**Guidance for Completing this Document**

The following template will guide you through the process of preparing and providing the findings for the necessary technical and environmental studies that will be used to coordinate with the TDOT Environmental Technical Studies Office (ETSO). For this document to be sent to the ETSO for review & comment, all sections must be specific, accurate, and complete.

**Steps to completion**:

* Use the fillable forms in each section to ensure all relevant project-related information is included.
* Where provided, select the check boxes that include the appropriate, required language. Do not delete the standard language. Only write within designated fillable boxes.
* Read the bolded language carefully because it gives specific information about additional documentation requirements.
* **Attachments**
* **Attachment 1**: Project Map(s)— Project maps should include, at minimum; clearly labeled termini, an indication of the project location (line for linear projects, circles for bridges or intersections), title box (to include route name, termini, county, and PIN), north arrow, and scale bar. The map should be of sufficient scale to show the detail of the project area.
* **Attachment 2**: Photos—Include photos of the project area (taken on site—no Google imagery—as it may not represent existing conditions) with a caption describing the orientation of the photo (i.e., “Intersection of Tee St. and Dot Ave. facing northwest”).
  + **Attachment 3**: FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) with the project location clearly identified and termini clearly labeled.
  + **Attachment 4**: Supporting documentation for wetland and stream determination
  + **Attachment 5**: Hazardous Materials supporting documentation including evidence of the databases reviewed
  + **Attachment 6**: Site Plans/ Functional Layouts—The ETSO will need to know the limits of proposed disturbance. If formal design plans/functional layouts are not available, please include figures or photos with lines that show the extent of ground disturbing activities. If ROW and/or easements are anticipated, the limits of these (if known) should be indicated as well. As close to 30% plans as possible is preferred.

\*\*Please note that the headings on the following sheet represent the standard studies required for all Local Programs projects. Depending on your project’s scope of work, additional studies may be required including (but not limited to) traffic and safety analyses, Conceptual Stage Relocation Plans, and environmental justice analyses.

Initial Studies Coordination Form

Project, City/Town, County, TDOT PIN

Name of Applicant, Point of Contact

**Need**

Insert a need statement for the project. This should be a clear statement of the specific transportation needs in the project area (deteriorating roadway conditions, lack of connectivity, insufficient capacity, etc.) that the proposed project/improvements will be addressing. **If your need statement includes mention of traffic or safety, you will need to support that statement with a traffic and/or safety analysis memo that will be reviewed and approved by TDOT’s Strategic Transportation Investments Division.**

Click here to enter text.

**Purpose**

Insert a purpose statement for the project. This statement should reflect the need for the project—if the need is to address a lack of connectivity, the purpose would be to improve connectivity. The purpose statement should not restate the specific improvements associated with the proposed project – only the intent of the project as a whole as it is related to addressing the identified needs.

Click here to enter text.

**Project Description**

Provide a brief narrative explaining the background and history of the project. Document any planning documents that were the foundation of the project. Describe any previous phases that have been completed or actions taken by state or local jurisdictions that gave rise to the project. For some projects this can be brief but for projects that have a long history, it is important to inform the reader and tie past work and decisions to the current proposed action. Describe current and future land use as well as construction impacts. Describe the funding source that includes STIP/TIP information if applicable. Include project maps and site plans as well as a copy of the STIP/TIP page in Attachment 1.

Click here to enter text.

**Document Determination Statement**

If federal funds are used for any part of a Local Programs project (projects that have a federal nexus, such as the use of federal funds or actions on federal or tribal lands), please cite the regulation from 23 CFR 771.117 under which this project qualifies as a Categorical Exclusion (CE). Please also consult the 2018 Programmatic Agreement between TDOT and FHWA and cite that as necessary.

While locally-let projects that are State-funded are not subject to NEPA, these projects still undergo a commensurate level of environmental review and coordination as federally funded projects that are subject to NEPA. Instead of a NEPA document (Categorical Exclusion, Environmental Assessment, or Environmental Impact Statement), the State-funded projects are documented under Tennessee Environmental Evaluation Reports (TEERs).

Click here to enter text.

**Right-of-Way (choose one option below)**

The project will be constructed entirely within existing right-of-way and will require no easements of any kind. No residential and/or commercial displacements are necessary.

The proposed project will require the acquisition and/or use of additional right-of-way and/or easements. **Click here to enter text. If this box is checked, provide any known information such as the amount of acreage needed for right-of-way and/or easements, number of parcels impacted, or right-of-way plans if available. Include your information in this text box.**

***Statement of Acknowledgement***

If the amounts or location(s) of proposed ROW and easement acquisitions change, additional coordination with our office will be necessary to determine whether further coordination with the ETSO is required.

I acknowledge that if the project scope of work changes, including the addition of ROW/easements or a change in their location/amounts, that additional coordination with the TDOT Environmental Division’s Local Programs Point of Contact will be necessary to determine next steps.

**Floodplain Management (choose one option below)**

**Please review the appropriate Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) and discuss whether the project would cross or encroach upon the 100-year floodplain, regulatory floodway, or study area. If your project lies in a FEMA floodplain, floodway, or study area, you may need to contact** [**TDOT.Env.LocalPrograms@tn.gov**](mailto:TDOT.Env.LocalPrograms@tn.gov) **for appropriate language.**

The project is not located in a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain, floodway, or study area. Refer to the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for \_\_\_ County, Map Number \_\_\_, attached.

Portions of this project are located in a FEMA defined floodplain, floodway, or study area. **Click here to enter text. If this box is checked, you will need to provide the appropriate Floodplain Management Text.**

**Wetlands and Streams (choose one option below)**

**To properly identify water resources (such as a stream, wetland, spring, pond with a stream either entering or leaving it, seep, etc.) that may be impacted by the project and thus would need environmental permits, the project site must be thoroughly investigated by a certified Qualified Hydrologic Professional (QHP)\* on behalf of the Local Government or their consultant. Water resource identification can be quite subtle, and what appears to be a simple ditch or a low area, for example, could be considered a jurisdictional stream or wetland to a biologist/scientist/QHP.**

The proposed project will be constructed entirely within previously disturbed existing right-of-way and does not have the potential to affect aquatic resources.

The proposed project involves construction activities that have the potential to impact aquatic features in the project area. **If this box is checked, review of the project area by a QHP must be completed.**

\***QHP Certification** is currently facilitated and tracked by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). For information on Tennessee’s official guidance and support regulations behind the current Hydrologic Determination standard processes, approved Hydrologic Determination training, the QHP Certification Process, as well as resources to help identify Certified QHPs in Tennessee, please visit the TDEC Water Quality Training website (<https://www.tn.gov/environment/program-areas/wr-water-resources/water-quality/water-quality-training.html>) and the TN Hydrologic Determination Training website (https://tnhdt.org/Index.asp).

**Hazardous Materials**

This section will inform the TDOT Hazardous Materials Section as to whether the proposed project will require acquisition of right-of-way or easements that have the potential to contain hazardous materials or if an affected property directly abuts property that might contain hazardous materials. The determination shall be based upon a review of the current plans in conjunction with:

* A desk top review of the online databases listed below,
* A site-walk with pictures, as necessary, and
* A TDEC online or in-person file review, if known or suspected underground storage tank (UST) facilities will be encountered or acquired for the project.

Check the box next to each resource to indicate you reviewed that database and provide documentation (screen shots, printouts, etc.) to support in the attachments.

[TDEC Underground Storage Tanks](https://tdeconline.tn.gov/USTActiveInactive_public/)

[TDEC Division of Water Resources Data Viewer](https://tdeconline.tn.gov/dwr/)

[EPA Enviromapper](https://enviro.epa.gov/enviro/em4ef.home)

[EPA Cleanups in My Community Map](https://ordspub.epa.gov/ords/cimc/f?p=CIMC:73:::NO::P71_IDSEARCH:SF_SITE_ID%7C0404159)

Name of Reviewer: **Click here to enter text.**

Company/Organization: **Click here to enter text.**

Date of Review: **MM/DD/YYYY**

Make a selection below, indicating a recommendation to the TDOT Hazardous Materials Section as to whether additional studies are necessary to properly assess the potential impact of hazardous materials to the project. The Hazardous Materials Section manager will then either concur and provide documentation to include in the LGT or disagree with the recommendation and provide revised recommendations as needed.

After a review of the databases listed above, **(Name of Municipality)** has determined that no additional hazardous materials studies are warranted.

After a review of the databases listed above, **(Name of Municipality)** has determined that additional hazardous materials studies *are* warranted. **Click here to enter text. If this box is checked, you will need to include information in this text box regarding the HazMat studies to be completed. Additional studies may include a historical database record search from a commercial data vendor, Phase I ESA, Phase II ESA, UST removals, or asbestos surveys and abatements**

**Air Quality**

Consult *Table 2: National Ambient Air Quality Standards Tennessee Designations* in the February 2023 TDOT Air Quality Procedures Manual to determine whether your project’s county is in attainment for all regulated pollutants. If your project is in one of the counties listed in Table 2, TDOT will need to coordinate with the appropriate Interagency Consultation (IAC) group before providing air quality clearance for projects in PM2.5 nonattainment or maintenance areas. Select the relevant statement below.

This project is in an area that is in attainment for all regulated criteria pollutants. Therefore, conformity does not apply to this project.

This project is in a nonattainment or maintenance area. Therefore, additional coordination with the TDOT Air Quality and Noise Section is required.

Reference the FHWA’s [Updated Interim Guidance on Mobile Source Air Toxic (MSATs) Analysis in NEPA Documents](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/air_toxics/policy_and_guidance/msat/fhwa_nepa_msat_memorandum_2023.pdf), dated January 18, 2023, and make a selection below.

This project qualifies as a Categorical Exclusion under 23 CFR 771.117 and therefore, does not require an evaluation of MSATs.

This project is being processed as a Tennessee Environmental Evaluation Report and therefore, does not require an evaluation of MSATs.

**Noise**

You must identify whether the project is Type I or Type III in accordance with the FHWA noise regulation, [Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic and Construction Noise (23 CFR 722)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-23/chapter-I/subchapter-H/part-772) and the [Tennessee Department of Transportation’s Policy on Highway Traffic Noise Abatement](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tdot/documents/Signed_and_Approved_TDOT_Policy_on_Highway_Traffic_Noise_Abatement_July_13_2011.pdf) (TDOT’s noise policy). Please refer to the [TDOT Local Government Guidelines for Completing the NEPA Process](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tdot/programdevelopment/localprograms/documents-and-forms/LGG_Manual.pdf) (LGG NEPA) for a list of definitions to aide in making a selection below.

Type I **If this box is checked, a Noise study will be required. The Tennessee Environmental Procedures Manual outlines the noise study process for Type I projects. TDOT’s noise study templates should be used for all projects to ensure consistency in analysis procedures and reporting. Only individuals (TDOT or consultant staff) qualified in the field of highway traffic noise analysis shall conduct highway traffic noise studies for Local Programs projects that will utilize federal or state funding. Section 5.3.4 (Noise) of the LGG NEPA outlines the minimum qualifications.**

Type III (exempt from noise studies)

**Permits**

The local government will obtain all permits and assume all responsibilities of the permittee as indicated in the permit. Copies of the permit application and supporting documentation will be submitted to the TDOT Environmental Division Permits Office prior to letting of the project. The TDOT Environmental Division’s Permits Office will issue a certification stating that the permits are complete before the project can be let to construction.

As currently planned this project will not require a General or Individual Aquatic Resource Alteration Permits (ARAP) from the State of Tennessee or a Nationwide or Individual Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

The proposed project will require a General or Individual ARAP from the State of Tennessee or a Nationwide or Individual Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. **Click here to enter text. If this box is checked, provide information about the type of permit(s) required.**

# Project Location Map(s)

# Project Area Photographs

# STIP/TIP

# FEMA Map

# Ecology Documentation

# Hazardous Materials Documentation

# Site Plans/Functional Layouts