



ODOT/ORDC FRA NEPA ASSIGNMENT APPLICATION

Q: I heard something about a joint partnership between ODOT and the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), can you tell me more?

A: ODOT/ORDC have submitted an application to the FRA to enter into a NEPA Assignment agreement. As part of the application process, we are required by law to make the draft application available for the public to review and allow for a thirty-day period after publication for the opportunity to provide comments.

Q: Where can the public view the application?

A: The application can be viewed online at:

<https://transportation.ohio.gov/programs/nepa-odot>

The application can also be viewed at ODOT's 12 District Offices and at Ohio's 17 Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) offices.

Q: What exactly is NEPA Assignment?

A: NEPA Assignment is a process states can choose to undertake whereby they assume federal responsibility for all environmental decisions, regulations, and laws that require review, reevaluation, consultation, or other actions related to the approval of transportation projects. The benefits of NEPA Assignment are cost savings due to the expedited environmental review process resulting in projects beginning construction sooner to the benefit of the public. ODOT has been a NEPA Assignment state since entering into an agreement with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in 2015, resulting in a significant savings in project delivery over the last several years.

What's Next?

- A newspaper advertisement will be published in The Cincinnati Enquirer, The Cleveland Plain Dealer, The Columbus Dispatch, The Dayton Daily News and the Toledo Blade on Sunday, June 2, 2024, notifying the public that the draft application is available for review and where they can view it, online and in-person.
- A 30-day comment period will be allowed through July 2, 2024.
- Following the comment period, ODOT/ORDC will respond to all comments and incorporate the comments and responses into the application package.
- The formal application will be submitted to FRA by the end of July 2024.
- In August 2024 FRA will post the application in the Federal Register.
- In September 2024, ODOT/ORDC will publish the approved application including the response to comments, and FRA will provide the final Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to ODOT/ORDC for review and signature.
- In December 2024 (or possibly sooner), FRA will issue the formal signed agreement.

More Info: www.transportation.ohio.gov or d06.pio@dot.ohio.gov

