

# Goals of the Study

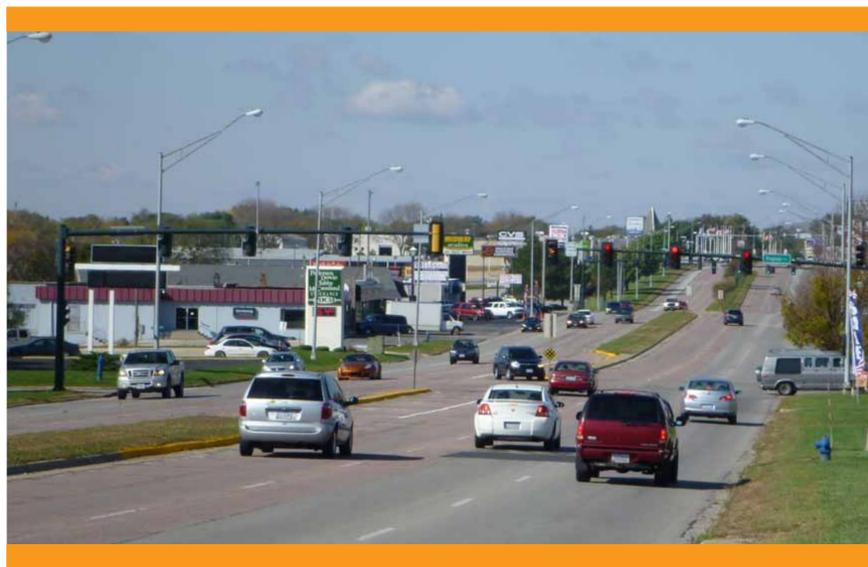
## The Study Goals are to:

- Optimize corridor operations to move people across and through the area safely and efficiently.
- Develop a *Complete Street* corridor that is functional and appealing for non-motorists and motorists alike.
- Determine what type of intersection improvements are needed to improve corridor operations.



# Draft Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to improve the condition, safety and traffic flow of University Avenue / IA 934 between Iowa Highway 58 in Cedar Falls and U.S. Highway 63 in Waterloo, and incorporate *Complete Streets* improvements.



## The Proposed Project is Needed to:

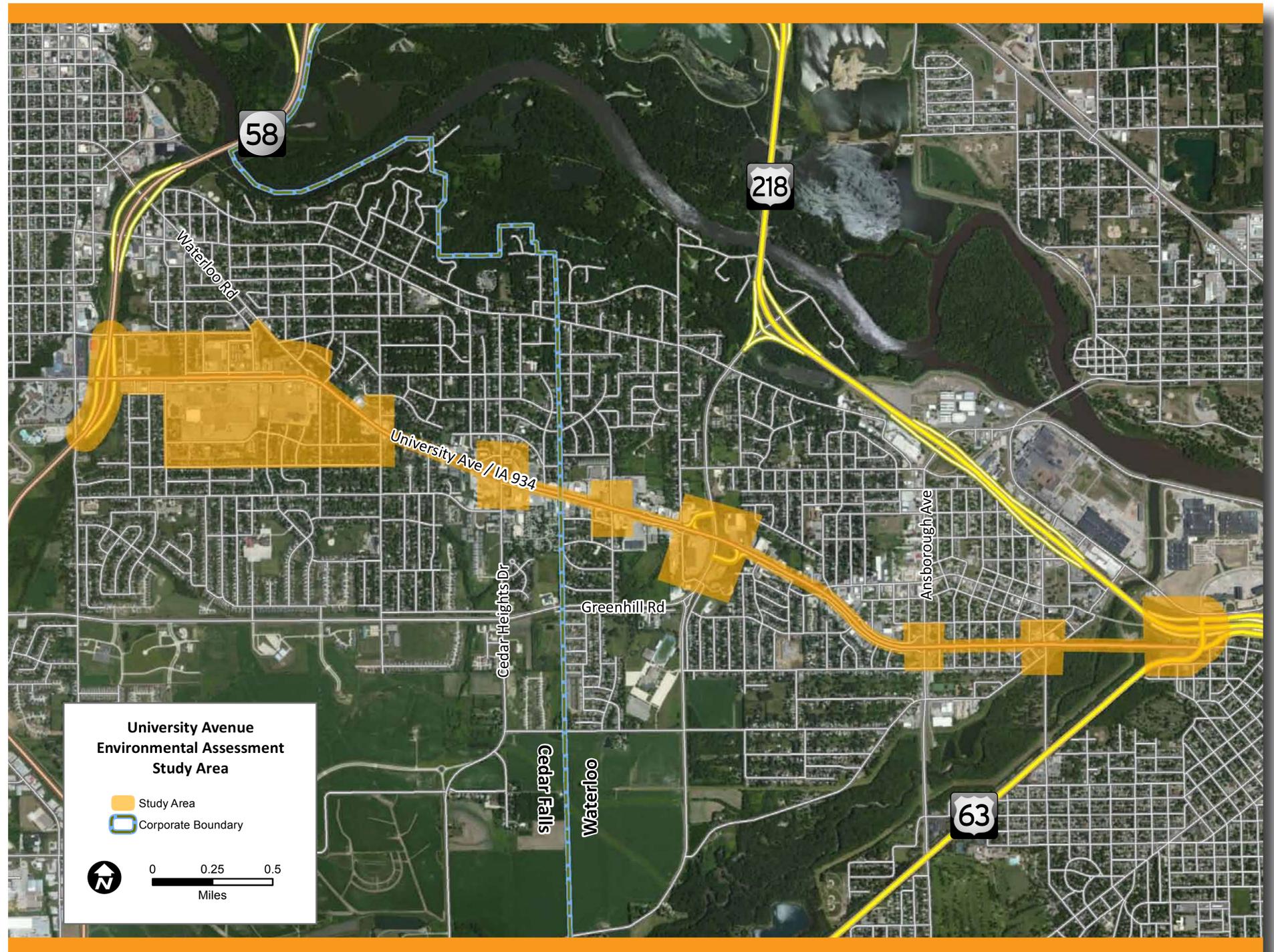
- Improve pavement and bridge condition
- Enhance safety
- Provide bicycle and pedestrian access and mobility
- Improve traffic flow
- Support economic growth and revitalization



# University Avenue / IA 934 Study Area

The University Avenue study is being led by the Iowa Department of Transportation in partnership with Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG) and the cities of Cedar Falls and Waterloo.

University Avenue is also designated as Iowa Highway 934 and is maintained jointly by the Iowa DOT and the cities.



# Haven't We Already Completed a Study?

The University Avenue Corridor Study was performed between 2008 and 2010 to investigate future transportation needs in the University Avenue Corridor between Iowa Highway 58 in Cedar Falls and U.S. Highway 63 in Waterloo. The purpose of the study was to examine the needs and functions of University Avenue to develop feasible alternatives for future reconstruction and improvement of the operations and efficiency of the corridor.

## The Corridor Study Considered:

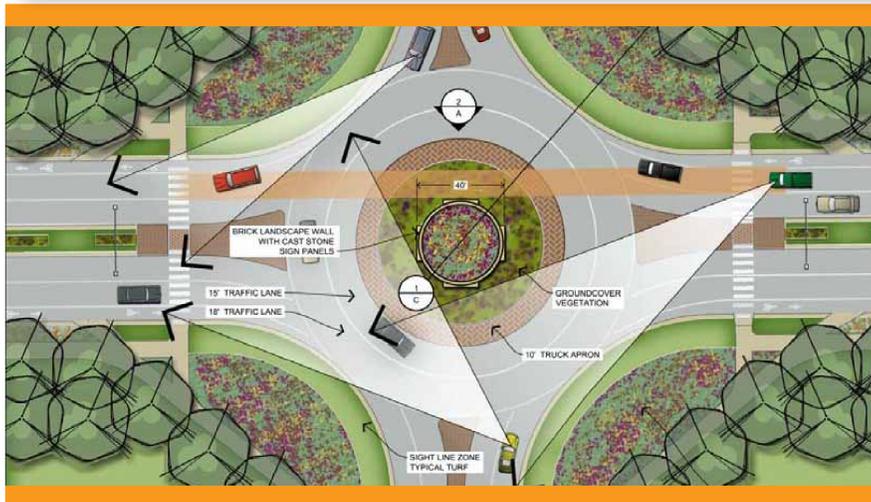
- Traffic capacity and operations
- Traffic safety
- Access to properties
- Frontage road and side road configurations
- Drainage and utility accommodations
- Visual appearance of corridor
- Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations
- Intersection types, including roundabouts



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# University Avenue Corridor Study Recommendations



## Key Study Recommendations:

- Reduce number of lanes along the corridor from 6-lanes to 4-lanes with bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, incorporating *Complete Streets* improvements.
- Reconfigure intersections and incorporate roundabouts in key locations to improve traffic operations, safety and efficiency.
- Add aesthetic treatments, including public art and landscaping, to the corridor.



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# Complete Streets

## What are Complete Streets?

*Complete Streets* are planned, designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Motorists, truck drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians and bus riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a *Complete Street*.

## What does a Complete Street look like?

A *Complete Street* may include:

- Sidewalks or multi-use trails
- Bike lanes or wide paved shoulders
- Bus turn-outs
- Comfortable and accessible public transportation stops



- Frequent and safe crossing opportunities
- Median islands
- Accessible pedestrian signals
- Narrower travel lanes
- Aesthetic treatments and landscaping
- Roundabouts



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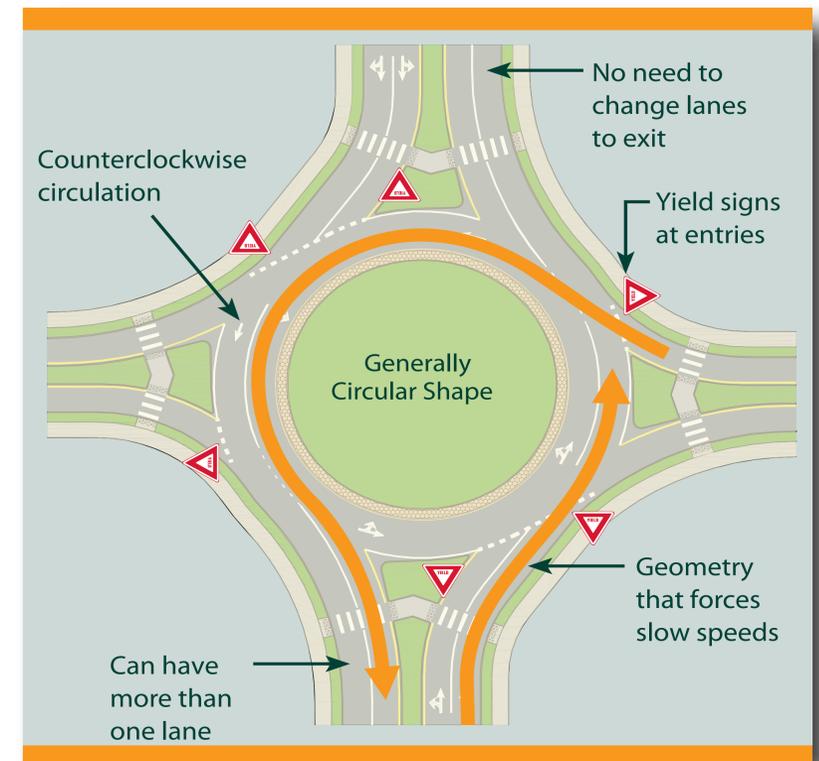


# What Is a Roundabout?

A Roundabout is a circular intersection designed for uniform, low-speed flow in one direction with yield control for entering traffic.

## What are the benefits compared to stop-controlled and signalized intersections?

- Operates more efficiently due to free flow travel conditions
- Lower speeds and shorter crossing distances are simpler and safer for pedestrians
- Reduces overall crashes by eliminating angle crashes and lowering speeds
- More environmentally friendly because there is less stop-and-go traffic and no electricity needed for traffic signals
- Provides opportunity to incorporate aesthetic treatments, such as landscaping or public art



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# Why Is a New Study Needed?

In all projects that use federal funds or need federal permits, it is necessary to follow the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA requires the completion of an environmental study to help communities identify the best way to meet future needs and avoid or minimize impacts to both the natural and man-made environment. For University Avenue, an Environmental Assessment (EA) is being developed and will likely take between 18 and 24 months to complete. The EA will use the recommendations from the Corridor Study as a baseline for refining and evaluating corridor alternatives and assessing their impacts to the natural and man-made environment.

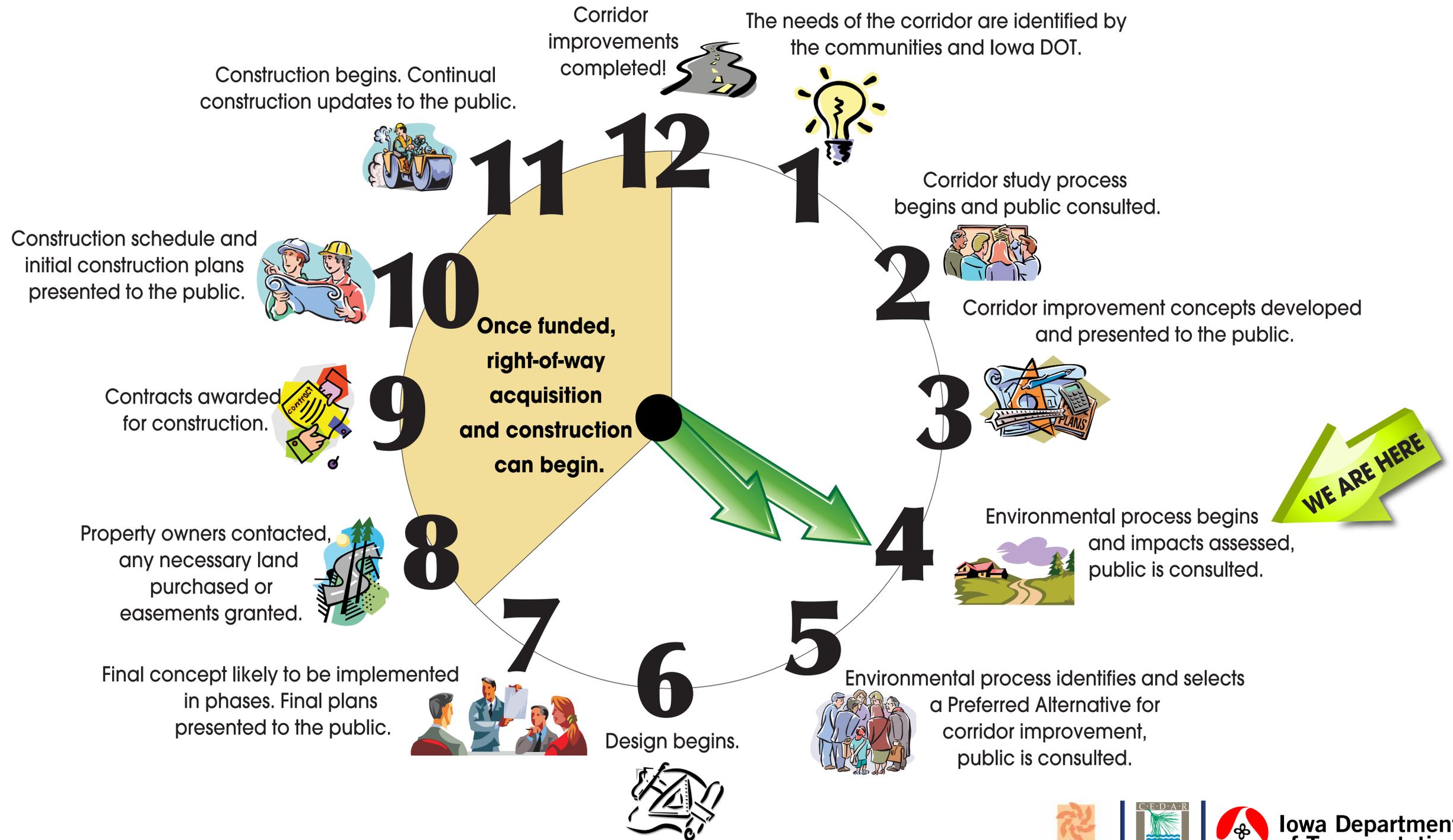


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# Project Development Process

How a transportation project moves toward construction:



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# What Is An EA?

An EA is one kind of environmental study. Public input is a critical component in the NEPA process and in an EA. The EA helps agencies and the public make well-informed decisions about investments in their communities. The EA documents the decision-making process and answers the following questions:

- What is the **purpose and need** for the improvement?
- How would the proposed improvement **function**?
- How might improvements impact the **natural and man-made environment**?
- Which alternative **best meets the purpose and need** while minimizing or avoiding impacts?
- How do the **public and project stakeholders** feel about the proposed project?

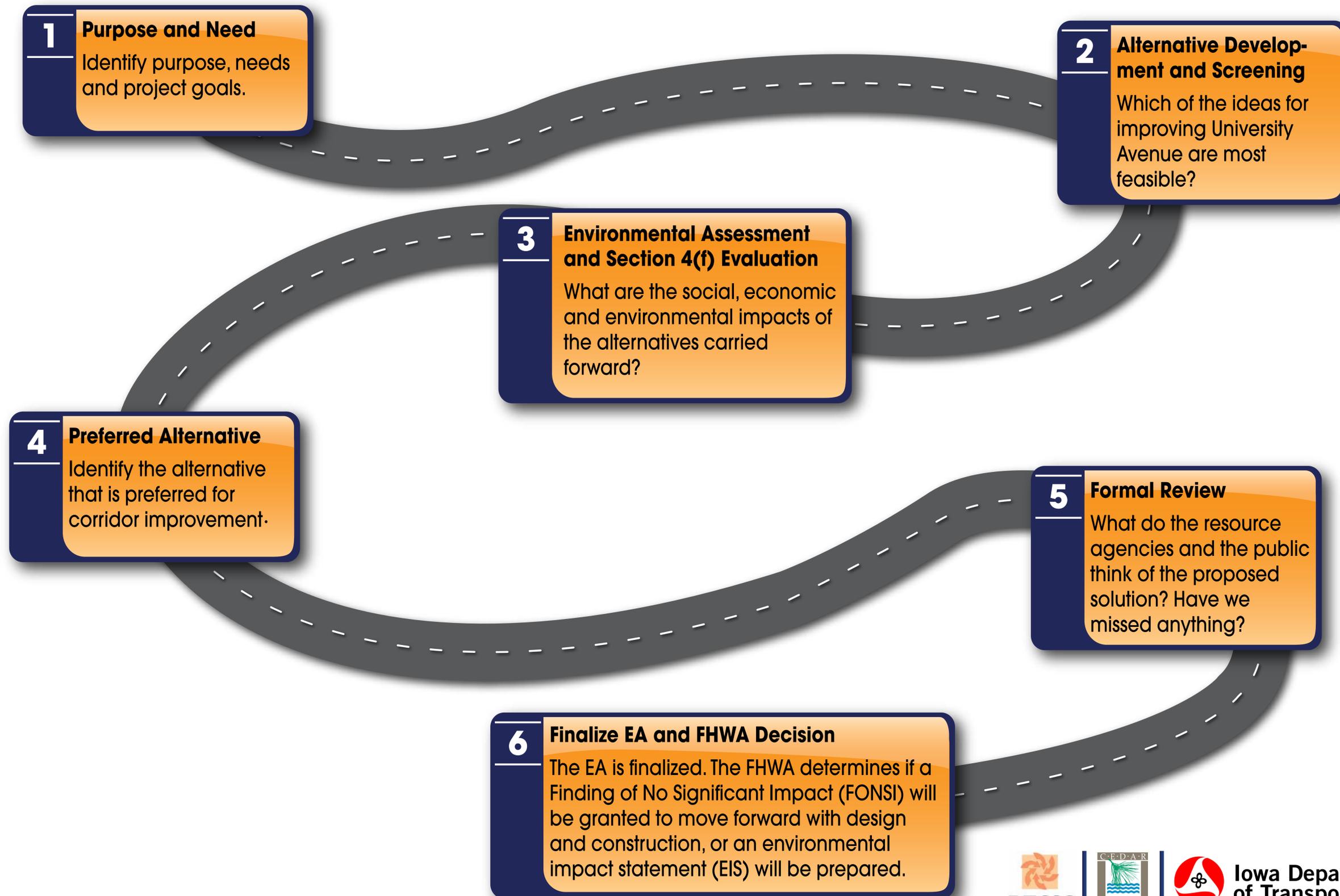
The Federal Highway Administration is responsible for overseeing the EA and approving the selected alternative. This approval is necessary for the project to move forward into design, right-of-way acquisition and construction.



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# What are the Steps to Complete an EA?



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# Natural and Man-Made Environmental Issues to Consider

A project field review of the natural and man-made environmental issues will be conducted during the study. The study team will consider a number of issues and constraints during the course of the study:

## Natural and Social Environment:

- Homes and businesses
- Cultural and historic resources
- Parks and public facilities
- Air quality
- Noise
- Land use
- Water resources, floodways, and wetlands
- Threatened and endangered species
- Environmental justice

## Engineering:

- Safety and mobility of motorists and non-motorists
- Connections and transitions to existing U.S. 63 and IA 58
- Existing intersection improvements/modifications, including roundabouts
- Bridges and culverts
- Right-of-Way
- Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations
- Accommodation of access



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# Study Schedule and Next Steps

The schedule shows the tasks and next steps that it will take to complete the environmental assessment for the corridor. Once the project completes the environmental assessment phase, design of the initial improvements could begin in Fall/Winter 2013. Right-of-way acquisition and construction will not occur until funding is identified.

Task Name	Quarter 4 - 2011	Quarter 1 - 2012	Quarter 2 - 2012	Quarter 3 - 2012	Quarter 4 - 2012	Quarter 1 - 2013	Quarter 2 - 2013
Collect Data							
Develop Purpose and Need Statement							
Conduct Traffic and Safety Analysis							
Perform Field Reviews							
Develop and Refine Alternatives							
Conduct Environmental Analysis							
Prepare Environmental Documentation							
Conduct Public Involvement Events							
Public Review of EA and Preferred Alternative							
Respond to Public Comments on EA and prepare FONSI							
NEPA Complete							

- Public Information Meeting
- Public Hearing
- NEPA Complete

