

**FTA Region 4
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION and
DOCUMENTED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION WORKSHEET**

Note: The purpose of this worksheet is to assist sponsoring agencies (grantees) in gathering and organizing materials for environmental analysis required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), particularly for projects that may qualify as a Categorical Exclusion (CE) or Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE). The use and submission of this particular worksheet is NOT required. The worksheet is provided merely as a helpful tool for assembling information needed by FTA to determine the likelihood and magnitude of potential project impacts. **NOTE: Fields are expandable, so feel free to use more than a line or two if needed.**

Submission of the worksheet does not satisfy NEPA requirements. FTA must concur in writing in the sponsoring agency's NEPA recommendation. Project activities may not begin until this process is complete. Contact the FTA Region 4 office at (404) 865-5600 if you have any questions or require assistance.

I. Project Description		
Sponsoring Agency	Date Submitted	FTA Grant Number(s) (if known)
Project Title		
Project Description (brief, 1-2 sentences)		
Purpose and Need for Project (brief, 1-2 sentences, include as an attachment if adopted statement is lengthy)		
Project Location (include City and Street address)		
Project Contact (include phone number, mailing address and email address)		
<p><u>If your project involves construction, include the following:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project vicinity map • Project site plan showing access points and project boundaries • Other useful maps as appropriate (topo, for instance, depending on circumstances, and/or Google Earth aerial, NEPA Assist, etc.) • A few photographs of the site if useful to illustrate important features • Details pertaining to the depth of soil excavation • Note if the soil has been previously disturbed by prior construction or other activity • List parks or recreation areas within the project vicinity • Any previous consultations that might be relevant? (HUD, SHPO, or DOTs) 		

II. NEPA Class of Action

Answer the following questions to determine the project's potential class of action. If the answer to any of the questions in [Section A](#) is "YES", contact the FTA Region 4 office to determine whether the project requires preparation of a NEPA environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS).

A. Will the project significantly impact the natural, social and/or economic environment?

YES (contact FTA Regional office)

NO (continue)

A.1 Is the significance of the project's social, economic or environmental impacts unknown?

YES (contact FTA Regional office)

NO (continue)

A.2 Is the project likely to require detailed evaluation of more than a few potential impacts?

YES (contact FTA Regional office)

NO (continue)

A.3 Is the project likely to generate intense public discussion, concern or controversy, even though it may be limited to a relatively small subset of the community?

YES (contact FTA Regional office)

NO (continue)

B. Does the project appear on the following list of Categorical Exclusions (CEs)?

The types of activities listed below describe actions which, when the corresponding conditions are met, are under usual circumstances categorically excluded from further NEPA analysis under [23 CFR 771.118\(c\)](#). Unusual circumstances may include, but are not limited to, the presence of wetlands, historic buildings and structures, parklands, or floodplains in the project area, or the potential for the project to impact other resources. (Descriptions of each type of activity, and corresponding conditions, are available [here](#); this worksheet simply lists the name of each exclusion.)

YES (If checked AND there are no special circumstances, check the applicable box and briefly describe the activity in [Section III. A](#); then proceed to the signature block on the back page.)

NO (continue to [Section II. C](#))

[23 CFR 771.118\(c\)\(1-16\)](#)

(1) Utility and Similar Appurtenance Action

- (2) Pedestrian or Bicycle Action
- (3) Environmental Mitigation or Stewardship Activity
- (4) Planning and Administrative Activity
- (5) Activities Promoting Transportation Safety, Security, Accessibility and Communication
- (6) Acquisition, Transfer of Real Property Interest
- (7) Acquisition, Rehab, Maintenance of Vehicles or Equipment
- (8) Maintenance, Rehab, Reconstruction of Facilities
- (9) Assembly or Construction of Facilities
- (10) Joint Development of Facilities
- (11) Emergency Recovery Actions
(Several conditions attach to this type of CE. We recommend you consult with FTA if you think this CE may apply to your action.)
- (12) Projects Entirely within the Existing Operational Right-of-Way.
- (13) Federally Funded Projects
(Must be less than \$5 million in federal funding, or having a total estimated cost of not more than \$30,000,000 and Federal funds comprising less than 15 percent of the total estimated project cost.
- (14) Bridge Removal and Related Activities.
- (15) Preventative Maintenance to Certain Culverts and Channels
- (16) Geotechnical and Similar Investigations

C. Does the project appear on the following list of potential documented Categorical Exclusions?

Projects that are categorical exclusions under [23 CFR 771.118\(d\)](#) require additional documentation demonstrating that the specific conditions or criteria for the CEs are satisfied and that significant effects will not result.

YES (Check correct box below and continue to Part III)

NO (Contact FTA Regional Office)

[23 CFR 771.118\(d\)\(1-8\)](#)

- (1) Modernization of a highway by resurfacing, restoring, rehabilitating, or reconstructing shoulders or auxiliary lanes.
- (2) Bridge replacement or the construction of grade separation to replace existing at-grade railroad crossings.
- (3) Acquisition of land for hardship or protective purposes. (NOTE: Hardship and protective buying will be permitted only for one or a limited number of parcels, and only where it will not limit the evaluation of alternatives (including alignments) for

- planned construction projects.
 - (4) Acquisition of right-of-way. (NOTE: No project development on the acquired right-of-way may proceed until the NEPA process for such project development, including the consideration of alternatives, where appropriate, has been completed.)
 - (5) [Reserved]
 - (6) Facility modernization through construction or replacement of existing components.
 - (7) Minor realignment for rail safety purposes
 - (8) Facility modernization/expansion outside existing ROW
- “Other” actions which meet the criteria for a CE in the CEO regulations (40 CFR 1508.4) and will not result in significant environmental effects. Actions must not: induce significant impacts to planned growth or land use; require the relocation of significant numbers of people; have a significant impact on any natural, cultural, recreational, historic or other resource; cause significant air, noise, or water quality impacts; have significant impacts on travel patterns; or otherwise have significant environmental impacts (either individually or cumulatively).

III. Information Required for Documented Categorical Exclusions

If you checked “Yes” to any of the options in Part II. C, complete each relevant subject area for Part III. Sections B-AA and submit to FTA. Depending on the project, some of the subject areas may not be applicable. In such cases, no discussion is needed.

The list below is not all-inclusive. If your proposed project has the potential to cause impacts to resources which are not listed below, please provide supplemental information about those potential impacts.

A. Detailed Project Description
Describe the project and explain how it satisfies the purpose and need identified in Part I.

B. Location and Zoning
Attach a map identifying the project’s location and surrounding land uses. Note any critical resource areas (historic, cultural or environmental) or sensitive noise or vibration receptors (schools, hospitals, churches, residences, etc). Briefly describe the project area’s zoning and indicate whether the proposed project is consistent with it. Briefly describe the community (geographic, demographic, economic and population characteristics) in the project vicinity.

C. Traffic
Describe potential traffic and parking impacts, including whether the existing roadways have adequate capacity to handle increased bus or other vehicular traffic. Include a map or diagram if the project will modify existing roadway configurations. Describe connectivity to other transportation facilities and modes, and coordination with relevant agencies.

D. Aesthetics

Will the project have an adverse effect on a scenic vista?

- No
- Yes, describe

Will the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

- No
- Yes, describe

Will the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

- No
- Yes, describe

E. Air Quality

Does the project have the potential to impact air quality?

- No
- Yes, describe

Is the project located in an EPA-designated non-attainment or maintenance area?

- No
- Yes, indicate the criteria pollutant and contact FTA to determine if a hot spot analysis is necessary.
 - Carbon Monoxide (CO)
 - Ozone (O₃)
 - Particulate Matter (PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5})

If the non-attainment area is also in a metropolitan area, was the project included in the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) air quality conformity analysis?

- No
- Yes Date of USDOT conformity finding:

F. Coastal Zone

Is the proposed project located in a designated coastal zone management area?

- No
- Yes, describe coordination with the State regarding consistency with the coastal zone management plan and attach the State finding, if available.

G. Environmental Justice

Determine the presence of minority and low-income populations (business owners, land owners, and residents) within about a quarter-mile of the project area. Indicate whether the project will have disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations. Describe any potential adverse effects. Describe outreach efforts targeted specifically at minority or low-income populations. Guidance is [here](#).

H. Floodplains

Is the proposed project located within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 100-year floodplain?

- No
- Yes, describe potential impacts, indicate if the project will impact the base flood elevation, and include or link to the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) with the project location identified.

I. Hazardous Materials

Is there any known or potential contamination at the project site? This may include, but is not limited to, lead/asbestos in existing facilities or building materials; above or below ground storage tanks; or a history of industrial uses of the site.

- No, describe steps taken to determine whether hazardous materials are present on the site.
- Yes, note mitigation and clean-up measures that will be taken to remove hazardous materials from the project site. If the project includes property acquisition, identify if a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment for the land to be acquired has been completed and the results.

J. Navigable Waterways

Does the proposed project cross or have the potential to impact a navigable waterway?

- No
- Yes, describe potential impacts and any coordination with the US Coast Guard.

K. Noise and vibration

Does the project have the potential to increase noise or vibration?

- NO
- YES, describe impact and provide map identifying sensitive receptors such as schools, hospitals, parks and residences. If the project will result in a change in noise and vibration sources, you must use FTA's "Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment" methodology to determine impact.

L. Prime and Unique Farmlands

Does the proposal involve the use of any prime or unique farmlands?

- No
- Yes, describe potential impacts and any coordination with the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

M. Historic & Cultural Resources

Impacts to cultural, historic, or recreational properties may trigger Section 106 or tribal consultations or a Section 4(f) evaluation, requiring consideration of avoidance alternatives.

Does the project involve any ground disturbing activities?

- No
- Yes, provide the approximate maximum ground disturbance depth. Also provide information on previous disturbances or where ground disturbance will occur.

Are there any historic resources in the vicinity of the project?

- No
- Yes, Attach photos of structures more than 45 years old that are within or adjacent to the project site and describe any direct or indirect impacts the project may cause.

N. Biological

Are there any species located within the project vicinity that are listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act? Determine this by obtaining lists of threatened and endangered species and critical habitat from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Describe any critical habitat, essential fish habitat or other ecologically sensitive areas within or near the project area.

O. Recreational

Is the project located in or adjacent to a park or recreation area?

- No
- Yes, provide information on potential impacts to the park or recreation area. Please also indicate if the park involved Land and Water Conservation Act funds (Section 6(f))

P. Seismic and Soils

Are there any unusual seismic or soil conditions in the project vicinity? If so, indicate on project map and describe the seismic standards to which the project will be designed.

- No
- Yes, describe

Q. Water Quality

Does the project have the potential to impact water quality, including during construction.

- No
- Yes, describe potential impacts and best management practices which will be in place.

Will there be an increase in new impervious surface or restored pervious surface?

- No
- Yes, describe potential impacts and proposed treatment for stormwater runoff.

Is the project located in the vicinity of an EPA-designated sole source aquifer (SSA)?

- No
- Yes, provide the name of the aquifer which the project is located in and describe any potential impacts to the aquifer. Also include the approximate amount of new impervious surface created by the project. (May require completion of SSA worksheet.)

R. Wetlands

Does the proposal temporarily or permanently impact wetlands or require alterations to streams or waterways?

- No
- Yes, describe potential impacts

S. Construction Impacts

Describe the construction plan and identify impacts due to construction noise, utility disruption, debris and spoil disposal, and staging areas. Address air and water quality impacts, safety and security issues, and disruptions to traffic and access to property.

T. Cumulative and Indirect Impacts

Are cumulative and indirect impacts likely?

No

Yes, describe the reasonably foreseeable:

a) Cumulative impacts, which result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes them. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

b) Indirect impacts, which are caused by the action but are later in time or farther removed in distance, yet are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect impacts may include growth-inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air, water and other natural systems, including ecosystems.

U. Property Acquisition

If property is to be acquired for the project, indicate whether acquisition will result in relocation of businesses or individuals.

Note: For acquisitions over \$500,000, FTA concurrence in the property's valuation is also required.

V. Energy

If the project includes the construction or reconstruction of a building, identify potential opportunities to conserve energy which could be employed. This includes building materials and techniques used for construction; special innovative conservation features; fuel use for heating, cooling and operations; and alternative renewable energy sources.

W. Public Involvement

Describe public outreach efforts undertaken on behalf of the project. Indicate opportunities for public meetings (e.g. board meetings, open houses, special hearings). Indicate any significant concerns expressed by agencies or the public regarding the project.

X. Mitigation Measures

Describe all measures to be taken to mitigate project impacts.

Y. Other Federal Actions

Provide a list of other federal NEPA actions related to the proposed project or in the vicinity.

Z. State and Local Policies and Ordinances

Is the project in compliance with all applicable state and local policies and ordinances?

No, describe noncompliance:

Yes

AA. Related Federal and State/Local Actions

- Corps of Engineers Permit (Section 10, Section 404)
- Coast Guard Permit
- Coastal Zone Management Certification
- Critical Area Ordinance Permit
- ESA and EFH Consultation
- Floodplain Development Permit
- Forest Practice Act Permit
- Hydraulic Project Approval
- Local Building or Site Development Permits
- Local Clearing and Grubbing Permit
- National Historic Preservation Act-Section 106 consultation
- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Construction Permit
- Shoreline Permit
- Solid Waste Discharge Permit
- Sole Source Aquifer Consultation
- Section 4(f) (Historic or Recreational Properties; Wildlife Refuges)
- Section 6(f) (Recreational Properties)
- Section 106 (Historic Properties)
- Stormwater Site Plan (SSP)
- Temporary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (TESC)
- Water Rights Permit
- Water Quality Certification—Section 401
- Tribal Consultation or Permits (if any, describe below)
- Other

Others (describe as applicable):

Submitted By (name, title):

Date:

Please submit an electronic copy of this form, attachments, and a signed transmittal letter recommending a NEPA finding to either julia.walker@dot.gov or stanley.a.mitchell@dot.gov

For links to further topical guidance, please visit Region 4's webpage.