

Social and Community Effects FAQs

This document attempts to answer the most commonly asked questions about Social and Economic Analysis. Please contact [WSDOT Environmental Services Office](#) if you have additional questions.

1. Is the requirement for a Social and Economic analysis new?

No, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that environmental considerations, including the social and economic impacts of a project, are given due weight in the decision making process. The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) assumes that “the general welfare, social, economic, and other requirements and essential considerations of state policy will be taken into account in weighing and balancing alternatives in making final decisions.”

2. How role does Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) play in the Social and Economic analysis?

CSS encourages WSDOT engineers to design projects that consider effects on a community’s aesthetic, social, economic and environmental values and needs. WSDOT Executive Order E 1028.00 endorses a CSS approach for all projects and supports the use of public involvement to achieve this goal.

3. Do I need to analyze social and economic effects on all projects?

Yes. Federal non-discrimination laws apply to all planning and project development programs, policies and activities. Social effects should be considered for all projects, although the level of detail and scope of the analysis should be tailored to fit the complexity of the project and severity of the impacts.

4. Should the Social and Economic Analysis be separate from the EJ analysis?

The EJ analysis should be included in the Social and Economic Analysis although the EJ section of the report should be clearly labeled and referenced in the index and table of contents to assist the reviewer.

Other disciplines that may be combined with the Social and Economic Analysis are public services and utilities, visual impacts, and parks and recreation, since information from these disciplines is frequently referenced in the social analysis.

5. Does a Social Analysis focus only on residential effects?

A Social Analysis includes more than residential effects. At the very least, you will need to look at how changes in businesses and social resources (such as parks and service providers) might affect the community. Will the project relocate a business that supplies an important service or product to the local neighborhood? Will the project affect religious institutions or social services? If so, you need to document these effects.

6. What if my project only has business effects, do I still have to do a Social Analysis?

7. Do I need to coordinate between discipline reports?

Yes. The writer of the Social and Economic Analysis needs to coordinate with other related disciplines to obtain important information on how the project will affect people. To clearly understand how the project will need information from related disciplines, especially

- Noise.
- Air Quality.
- Visual Impacts.
- Transportation.
- Parks and Recreation.
- Public Utilities
- You may also need to review the Cultural Resources and Hazardous Materials analysis, depending on the scope and location of your project.