

## **Streamlined Environmental Questionnaire for Modernization with No Changes to Existing Infrastructure**

The purpose of the Streamlined Environmental Questionnaire for modernization projects is to assist the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) CHIPS Program Office (CPO) in determining the appropriate level of environmental review required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and related laws. Modernization projects that qualify under this Streamlined Environmental Questionnaire are those where any activity associated with the project will occur within the existing footprint of the facility(ies) on the site. If there will be any new land disturbance associated with the project, then the applicant must complete CPO's other Environmental Questionnaire.

The applicant should submit a single Environmental Questionnaire for its entire application, with responses to questions A through R for each project included in its application. Please provide CPO with a sufficient level of documentation and analysis to inform CPO's assessment of the appropriate level of NEPA review, which should include as much detail and information as is currently available, and may, in some cases, necessitate working with environmental experts or consultants to develop additional information. Documentation may include background research, and any past planning or studies.

The applicant is responsible for providing all necessary analysis and documentation to enable NIST to comply with NEPA and its implementing regulations. Submission of this Questionnaire by itself does not satisfy NIST's NEPA obligations. The Questionnaire is not the Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement. CPO may request additional information or documentation from the applicant to assist CPO in its environmental review. For questions regarding CPO's NEPA requirements, please contact CPO at [apply@chips.gov](mailto:apply@chips.gov).

Applicants must provide information on the following items in this Streamlined Environmental Questionnaire. For any question in which the applicant asserts that an item is not applicable to a project, provide a brief supporting explanation.

### **A. Project Description**

Please provide a brief summary of the proposed project(s) and each of the activities included in the proposed project(s), including the project schedule and a summary of any manufacturing process that will take place at the facility associated with the project. For each activity included in the project(s), describe both how that activity would benefit from the other project activities, and any value or utility that the activity will have independent of other activities. Provide the increase in production capacity, if any. If the applicant anticipates that Federal funds will only be used for certain activities, identify specifically the activities the applicant plans to conduct using Federal funds.

If the proposed project(s) is part of a larger application or a project cluster, describe both how the project(s) would benefit from the other projects included in the application or project cluster, and any value or utility that the project will have independent of other projects.

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**B. Project Site/Affected Environment**

Describe the location's address or coordinates, and the names of facilities. Provide a topographical map of the project area and a site map (with legend and north arrow) displaying the project location and boundaries, limits of any ground disturbance (if applicable), and existing and proposed project activities. *(A GIS shapefile is preferable, if available. If the specific locations of facilities and associated infrastructure are unknown, the applicant may provide a conceptual layout that describes the relative scale and proximity of project elements.)*

Describe the following for the location where the project would take place:

1. The nature of the site (e.g., urban, industrial, suburban, agricultural, university campus, manufacturing facility) and the current condition and/or use of the site;
2. The ownership or administration of the site and the surrounding lands, including whether any of the lands within or adjacent to the site are owned by any entity other than the applicant; if any of the lands are owned by a governmental entity, describe the management status of the lands (e.g., conservation lands, multiple-use lands, industrial lands);
3. Any existing facilities or buildings on the site, and whether those buildings would be modified or reused without substantial external modification;
4. Any temporary structures or equipment (e.g., office trailers, tension fabric structures, large generators) or laydown areas (e.g., storage containers, heavy equipment parking, or dumpsters) required to facilitate modernization and their location and likely duration on-site; and
5. Whether work on the activity has already begun or will begin before a funding decision is made.

**C. Resource Consumption Rates and Effluent Emissions Streams and Impacts**

Describe all material inputs and outputs, including, for example, but not limited to, material resources, water consumption, electricity use.

**D. Project Setting**

Describe the general proposed project area.

**E. Solid Waste Management**

Indicate the types and quantities of solid wastes, including from the end of life of equipment, the project facilities would produce and whether the action will result in permitting modification.

**F. Hazardous or Toxic Substances**

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Describe any new, or changes in volume of, toxic, hazardous, or radioactive substances that will be used or produced by the proposed project facilities and whether the action would require related modifications to existing permits or regulatory reporting or trigger new permits or reporting.

**G. Impacts to Water Quality/Water Resources**

Describe any impacts of the proposed project to these resources; and any measures that you have identified that might mitigate these impacts. If the proposed project would discharge wastewater in excess of existing permit conditions or water agreements, please describe the baseline condition and anticipated changes.

**H. Water Supply and Distribution System**

If the proposed project would require increased water use, indicate the source, quality, and supply capacity of local domestic and industrial/commercial water resources, the baseline conditions, and the anticipated changes to the amount of water that project facilities are expected to use. Note whether the water that is being supplied is in compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, and if not, what steps are being taken to ensure compliance.

**I. Wastewater Collection and Treatment Facilities**

Describe the capacity of any existing wastewater treatment facilities available for processing any additional effluent from the project.

**J. Environmental Justice & Socioeconomics**

Identify whether the proposed project would be in or near disadvantaged communities that are overburdened or underserved.<sup>1</sup> Describe whether the proposed project may result in disproportionate and adverse human health or environmental impacts to overburdened and underserved communities, including minority, tribal, or low-income populations. In describing potential impacts, consider whether the proposed project will result in any changes in local socioeconomic conditions, including population, employment rates, cost of housing, and other relevant conditions. Identify any measures that you have identified that might mitigate these impacts.

**K. Transportation (Streets, Traffic and Parking)**

To the extent the project increases on-site staff (direct or contractor) or increases routine material deliveries, briefly describe the local street/road system serving the project site(s) and describe any new traffic patterns that may arise because of the project. Indicate if land use in the vicinity, such as residential, hospital, school, or recreational, will be affected by these new traffic patterns. Indicate if any existing capacities of these transportation facilities will be exceeded as a direct or indirect result of this project implementation, particularly in terms of car and truck traffic, and what the new Level of Service designation will be.

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<sup>1</sup> Such communities can be identified using various tools for environmental justice analysis, including the Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/about#3/33.47/-97.5>, and the Environmental Protection Agency's EJScreen, <https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>.

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**L. Air Quality**

Indicate the delta in types and quantities of air emissions (including odors or nanoscale materials) and indicate types and quantities of any new air pollutants that would be produced by the project, and any measures you have identified that might mitigate these impacts. Is the proposed project site classified as a “non-attainment” area for any criteria pollutants? If so, for which pollutants? Indicate any local topographical or meteorological conditions that may hinder the dispersal of air emissions.

**M. Greenhouse Gases and their Environmental Effects**

Indicate the impact that the project would have on greenhouse gas emissions compared to existing conditions and describe sustainability efforts to be incorporated into the project (i.e., renewable energy use) as well as any efforts to improve energy efficiency and to reduce emissions.

Also describe how climate resilience is addressed; that is, how will the existing facility and project adapt to impacts from extreme weather events and climate change?

**N. Noise**

Aside from any potential change from traffic-related noise, will operation of project facilities increase local ambient noise levels outside of the facility fence-line? If yes, indicate the estimated levels of increase, and the areas impacted including any sensitive receptors (e.g., hospitals, schools, daycare facilities, housing for seniors, other residences) that may be affected. Indicate any measures that you have identified that might mitigate these impacts.

**O. Health and Safety**

Please identify and describe: (1) any known or potential health and safety hazards to the public or project workers that may result from or are associated with your proposed project; and (2) any efforts that would be taken to mitigate these hazards.

**P. Permits and other Government Agency Involvement**

Is any Federal agency other than NIST involved in any aspect of this project (e.g., funding, permitting, technical assistance, project located on Federally administered land)? Identify any Federal, Tribal, State, or local environmental permits, plans or reviews needed for the project (e.g., Clean Water Act 404 permits, stormwater management plans, coastal zone management/shoreline management plan, Clean Air Act permits, Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), etc.) and the status of any such permits. Attach copies of any such permits or permit applications and provide a timeline that describes the permitting plan to update/obtain the required permits.

**Q. Public Notification/Controversy**

Provide evidence of the community’s awareness of the project, such as newspaper articles or public notification and/or public meetings, as applicable. Identify State, tribal, or local government agencies that will have oversight or interest in the project, as well as any nongovernmental organizations that have expressed opposition or support for the project. Attach any project related correspondence with

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these agencies, tribes, and organizations. If a formal public hearing has been held by any government agency, attach any available minutes or notes from such hearings. Fully describe any public controversy or objections which have been made concerning this proposed project and discuss steps taken to resolve such objections.

**R. Environmental Experience and Approach**

Describe any experience in addressing and resolving environmental concerns during the performance of past projects of similar size and complexity including the obtaining of necessary permits. Describe any existing written environmental policies, procedures, or plans currently in place and considered essential to the conduct of the applicant's commercial business operation. Discuss any directly related education/experience of key project members (e.g., air quality management; surface water and ground water management; solid waste management; ecological resources; cultural resources; environmental permit applications).