

Business Owners

Who They Are:

Business owners offer a unique perspective in the planning process because they are often deeply rooted in the community where they do business, even if they do not reside there. In small businesses, the owner may be the only employee or one of few, and spend a majority of their time at the business.

Business owners may have concerns about how a project will affect their business, especially if it leads to loss of parking, road closures, or loss of visibility from the street. They may also have unique insight into their customers and what is important to them. They are important to engage because their businesses play an essential role in the economy and social life of the community.

Example:

The Albany Area MPO conducted door-to-door outreach to many businesses as an active outreach method for the Albany Area Regional Transportation Plan in November 2015. They connected with businesses through the Chamber of Commerce, service organizations such as Rotary and Elks that had members in the business community, and by targeting specific businesses such as bicycle shops.

<https://goo.gl/FULIYT>



Best Practices:

Outreach should be

- **Helpful:** During road closures, offer to assist businesses to notify customers and develop parking alternatives.
- **Where they are:** Make presentations or offer workshops during business association meetings or at the businesses themselves.

Recommended Strategies:

- **Visit Small Businesses in Person:** Visiting in person helps obtain feedback from and form partnerships with business owners who may not have time to attend an event.
- **Advisory Committees:** A board comprised of local business owners can give agencies feedback on important matters, such as how to increase foot traffic in business corridors or minimize disruptions during construction.
- **Workshops:** A workshop geared towards small businesses may help owners engage with a specific issue of interest, such as how to obtain bike racks in front of their store or how to deal with upcoming road closures.
- **Business Survival Kit:** Distribute information to businesses on how to mitigate negative effects of impending road closures or construction.