

Overview of MEPA Review Process

Logan Airport Parking Project, Boston (East Boston)
EEA# 15665

Q: What is the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA)?

A: The Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) office is part of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), an agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts led by Secretary Matthew Beaton. MEPA requires that State Agencies study the environmental consequences of their actions and that they take all feasible measures to avoid or minimize and mitigate Damage to the Environment, as defined by the MEPA regulations.

MEPA review is not a permitting process and does not result in the substantive approval or denial of a project. MEPA does not pass judgment on whether a project is environmentally beneficial, or whether a project can or should receive a particular permit. MEPA requires public study, disclosure, and development of feasible mitigation for a proposed project.

Q: When is MEPA review required?

A: MEPA review is required if a project meets or exceeds a MEPA review threshold (301 CMR 11.03), *and* requires a State Agency Action. State Agency Actions include a project proposed by a state Agency, the granting of state Permits or licenses, provision of state Financial Assistance, or transfer of state-owned land. MEPA review is required only if both conditions are satisfied.

Q: Why does this project require MEPA review?

A: The project requires MEPA review because it is proposed by a state Agency (specifically the Massachusetts Port Authority; Massport) and it exceeds the MEPA review threshold at 301 CMR 11.03(6)(a)(7): *Construction of 1,000 or more New parking spaces at a single location.*

Q: When does the comment period close and what are the next steps?

Based on the review threshold that this project meets/exceeds, the project is subject to preparation of an ENF and a mandatory Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The Secretary will accept written comments on the ENF through **April 25th** (*see other side for how to submit comments*). The Secretary will issue a Certificate on **May 5th** which will include a Scope that identifies the remaining issues and analysis to be addressed in the subsequent EIR. Notice of the EIR will be published on the MEPA website and copies of the EIR will be made available to those that commented on the ENF. The EIR will also be subject to a public comment period.

Q. How does this project relate to the Logan Airport Parking Freeze?

A: The Logan Airport Parking Project is contingent upon the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) amending the Logan Airport Parking Freeze regulations (310 CMR 7.30). MassDEP has issued a proposed regulatory amendment, which would allow the creation of an additional 5,000 commercial parking spaces at Logan International Airport. This proposed amendment is currently out for public comment. The regulatory and public process associated with MassDEP's proposed parking freeze amendment is separate from the MEPA review for the Logan Airport Parking Project. MassDEP is holding a public hearing on amending the parking regulations on Tuesday, **April 25th** at 4:00 pm at the Logan Airport Rental Car Center and the comment period on amending the regulations closes on **May 8th**. Additional information on Massport's parking freeze proposal and MassDEP's process may be found at: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/news/comment/logan-freeze.html>

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Q: What is the purpose of tonight's MEPA Scoping Session?

A: The purpose of tonight's Scoping Session is for the MEPA Environmental Analyst, State Agency Officials, and the public to learn about the project, existing conditions, what is proposed, potential impacts, measures that have been taken to avoid or minimize impacts, and potential mitigation measures.

There will be time allocated for questions and clarifications from members of the public. **The formal method of participation in the MEPA process is through the submittal of written comments (see below).** Comments made at the Consultation Session will be considered and inform the MEPA Analyst and State Agencies.

The order of the MEPA Scoping Session will be as follows:

- Overview of MEPA Process (Page Czepiga, MEPA Analyst)
- Overview of the Proposed Project (Massport)
- ENF Overview/Draft EIR Scope (Massport)
- Floor will be opened to questions/clarifications in the following order:
 - Elected officials
 - State officials
 - Local officials
 - Members of the public

Q: How do I submit comments / participate in the MEPA process?

A: The MEPA Consultation Session will provide an opportunity for questions/clarifications by State Agencies, public officials, and the public. **If you want your comments to be included in the public record and considered by Secretary Beaton, you must submit written comments to the Secretary.**

On ENFs, anyone may provide written comments on the project, its alternatives, its potential environmental impacts, mitigation measures, and what to require in the Scope of the EIR. **Comments must be submitted in writing on or before April 25th.**

The MEPA Office encourages submitting comments electronically via email; though comments may also be submitted by mail or by hand delivery. Please note that comments submitted on MEPA documents are public records. **Note that comments only need to be submitted once (do not provide both an electronic copy and signed hard copy).**

Comment letters can be emailed directly to page.czepiga@state.ma.us or mailed to:

Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)
Attn: MEPA Office
Page Czepiga, EEA No. 15665
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston MA 02114

Q: Who can I contact with questions about the MEPA Process?

A: Questions on the MEPA Process may be answered by contacting Page Czepiga, MEPA Analyst at (617) 626-1021 or page.czepiga@state.ma.us.

For additional information on the MEPA process, please visit: www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/mepa/