



Environmental Assessment Fact Sheet

ODOT published an [Environmental Assessment](#) for the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project in February 2019 and held a 45-day public comment period. In November 2020, ODOT published a [Finding of No Significant Impact](#) and Revised Environmental Assessment.

Purpose

The Environmental Assessment is needed to:

- Research environmental effects to see if more study is needed
- Reach the goals set for building the project

The Environmental Assessment is for projects that have uncertainty about proposed action having a significant impact on the environment. The Environmental Assessment process clarifies uncertainty, analyses impacts and documents findings. If no significant impacts are found, the process is concluded with a Finding of No Significant Impact. If significant impacts are found, an Environmental Impact Statement is prepared.

The Environmental Assessment described the purpose of the Project and the needs it addresses. Short-term construction impacts and long-term impacts through year 2045 were evaluated. The long-term impacts compared effects expected to occur in the future if the project were built (Build Alternative) versus if the project were not built (No-Build Alternative). The Environmental Assessment also identified what ODOT will do to minimize and limit adverse effects to people and the environment. The environmental analysis process provides the opportunity to include stakeholders and share project benefits and impacts with the public.

Impacts Analyzed

The [Environmental Assessment](#) reviews the potential effects of the project on the following resources:

- Air Quality
- Aquatic Resources
- Archaeological Resources
- Climate Change
- Environmental Justice
- Noise
- Right of Way
- Section 4(f)
- Socioeconomics
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Water Resources
- Cumulative Impacts
- Hazardous Materials
- Historic Resources

Process

1. ODOT and the Federal Highway Administration initiated the National Environmental Policy Act process in 2017 and began work to develop the Environmental Assessment for the project in coordination with agency partners.
2. The Environmental Assessment was published and shared for public review and comment in early 2019.
3. ODOT and the Federal Highway Administration reviewed and responded to public comments to update the Environmental Assessment as appropriate. ODOT convened a panel of national experts to review the



Environmental Assessment analyses for air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and noise in mid-2020.

4. The Federal Highway Administration and ODOT issued a [Finding of No Significant Impact](#) and Revised Environmental Assessment in late 2020.
 - The analysis sufficiently demonstrated, the project would not have significant adverse impacts on the human or natural environment. An Environmental Impact Statement was not required.
5. The Finding of No Significant Impact and Revised Environmental Assessment documents were made available to the public on [the project website](#).
6. With the environmental phase complete, ODOT was able to begin to implement the proposed project (or the Build Alternative) and the design phase began. Technical information and public comment from the environmental phase continues to inform project design, as the project team continues to work in partnership with stakeholders and community to make refinements.

Key Findings for the Project

- The Project would not result in significant adverse impact on the human or natural environment.
- Air quality and greenhouse gas emissions slightly improve in the area.
- Noise will increase in the area, but two sound walls are proposed to reduce the impact to Lillis Albina Park, Harriet Tubman Middle School, and residential neighborhoods near I-5.
- Crash frequency reduced on I-5.
- Safer movement, greater access, and improved connectivity for people walking, rolling, bicycling, and riding transit.
- Traffic operations and travel times improve on I-5.

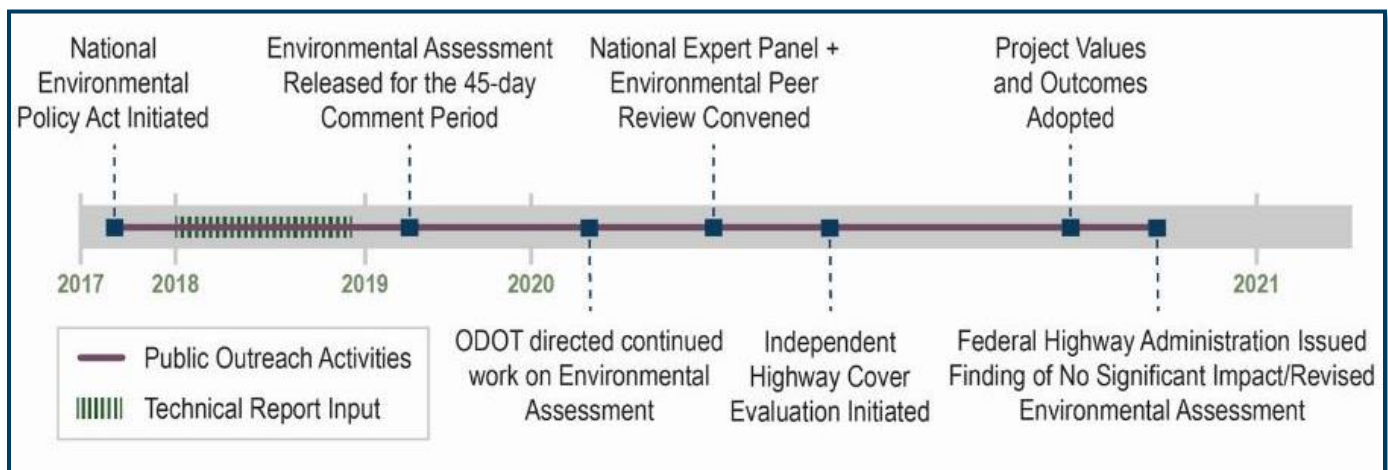


Figure 1: Environmental Review and Peer Review Timeline from 2017 to 2021.



Environmental Peer Review Report Fact Sheet

As directed by the Oregon Transportation Commission, a [peer review](#) was conducted for the Environmental Assessment for the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project in response to stakeholder concerns. The peer review was focused on the air quality, noise and greenhouse gas analyses. The project team hired a facilitator to convene a third-party panel of air and noise quality experts from around the country to review the environmental analysis, methodologies, and findings to determine if they were done correctly.

The panel reviewed the methodology, considered the appropriateness of the analysis, and determined whether the proposed conclusions and mitigation measures adequately addressed the identified impacts. The City of Portland, Metro, and Portland Public Schools participated in the process and provided supporting documents, questions, and project- or community-related concerns directly to the panel. Staff from Albina Vision Trust and Multnomah County were also invited but did not participate.

Findings by Areas of Concern

Noise Analysis:

- Complied with ODOT requirements
- Appropriately applied the Federal Highway Administration noise modeling
- Proposed noise barriers as mitigation
- Should evaluate construction noise

Air Quality Analysis:

- Followed Federal Highway Administration and US Environmental Protection Agency guidance
- No adverse long-term air quality impacts and no mitigation required

Greenhouse Gas Analysis:

- Went above and beyond National Environmental Policy Act requirements
- Could have included more quantitative data

Key Findings

- Supported the findings for air, greenhouse gas, and noise impacts for the project.
- Did not suggest that ODOT conduct additional environmental studies.
- Helped support the recommendations for making the Environmental Assessment document easier to navigate for the public, which informed publication of the [Revised Environmental Assessment](#).
- Provided recommendations for future design and construction phases.
- Identified opportunities for ODOT, partner agencies, and local community partners to come together to realize benefits for the community.

Additional Recommendations

- Communicate technical work in a way that is easier for the public to understand.
- Emphasize building local, regional, and state partnerships.
- Involve the community in solutions for reducing noise and air quality impacts from the project.
- Collaborate with partners on local enhancements toward restorative justice.
- Develop a strategy for intentional investment in local and disadvantaged business enterprises.
- Consider creating a job training program.
- Consider developing a youth involvement and education program.
- Commit to strategies avoiding gentrification.
- Develop an agreement with project partners that tracks responsibilities and commitments.