



March 10, 2021

Tori Kim, Director  
Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Office  
100 Cambridge Street, #900  
Boston, MA 02114

**RE: Comments on MEPA Interim Protocol for Environmental Justice Outreach**

Dear Director Kim,  
NAIOP appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft Interim Protocol for Environmental Justice Outreach and supports EEA's efforts to build upon the 2017 Environmental Justice Policy as applied to projects subject to MEPA review.

First, and most importantly, NAIOP supports the clear statement at the outset of the policy related to those review thresholds that trigger Environmental Justice requirements. Consistent adherence to that statement in individual project reviews is essential to maintaining the well-deserved reputation of MEPA review as an equitable and effective process.

Second, while NAIOP and its members fully support outreach to EJ populations, there are some practical considerations in connection with English Isolation identification and offerings. Defining "significant portion of the population" either qualitatively or quantitatively will help project proponents anticipate, plan for, and tailor appropriate translation offerings. For example, it will be sufficient to translate only a project fact sheet or executive summary in some instances; it may be appropriate to translate additional sections of review documents when a particular issue is likely of special concern by the impacted population; and it might be necessary to translate the entirety of (the non-technical sections of) an EIR for certain significant projects. These differences will be meaningful, in time and expense, so it will be critical to require translation and related services only if and to the extent also meaningful to the affected EJ population. Similarly, there may be circumstances in which the means of publication and distribution may need to be adjusted to be better suited to the affected population, with reliance on community bulletin boards and trusted community leaders more effectively communicating than conventionally in newspapers or on websites.

As the brevity of these comments suggests, NAIOP is supportive of the Interim Protocol's core goal, which is enhancing public participation by those in an EJ population, provided the practical considerations are considered and adopted. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tamara C. Small".

Tamara C. Small  
Chief Executive Officer  
NAIOP Massachusetts, The Commercial Real Estate Development Association

CC: Kathleen Theoharides, Secretary, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs  
Daniel Sieger, Undersecretary of Environmental Affairs, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs