (during the in-person component or after the in-person and virtual components via email or mail) or directly to a court reporter. Information on the comment process should be included in the project handout.

Laws and regulations applicable to the public hearing process should be placed on a display board or presentation slide. A sample statutes board is provided in the [PERK](#).

11.6.9.4 Public Hearing Presentation and Script

The public hearing is officiated by a moderator and includes a presentation followed by the public comment portion of the hearing. The moderator is typically the FDOT Project Manager. The following information is included in the public hearing presentation. The

information shown in *italics*, and modified as applicable, **must** be contained in the public hearing presentation. A hearing moderator script sample is provided in the [PERK](#).

1. Introduction by Moderator

The FDOT moderator should introduce themselves, the project, and briefly introduce/identify the project team, as well as thank public officials for attending. This introduction should be done live.

After the live introduction by the moderator, the rest of the presentation can be conducted by the moderator, other FDOT staff, consultant representative, or can be pre-recorded.

2. Presentation Script

This portion of the script should contain the following sections.

a. Purpose of the public hearing and federal and state compliance

This public hearing is for project name, Financial Management Project Number ____ and Federal Aid Project Number [if an FDOT Federal Project]. This project has been conducted by FDOT in compliance with applicable federal environmental laws and pursuant to 23 United States Code Section 327 [only state next part of sentence if an FDOT Federal Project] and the implementing memorandum of understanding between FDOT and the Federal Highway Administration signed on May 26, 2022.

The public hearing also serves as an official forum providing an opportunity for members of the public to express their opinions regarding the project. Public participation at this hearing is encouraged and solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status.

This public hearing is being conducted consistent with federal and state requirements. [If the laws are displayed on a slide, then the script could be changed as follows: "This public hearing is being conducted consistent with the federal and state requirements shown on the slide."] Persons wishing to express their concerns about Title VI may do so by contacting either the Florida Department of Transportation, District ____ office, or the Tallahassee office of the Florida Department of Transportation. This contact information is also provided in the project handout and on a sign displayed at this hearing.

b. Purpose and need and project's consistency with local and regional plans

Provide a brief summary of the project's purpose and need and status of planning consistency.

c. Discussion of alternatives

All alternatives studied, including the No-Build option, must be briefly discussed; with additional information provided on the alternatives that have been studied in further detail and documented in the Environmental Document. The advantages and disadvantages of each alternative should be provided, including major design features and estimated costs. The preferred alternative should be identified. If the preferred alternative is not chosen prior to the public hearing, see [Section 11.6.14](#).

d. Discussion of the reasonably foreseeable environmental and other impacts of the project

The potential reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts of the project must be briefly outlined. Key factors to be discussed include impacts on air quality, noise, floodplain impacts (required if encroachments per **EO 11988**), wetlands (required if impacts per **EO 11990**), protected species, archaeological or historical resources, **Section 4(f)** resources, residential and business displacements or relocations, ROW requirements, and any other pertinent topics/resources.

e. Explanation of the FDOT Right of Way acquisition and relocation process

During a public hearing, the following information must be provided to explain the ROW acquisition process and describe the compensation requirements to be followed by FDOT.

If both ROW acquisition and relocation will take place:

This project could include the relocation of families and businesses. For this project, we expect approximately ___ families and ___ businesses may need to be relocated.

All Right of Way activities will follow Sections 339.09 and 421.55, Florida Statutes, as well as the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 —commonly known as the Uniform Act.

If you are required to move, you can expect to be treated fairly and in full compliance with these laws. An appraiser will inspect your property, and you are encouraged to be there during the inspection. This is an opportunity to share any information that might help establish the value of your property with the appraiser.

You may also be eligible for relocation assistance and payment benefits. If you disagree with the decision regarding your eligibility or the amount offered, you do have the right to appeal. FDOT will ensure you have the forms and assistance needed to complete an appeal.

If you move before receiving official notice of your relocation benefits may be jeopardized. The relocation specialists for this project are available and can answer your questions and provide more information regarding Relocation Assistance.

If the project requires only ROW:

This project will not cause any relocation of families or businesses. All right of way acquisition will be conducted in accordance with Sections 339.09 and 421.55, Florida Statutes, and also the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, commonly known as the Uniform Act. The right of way specialists who are supervising this program are here tonight and will be happy to answer your questions.

f. Explanation of how the public can provide their comments

Information is provided on all ways the public can comment during the live event and following the live event during the comment period.

g. Next steps and concluding statement

The next steps for the PD&E Study are explained including how to be notified about a project decision/approval.

3. Moderator script for public comment portion

The comment procedure for in-person and virtual attendees is explained and other ways to submit comments and the closing date of the public hearing comment period are reiterated.

11.6.9.5 Public Hearing Transcript and Certification

The in-person hearing proceedings are recorded by a court reporter and transcribed into a written transcript. Verbal and written comments are a formal part of the public record. The transcript of hearing proceedings includes the FDOT presentation (including portions that are voiced-over or pre-recorded) and all verbal public comment/testimony received at the hearing. If holding the virtual hearing component as a separate event, the hearing recording or transcript from the platform, along with any additional written comments submitted during the event, must be provided to a court reporting service for transcription

if a court reporter is not in attendance. An online moderator may read aloud any comments received through the chat function for ease of adding into the hearing record.

Per **23 U.S.C. § 128**, public hearings must be certified. For FDOT projects, this is accomplished by the Project Manager preparing a **Public Hearing Certification Form**. This form may be completed in SWEPT or by using the **Public Hearing Certification, Form No. 650-050-56**. If completed in SWEPT, the **Public Hearing Transcript** is uploaded to SWEPT and a link to it is provided in the form. If completed outside of SWEPT, the certification form and **Public Hearing Transcript** are uploaded to SWEPT for the project file.

For a Type 2 CE, these two documents are included in the Appendix of the Environmental Document. For an EA with FONSI, FEIS/ROD or FEIS, they are incorporated by reference. Written statements from the public, both submitted at the public hearing or during the public comment period, are included in the **SPI**.

11.6.10 Notice of Opportunity to Request a Public Hearing

Under limited circumstances, when a Type 2 CE or an EA does not constitute a Major Transportation Improvement pursuant to **Section 339.155(5), F.S.**, the District must obtain OEM approval in order to offer the public an opportunity to request a public hearing in lieu of holding it without a public request.

A notice of opportunity to request a public hearing is published in a local newspaper having general circulation in the project area. **A newspaper ad should be published at least 15 calendar days prior to the deadline** established by the District for receipt of requests. After the notice period has lapsed, the District requests proof of publication or an **Affidavit of Publication** from the newspaper that the publication was made. The proof of publication is included in the **SPI**.

A notice of opportunity to request a public hearing is typically placed in the **FAR** and the FDOT [Public Meeting Notices Website](#).

The content of the notice of opportunity to request a public hearing (newspaper ad, **FAR** and FDOT [Public Meeting Notices Website](#)) must include, as a minimum, the following information.

1. An explanation of the opportunity notice
2. A project description
3. A statement on the type of studies accomplished and a list of places where study documents are available for public inspection

4. A statement that the request for a public hearing must be submitted in writing, and the date by which the request must be received
5. The name of the District contact person
6. The address where the request for a public hearing is to be sent

When preparing an EA that does not require a public hearing, public notice of the availability of the EA is typically combined with the notice of opportunity to request a public hearing. The notice must include the additional requirements for notification of an EA listed in [Section 11.6.9.2](#). It also must be made available for public inspection as discussed in [Section 11.6.9.1](#).

If the District only receives a minimal number of requests from individuals for a public hearing, the District may contact the individuals and attempt to rectify the concern. If the request is not withdrawn, OEM is contacted to discuss next steps. If it is determined a public hearing is to be held, then notification and hearing procedures described in [Section 11.6](#) must be followed. In this case the notice of the availability of an EA would not need to be repeated in the public hearing notice.

For a sample of a notice of opportunity to request a public hearing, see the [PERK](#).

11.6.11 Joint Public Hearings

Joint public hearings can be held with other agencies if appropriate and if the project meets the public hearing criteria of both agencies. If an agency agrees to hold a public hearing jointly with FDOT, the District should establish in writing the guidelines by which the public hearing is to be held. Preparation of acceptable joint procedures ensures that the requirements of both agencies will be satisfied. This includes the format of the hearing, presentations, and all elements of the public hearing process. If the newspaper ad notification period of the agency is different from FDOT's, then the longer period for hearing notification should be used.

11.6.12 Toll Rate Workshops and Public Hearings

Toll rate rulemaking is required in accordance with **Chapter 120, F.S.** Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) conducts the toll rate rule development and rulemaking for the Turnpike System and other FDOT toll facilities. Toll rate rule development and rulemaking is required before new toll projects are opened, new tolled access on existing toll facilities is opened, and to also notify the public of proposed toll rate changes.

A toll rate rule development workshop may be conducted as part of the PD&E phase. A toll rate rulemaking public hearing may be conducted following the 60 percent design of project development. However, the scheduling of any rule-related workshop or hearing is at the discretion of FDOT executive management.

11.6.13 Local Agency Managed Projects

Public meetings or public hearings may be held by a local agency (i.e., county, city) for Local Agency Managed Projects before they are transferred to FDOT. They should follow the same procedures and requirements as provided in [Section 11.6](#). The public notice requirement in **Section 120.525, F.S.**, may be met by posting on the local agency's website. For example, if the project is anticipated to be a Local Agency Program (LAP) project, but not officially a LAP project yet, the local agency may post the public notices on their website to meet the requirements.

11.6.14 Potential Public Involvement Following a Public Hearing

If a "use" within the meaning of **Section 4(f)** or an adverse effect under **Section 106** are identified after a public hearing, the public must be provided with the opportunity to review and comment (see [Part 2, Chapter 7, Section 4\(f\) Resources](#)).

It is normally expected that a preferred alternative is chosen prior to the public hearing. If in unusual circumstances a preferred alternative cannot be selected before the public hearing, the District should coordinate with OEM. For these situations, additional public involvement after the public hearing could be necessary and could range from another public hearing to a meeting, or a flyer/mailer. The documents should also be posted on the project website.

11.7 FINAL NOTIFICATIONS

Final notifications are published after the Environmental Document has been approved by OEM. They are not required for a Type 1 CE, NMSA, or a SEIR. The types of final notifications include a public notice of availability of an FEIS, an Announcement of LDCA, and a **Limitations on Claims Notice**.

11.7.1 Public Notice of Availability of a Final Environmental Impact Statement

If an FEIS is prepared separately from a ROD, after OEM approval, the FEIS is made available for public review:

- At the District office
- At institutions such as local government offices, libraries, and schools, as appropriate
- On project websites or other publicly accessible electronic means

The District places a notice of availability as a newspaper ad which advises the public of the availability of the FEIS for public review. The ad is published in the same local newspaper(s) used to advertise the public hearing. The District obtains proof of publication or an ***Affidavit of Publication*** and includes it in the ***Final Notifications Package*** (see [Section 11.9](#)).

The FEIS remains available for a 30-day comment period after publication of the ***Notice of Availability*** in the ***FR*** (see [Part 1, Chapter 9, Final Environmental Impact Statement](#)).

11.7.2 Announcement of Location and Design Concept Acceptance

When a Type 2 CE, EA with FONSI, FEIS/ROD, or ROD is signed by OEM it receives LDCA. An Announcement of LDCA is then published informing the public that the project has received LDCA and is being advanced.

It must be published as a newspaper ad in the same local newspaper(s) used to advertise the public hearing, if one was held (or a newspaper of general circulation).

If the project is a Type 2 CE with an ***Individual Section 4(f) Evaluation***, then the newspaper ad should also include that the ***Final Section 4(f) Evaluation*** was approved by OEM.

Once the Announcement of LDCA is published, the District obtains proof of publication or an ***Affidavit of Publication*** which is included in the ***Final Notifications Package*** (see [Section 11.9](#)).

Other notifications are recommended, but not required including:

- Emailing a notice of project approval to public officials, local agencies, and interested parties
- Mailing a notice of project approval via a newsletter/flyer to property owners
- Uploading the approved Environmental Document to the project website, stating that it received approval from OEM with the approval date

Additionally, EA with FONSI, FEIS/RODs, and RODs have specific requirements for making the Environmental Document available in conjunction with the Announcement of LDCA.

An EA with FONSI is made available to the public after OEM approval/LCDA:

- Upon request by the public

- On the project website or using other publicly accessible electronic means

An FEIS/ROD is made available after OEM approval/LDCA:

- At the District office
- At institutions such as local government offices, libraries, and schools, as appropriate
- On project websites or other publicly accessible electronic means

A ROD, if separate from the FEIS, is made available after OEM approval/LDCA:

- Upon request by the public
- On project websites or using other publicly accessible electronic means

The Announcement of LDCA for an EA with FONSI, FEIS/ROD, or ROD must also notify the public of the availability of these Environmental Documents.

11.7.3 Limitations on Claims Notice

Title 23 U.S.C. § 139(I) includes a provision for limiting the time period for filing claims and seeking judicial review of permits, licenses, or approvals issued by federal agencies for a highway or public transportation capital project. The provision establishes a statute of limitations period of 150 days for filing a challenge following publication of the notice in the **FR** of the agency action(s).

A **Limitations on Claims Notice** may be prepared for a Type 2 CE at the District's discretion or upon discussion with OEM and the Office of General Counsel (OGC).

EA with FONSI, FEIS/RODs and RODs require preparation of a **Limitations on Claims Notice**. For a FEIS/ROD, the **Limitations on Claims Notice** may be combined with the **Notice of Availability** published in the **FR**. See [Part 1, Chapter 9, Final Environmental Impact Statement](#) for guidance on the **Notice of Availability**.

The District provides the **Limitations on Claims Notice** to OEM. See the OEM [Guidance for Processing Limitations on Claims](#) for a sample and more information. OEM provides the **Limitations on Claims Notice** to FHWA for signature and electronic submittal to the **FR**. A copy of the notice is included in the **Final Notifications Package** (see [Section 11.9](#)).

11.8 SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A Summary of Public Involvement (SPI) is a technical document compiled to confirm engagement previously outlined in the **PIP** and contains documentation of the public involvement activities that occurred during the PD&E phase. The **SPI** is uploaded to the SWEPT project file and incorporated into the Environmental Document by reference.

The **SPI** includes the following items in order to provide documentation of compliance with state and federal public involvement requirements:

- The notification process
 - The contact lists for officials, local agencies, property owners, and interested parties, for any outreach
 - Copies of all published notifications used to invite the public to activities (i.e., letters, newsletters, ads, press releases, news media)
- A summary of all public involvement outreach events
 - Summary text for public meetings and hearings, as well as any other activities completed in the PD&E phase (i.e., small group meetings, stakeholder meetings, MPO presentations, Project Advisory Group meetings, local agency coordination, pop-up events)
 - Documentation of major milestones, including photographs, sign-in sheets, maps, graphs, handouts, display boards and/or exhibits, scans of any comment forms, comment summaries, surveys, presentations, and meeting minutes, as applicable
- Reference to the **Public Hearing Transcript** and certification (included in the SWEPT project file), if applicable.
- Acknowledgement and explanation of public involvement strategy changes since the **PIP** was finalized.

Periodic evaluation of public involvement strategy included in the **PIP** is needed to determine the effectiveness of planned engagement. It is expected that tailored strategies may need to be adjusted/supplemented as more communication with the local community takes place. i.e.:

The project team anticipated reaching out to Group X and Group Y, but during the alternatives meeting, we were notified about Group Z's interest in the project. So, the team also reached out to Group Z.

Or:

The project team documented anticipated coordination in the PIP with Group Y, but upon reaching out, Group Y declined participation and suggested contacting Group X. The project team coordinated with Group X through the following events:

Resource agency coordination may be mentioned in the **SPI**, however, this coordination is discussed in detail in the applicable technical documents and the Environmental Document, and correspondence is included in the project file.

Final notifications may be referenced in the **SPI**, but only to note that publication copies of any approval notices will be included in the **Final Notifications Package** (see [Section 11.9](#)). A sample **SPI** is included in the [PERK](#).

11.9 FINAL NOTIFICATIONS PACKAGE

A **Final Notifications Package** confirms publication of final notifications of project approvals. It includes any **Affidavits of Publication**, along with copies/scans of any other published notices. The package should be uploaded to the project file in SWEPT. See [Section 11.7](#) for information on final notification preparation. For a sample **Final Notifications Package**, see the [PERK](#).

11.10 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AFTER THE PD&E PHASE

Public meetings or public hearings held after PD&E project approval should follow the same procedures and requirements as provided within [Section 11.6](#).

11.10.1 Median Openings

A public meeting must be held for any projects on the State Highway System which will divide a state highway, erect median barriers modifying currently available vehicle turn movements, or have the effect of closing or modifying an existing access to an abutting property owner, per **Section 335.199 F.S.** This meeting must be held a minimum of 180 days before the design of the project is completed. This may apply to all types of projects including resurfacing, reconstruction, standalone safety projects, and design-build regardless of the type of Environmental Document prepared.

11.10.2 Re-evaluations

During a Re-evaluation, the District determines whether changes in the project or new information warrant additional public involvement. OEM may be consulted, as needed. Any public involvement activities since the project approval or the previous Re-evaluation, should be included in the **Re-evaluation Form**. For more information on preparing a Re-evaluation, see [Part 1, Chapter 13, Re-evaluations](#).

11.10.3 Noise Barriers and Outdoor Advertising

During the Design phase of the project, a noise abatement workshop and/or a public survey is used to determine the wishes of the benefited receptors. Each benefited receptor (owner or resident) is given the opportunity to provide input to FDOT regarding their desire to have the proposed noise abatement measure constructed. They may also be given the opportunity (at the discretion of the District) to provide input regarding their aesthetic preferences from a list of pre-selected options.

For more information, see [Part 2, Chapter 18, Highway Traffic Noise](#). Coordination with the District Noise Specialist in obtaining input during the final design of the noise barrier is suggested.

The construction of noise barriers could impact outdoor advertising signs. **Section 479.25, F.S.**, allows permitted, conforming, lawfully erected outdoor advertising signs to be increased in height if visibility is blocked due to construction of “noise attenuation” barriers. In addition, the Statute requires FDOT to notify a local government or local jurisdiction before erecting a noise barrier that will block a lawfully permitted sign.

The Statute also requires that FDOT hold a public hearing within the boundaries of the affected local government or local jurisdiction to receive input on proposed noise barriers that may conflict with local ordinances or land development regulations. The public hearing allows suggestions, consideration of alternatives, and modification to the proposed noise barriers to be heard in order to alleviate or minimize conflict with local ordinances and minimize any costs associated with relocating, reconstructing, or paying for the affected outdoor advertising sign (see [FDOT Design Manual, Topic No. 625-000-002, Part 2](#)). For all other considerations, see [Part 2, Chapter 18, Highway Traffic Noise](#).

11.10.4 Overlapping PD&E and Design Phases

Public meetings and public hearings held for projects with overlapping PD&E and Design phases should follow the same procedures and requirements as provided in [Section 11.6](#). A **CAP** is typically prepared for these projects, however a **PIP** may be prepared instead, depending on the needs of the project. For more information about developing a **CAP**, see the [FDOT Design Manual, Part 1, Chapter 104, Public Involvement, Topic No. 625-000-002](#).

11.10.5 Design-Build

Once a project begins construction in a Design-Build process, it may switch to a construction public information approach (see the [FDOT Public Involvement Handbook](#)). A **CAP** may be prepared in this instance. To support **NEPA** in the Design phase, see the meeting requirements outlined in [Section 11.6](#).

11.11 REFERENCES

AASHTO/ACEC and FHWA, Improving the Quality of Environmental Documents, May 2006. <https://environment.transportation.org/resources/aashto-publications/improving-the-quality-of-environmental-documents/>

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990

Chapter 120, F.S., Administrative Procedures Act

Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI, and Related Statutes

EO 07-01, State of Florida, Governor's Plain Language Initiative

EO 11988, Floodplain Management as amended by Executive Order 13690, Establishing a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard and a Process for Further Soliciting and Considering Stakeholder Input, 80 FR 6425 (Jan. 30, 2015)

EO 11990, Protection of Wetlands

FDOT, Community Engagement Website:

<https://www.fdot.gov/planning/policy/community-engagement/index>

FDOT, Efficient Transportation Decision Making Manual, Topic No. 650-000-002

FDOT, ETDM Public Access Site: <https://etdmpub.fl-a-etat.org/est/pub/>

FDOT Employee Portal: <https://fdot.sharepoint.com/sites/FDOT-Portal>

FDOT, FDOT Design Manual, Topic No. 625-000-002.

<https://www.fdot.gov/roadway/fdm/default.shtm>

FDOT, Median Openings and Access Management, Procedure No. 625-010-021

FDOT, OEM Website: <http://www.fdot.gov/environment/>

FDOT, Public Engagement Resource Kit. <https://www.fdot.gov/environment/oem-divisions/env/public-involvement>

FDOT, Public Involvement Handbook. <https://www.fdot.gov/planning/policy/community-engagement/resource-guide.shtm>

FDOT, Public Meeting Notices Website:

<https://www.fdot.gov/planning/policy/community-engagement/public-meeting-notices>

FDOT, Title VI Forms: <https://www.fdot.gov/equalopportunity/titlevi.shtm>

FHWA, Public Involvement Website:

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/public_involvement/index.cfm

FHWA, Technical Advisory T6640.8A, Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents, October 30, 1987

FHWA, Visualization in Planning Website:

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/scenario_and_visualization/visualization_in_planning/index.cfm

Florida Administrative Register, Bureau of Administrative Code 1S-1.003(1)

Florida Administrative Register, Website: www.flrules.org

Florida Department of State's e-rulemaking Website: www.flrules.org

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 as amended (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.).

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/COMPS-10352/pdf/COMPS-10352.pdf>

Section 120.525, F.S., Meetings, Hearings, and Workshops

Section 286.011, F.S., Florida's Government in the Sunshine Law

Section 335.02, F.S., State Highway System

Section 335.199, F.S., Transportation projects modifying access to adjacent property

Chapter 339, F.S., Transportation Finance and Planning

Section 339.135, F.S., Work program; legislative budget request; definitions; preparation, adoption, execution, and amendment.

Section 339.155, F.S., Transportation Planning

Section 479.25, F.S., Outdoor Advertising Signs – Noise Attenuation Barrier, as Amended by House Bill 273

Title 23 CFR Part 771, Environmental Impact and Related Procedures

Title 23 U.S.C. § 109(h) Highways – Economic, Social, and Environmental Effects

Title 23 U.S.C. § 128, Public Hearings

Title 23 U.S.C. § Part 135, Statewide and nonmetropolitan transportation planning

Title 42, Chapter 126, Section 12101: Equal Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities

Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970

U.S. Department of Transportation, Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients' Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient Persons, Federal Register Volume 70, Number 239, Pages 74087-74100, December 2005

<https://www.transportation.gov/civil-rights/civil-rights-library/policy-guidance-concerning-recipients-responsibilities-limited>

U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decision-Making, September 1996

11.12 FORMS

[Public Hearing Certification Form, Form No. 650-050-56](#)

Table 11-1 Federal Regulations Applicable to Public Involvement Activities

Citation	Title	Purpose
42 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 2000d	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964	Prohibiting discrimination in federally-assisted programs based on race, color, or national origin
29 U.S.C. §794	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	Prohibiting discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity for persons with disabilities
42 U.S.C. §§ 6101-6107	Age Discrimination Act of 1975	Prohibiting federally-assisted program from discrimination based on age
42 U.S.C. § 4321	National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969	Requiring the consideration of potential impacts on the environment during transportation decision-making
23 U.S.C. §109(h)	Highway, Standards	Requiring that potential economic, social, and environmental impacts of proposed transportation projects are addressed
23 U.S.C. §128	Highways, Public Hearings	Requiring the opportunity for public hearings for federal-aid highway projects, and consideration of potential economic, social, and environmental effects of the implementation of the project
23 U.S.C. §135	Statewide Transportation Planning	Requiring that during development of statewide transportation plans there are sufficient opportunities for public comment
23 U.S.C. §139	Efficient environmental reviews for project decision-making	Requiring that as early as practicable there is an opportunity for public involvement in the purpose and need and range of alternatives for a project
23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §450.210	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Department of Transportation (DOT): Interested Parties, Public Involvement, and Consultation	Requiring states carrying out the statewide transportation planning process to develop and use a documented public involvement process that provides opportunities for public review and comment at key decision points, and providing minimum criteria for the public involvement process

Table 11-1 Federal Regulations Applicable to Public Involvement Activities (Page 2 of 2)

Citation	Title	Purpose
23 CFR §771.111	Early coordination, public involvement, and project development	Requiring each state to have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a public involvement/public hearing program
40 CFR §6.200	Protection of the Environment	Establishes public involvement requirements as per the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
49 CFR Part 24	Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition (Uniform Act) for Federal and Federally Assisted Programs	Ensuring that property owners displaced by federally-assisted projects receive fair treatment and entitlement
FHWA Technical Advisory 6640.8A	Guidance for Preparing and processing Environmental and Section 4(f) documents.	Guidance (not regulatory) emphasizing early coordination with agencies and the public in the preparation and processing of environmental documents and Section 4(f) documents

Table 11-2 State Regulations Applicable to Public Involvement Activities

Citation	Title	Purpose
S. 120.525, Florida Statutes (F.S.)	Meetings, hearings, and workshops	Notice publication and agenda requirements for public meetings, hearings, and workshops
S. 286.011, F.S.	Government in the Sunshine Law	All meetings of public boards and commissions should be open to the public, with no discrimination, and with sufficient notice. Meeting minutes should also be publicly accessible.
S. 335.02(1), F.S.	Authority to designate transportation facilities	Notice requirements for a public hearing prior to redesignating or relocating transportation facilities which are part of the State Highway System
S. 335.199, F.S.	Transportation projects modifying vehicle movements and access to adjacent property	Requiring a public meeting within the jurisdiction (city/county) of the project when the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) proposes to divide a state highway, erect median barriers, or close or modify existing access to abutting commercial business properties
S. 339.135, F.S.	Work program; legislative budget request; definitions; preparation, adoption, execution and amendment	Requiring a public hearing prior to submittal of the District Work Program
S. 339.155, F.S.	Transportation planning	Requiring public involvement procedures for the transportation planning process. In the event of a major transportation improvement, a public hearing should be held prior to selecting the project site and the improvement alternative.
House Bill (HB) 1877	Jessica Lunsford Act	FDOT policy prohibits holding any public meetings at public school facilities (K-12). For exceptions, approval from the FDOT's Assistant Secretary of Engineering and Operations is required. Alternate venues include colleges, universities, and private schools.
Executive Order 07-01	Plain Language Initiative	Requiring the use of clear plain language in communication with the public to ensure an understandable format

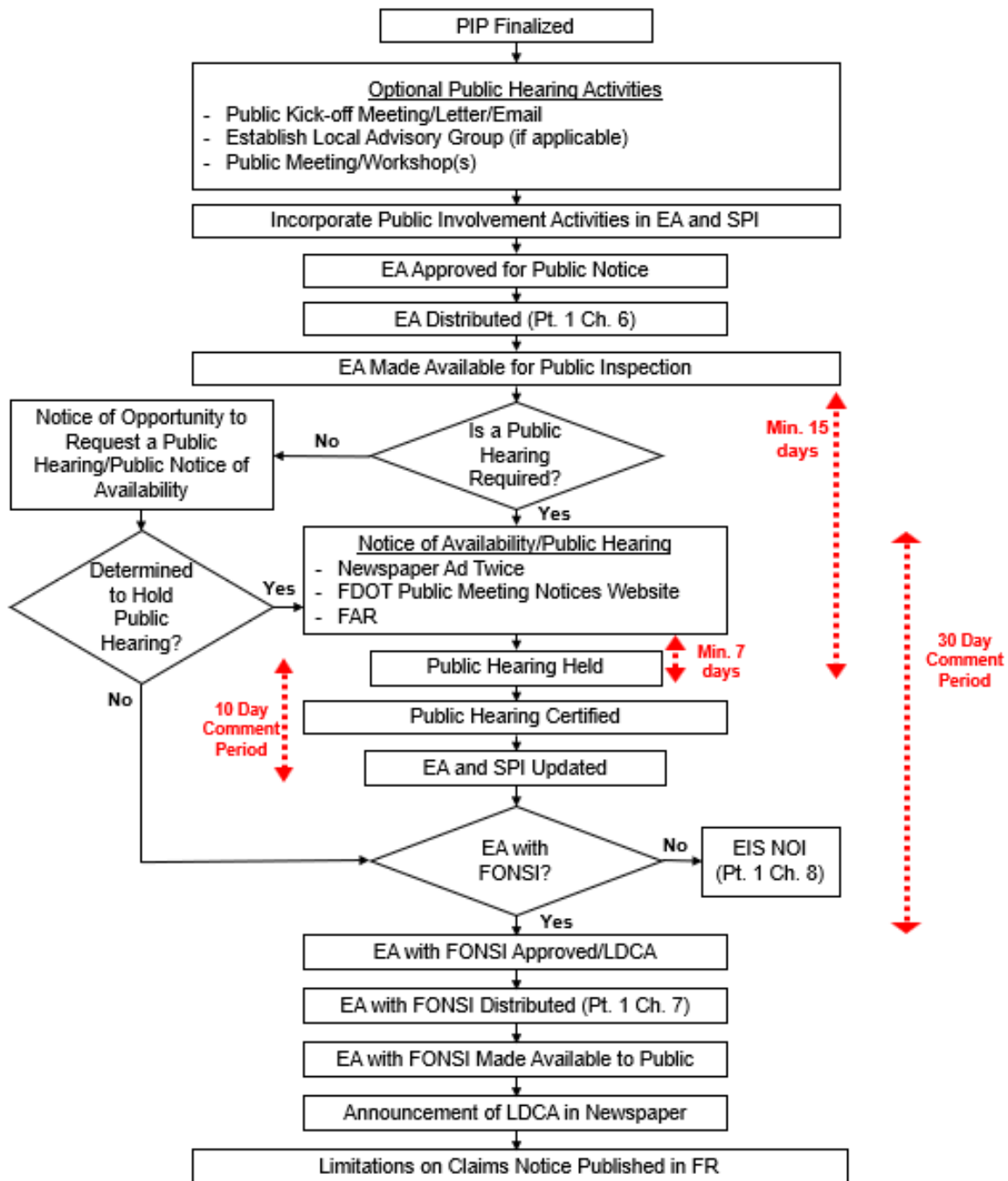


Figure 11-1 Typical Public Involvement and Notice Activities for an EA and EA with FONSI

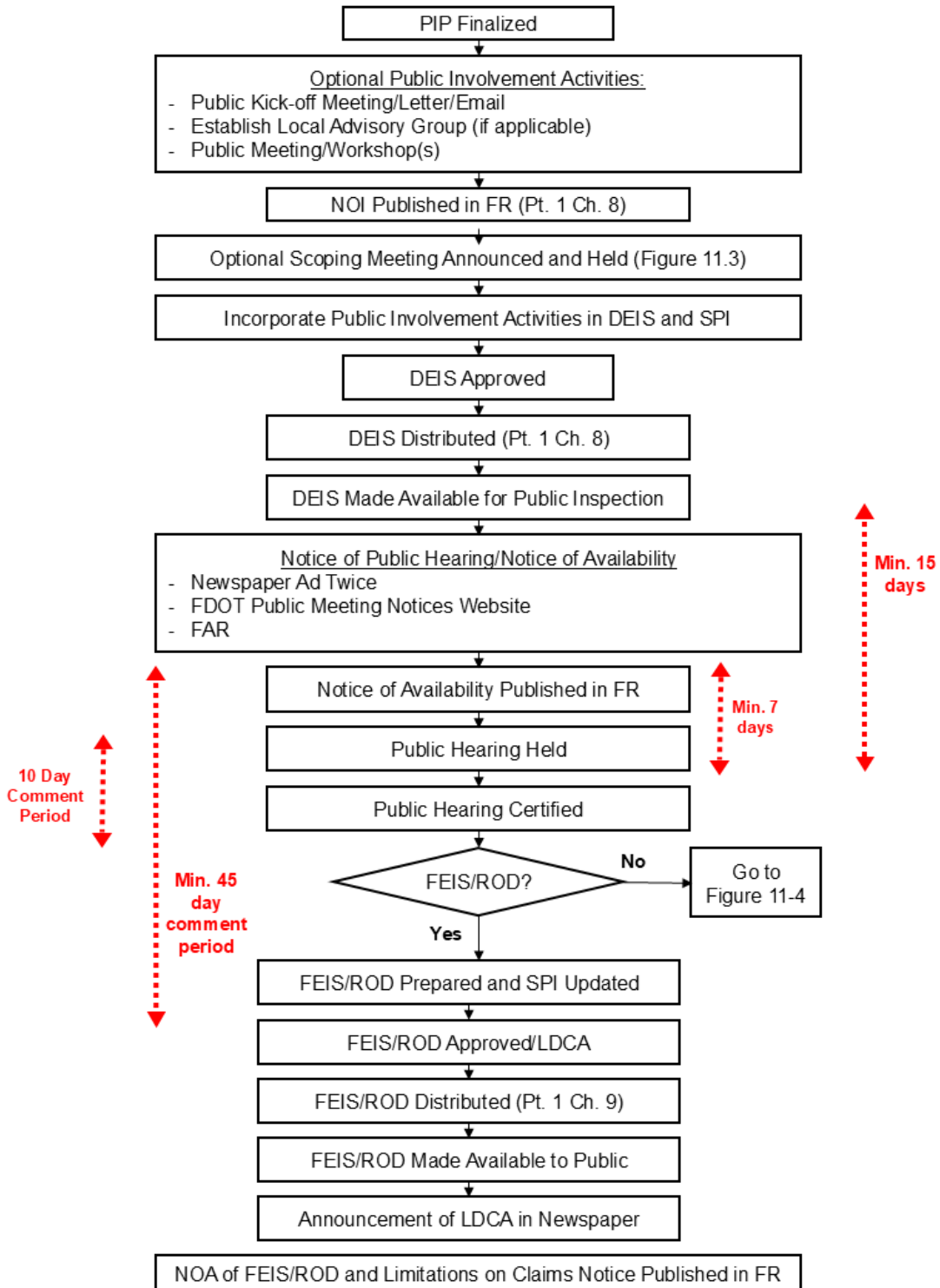


Figure 11-2 Typical Public Involvement and Notice Activities for a DEIS and FEIS/ROD

If a formal scoping meeting is to be held for an EIS, guidance is provided below:

Invitation

A scoping meeting is initiated by an invitational letter or email sent by the District to relevant government agencies, public interest groups, and others with an interest in or knowledge about the project. The public is permitted to attend and listen to the proceedings. The invitation should:

- Give notice that a scoping meeting is being held. Notice is provided in the FAR and FDOT Public Meeting Notices Website.
- Describe why the meeting is being held (FDOT expected outcome of the meeting; roles of participants)
- Provide information about the project and potential alternatives (including project location map)
- Provide information on the date, time, physical location of the scoping meeting, directions on how to get to the physical location, how to participate virtually, and meeting agenda
- Provide contact information for the project representative

Meeting Format

The format of a scoping meeting entails a formal presentation to fully acquaint attendees with the project. While a formal agenda should be followed, the setting and tone of the meeting should be relaxed and conducive to good interaction among attendees.

A field visit or virtual field review may be scheduled. After the field visit/review, participants would then reconvene and further discuss potential project issues. Before adjourning, each agency is asked to state its position on the identified issues. Each agency's position is then included in a meeting summary (minutes) for use by FDOT.

Agenda

The activities below may take place or be discussed at the meeting.

Discuss the scope and significance of issues and the degree of analysis required in the EIS. This includes identification of the range of alternatives and potential impacts.

Figure 11-3 Guidelines for an Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Meeting

- Discuss the elimination from detailed study those issues that are not significant or have been covered by prior environmental studies, thereby narrowing discussion in the EIS to a brief presentation of why they will not have a significant effect on the human environment or providing a reference to their coverage elsewhere.
- Allocate assignments for preparation of the EIS among FDOT and cooperating agencies, with FDOT retaining responsibility for the EIS.
- Discuss any adjacent or nearby projects that are being prepared and are related to, but are not part of, the scope of the EIS under consideration.
- Discuss other environmental review and consultation requirements so that FDOT and cooperating agencies may prepare, if possible, other required analyses and studies concurrently with, and integrated with, the EIS.
- Discuss any permits, licenses, or entitlements that are necessary.
- Determine whether a joint public hearing can be held and outline the coordination required.
- Determine the relationship between the timing of the preparation of environmental analyses and the agency's tentative planning and decision-making schedule.

Meeting Follow-up

The meeting summary/meeting minutes are forwarded to all attendees, agencies that showed interested in participating but could not attend the scoping meeting, and those on the invitation mailing list. The minutes of all events are included in the SWEPT project file.

**Figure 11-3 Guidelines for an Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Meeting
(Page 2 of 2)**

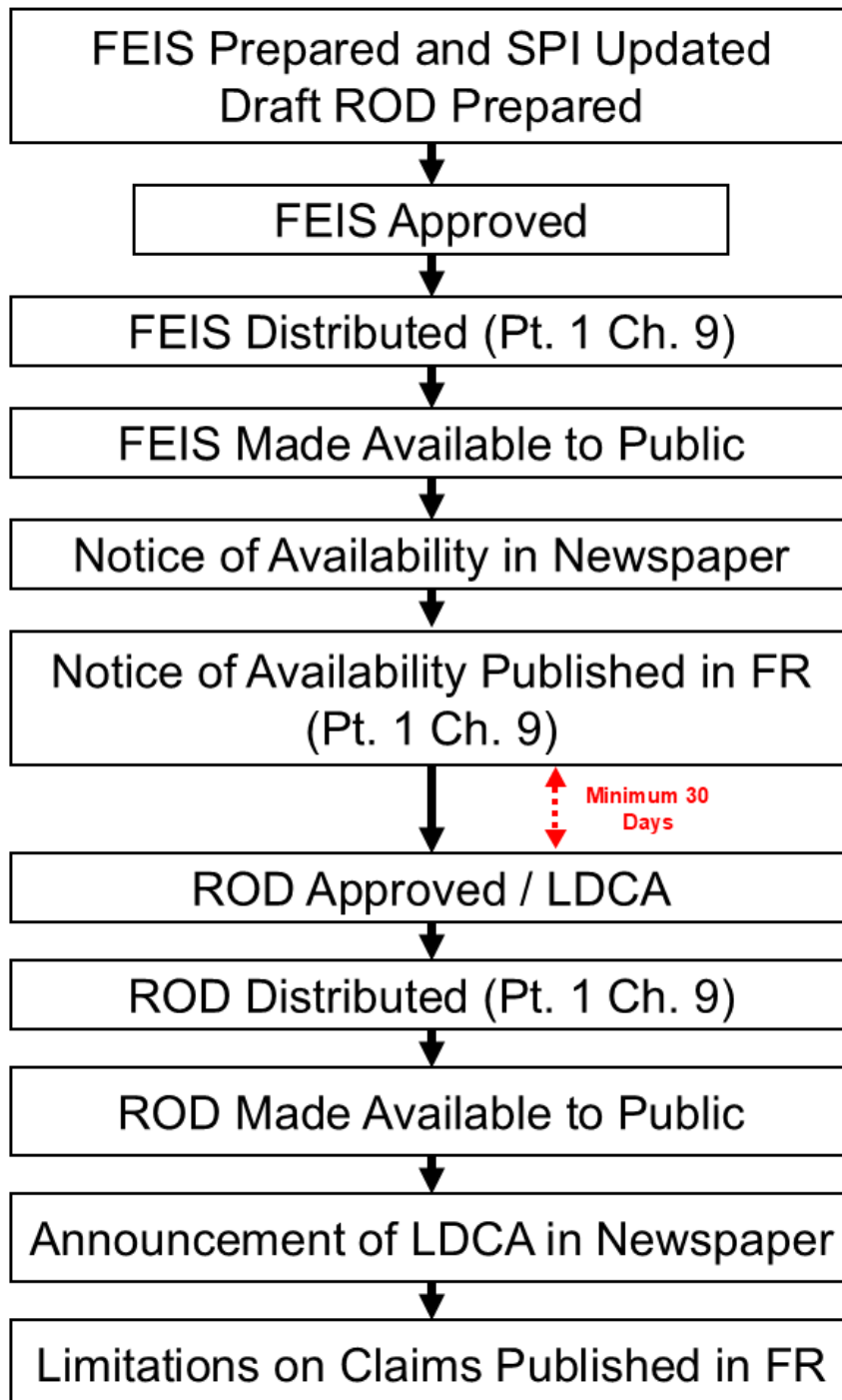


Figure 11-4 Typical Notice Activities for a FEIS and Separate ROD