

Environmental Fact Sheet

Did you know?

Environmental Process Basics

- 1 The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was passed by Congress in 1969. In 1971, Connecticut passed the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) for state-funded projects.
- 2 NEPA and CEPA were enacted to protect critical environmental resources and promote informed decision-making in federal and state projects. It is a BIG part of project development and the decision-making process for a project such as the I-84 Hartford Project.
- 3 The I-84 Hartford Project must comply with both NEPA and CEPA – collectively referred to as “the environmental process” or “environmental documentation”.
- 4 The environmental process is not one-size-fits-all. Simpler projects go through a less rigorous analysis while more complex projects require a broader, more detailed assessment.

The flow chart on page 2 shows how things will happen on the I-84 Hartford Project.

Why the Environmental Process is a Good Thing

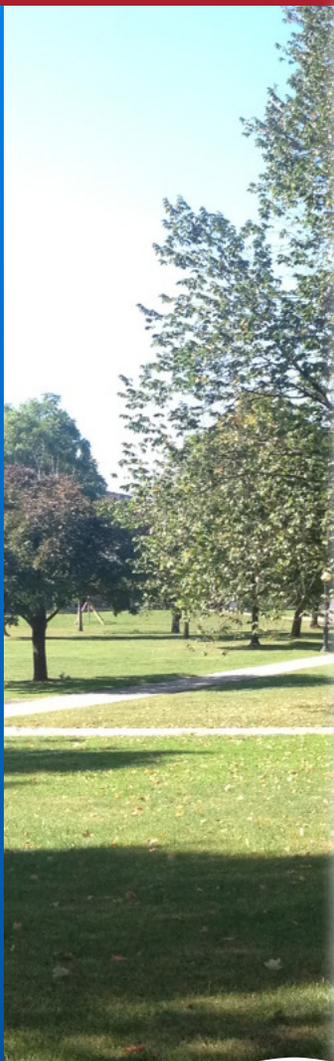
In short, the environmental process helps get a project to the best decision by requiring that:

- >> The need for the project and its purpose are clearly defined and generally agreed upon
- >> All reasonable alternatives are considered
- >> Possible impacts of each alternative are identified so that they can be avoided, minimized, or mitigated to a reasonable extent
- >> Mitigation of impacts is a **very** important part of the environmental process (more about mitigation on page 2)
- >> Open communication and coordination is **central** to the environmental process (see page 2 for more on this)

What does “the environment” mean?

When we see a reference to the environment, we often think of wetlands, habitats, or endangered plants and animals. But under NEPA and CEPA, the environment also refers to the “built”

environment that humans have created, such as neighborhoods, historic buildings, homes, and businesses. Potential impacts to many features of both the built and natural environment are considered in the environmental process. Because of its urban setting, the I-84 Hartford Project is likely to have more impacts to the built environment than the natural environment.



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The process of developing alternatives and evaluating their impacts is iterative. In other words, as we learn more, it is possible to alter the alternatives to avoid or lessen impact.

Determine Purpose & Need

Define Project Area

Develop & Evaluate Alternatives

Determine Impacts & Develop Mitigation

Document Impacts

Review by Agencies & the Public

Select Preferred Alternative

Obtain Approvals to Design & Build Project

Scoping? What's That?

Scoping is the first official step of the environmental process. It provides an early opportunity for input. During scoping, the regulatory agencies and public are formally consulted with regard to:

- » Project purpose and need
- » Alternatives to be considered
- » Key impact concerns

A scoping report, issued at the end of the scoping process, responds to agency and public comments and provides direction to the team in moving forward.



the importance of scoping

Scoping requires that input is sought **early** in the environmental process, ensuring that the project starts on the right foot. However, comments and input are welcome throughout the entire project.

what does mitigation include?

Avoiding impact altogether

Minimizing impact by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action

Repairing or restoring the affected environment

Reducing the impact over time by preservation and maintenance

Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments

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Coordination and communication are central to the environmental process. The success of the project depends on early and frequent coordination with **regulatory agencies** and open communication with **the public**.

Many environmental resources (e.g., wetlands, endangered species, parklands, historic resources, and others) are regulated by various agencies. The project must coordinate closely with the regulatory agencies which oversee those resources.



The active engagement of an informed and involved public will result in a better project. Throughout the environmental process, there will be ample opportunities to learn about the project, ask questions, submit comments and share your views.

