

# MAIN COMPONENTS OF MINNESOTA ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW



Environmental review is a public process that the City of Minneapolis and other governments in Minnesota must undertake before most major projects can be approved. Environmental review generally has three main components: **The Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW)**, **the public comment period**, and **the final decision**. By engaging in the environmental review process, community members can suggest specific improvements to proposals and ensure the government is held accountable to the people. Engagement is a powerful tool to push back on unfavorable project proposals, but generally environmental review alone is not grounds to approve or deny a project.

## 1) the EAW

The first step is for the project proposer to complete an EAW. This short document must include a site plan showing the project's significant features, any permits that will be required, whether the project is part of a larger planned construction, and more. The EAW must also detail the project's water and land usage, and its anticipated air, noise, and traffic pollution. An EAW often takes a few months to prepare.

## 2) public comment

Once the EAW is completed, the public comment period begins. During this time, anyone from the public—individuals and organizations—may send a written comment to the project proposer, highlighting concerns that the EAW did not appropriately consider. Comments that identify specific concerns, rather than general complaints, about the project or that suggest specific ways to mitigate or avoid impacts are particularly effective.

## 3) final decision

After the public comment period closes, the proposer determines whether the project requires additional and more comprehensive environmental review, which can take years to complete, or if the project may proceed as planned. Regardless of its decision, the proposer must specifically respond to the comments it received during the comment period, ensuring that the public's concerns are addressed.