Since 1994, every Federal agency has a mandate to develop a strategy for identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on low-income populations and minority populations. In transportation planning this means including those communities’ voices in the planning process, and evaluating the social impacts early on.

A new report from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), prepared by Portland State University and ICF International, provides an in-depth analysis of national demographic trends and a synthesis of best long-range planning practices borne out of five case studies.

Questions to Consider When Implementing Environmental Justice

Local Trends

- Is your community addressing the issue of demographic change when engaging the public?
- Is your community aware of demographic changes to date that may have already shifted community composition?
- Do recent trends suggest the community is likely to shift over the lifecycle of a transportation plan or investment?
- If it will change, how will you address that at later decision points?

Impacts of Planned Investments

- Is your community considering how planned investments could result in local demographic change?
- Has your community developed a process to evaluate impacts of investments on neighborhood change?
- Do investments address the needs of EJ populations and are there scenarios considering community change?