



Stakeholder Engagement Plan

1. Stakeholder engagement objectives

Stakeholder engagement facilitates and supports public involvement of interested members of the public – providing the opportunity for all stakeholders to participate and be heard. This plan describes coordination and communication efforts intended to inform, educate, and engage the public and airport users as part of the Federal Environmental Assessment (EA)/State Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for Lake Elmo Airport, as well as the approach for documenting the outreach process. The EA will be carried out according to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the EAW will be carried out according to the requirements of the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). The two environmental processes will be carried out in parallel and the public engagement will include both processes.

The focus audience for the strategy will be members of the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) policy board, airport tenants, the general public and community leaders (elected and other) in the vicinity of the Airport, and stakeholders who actively participated in the recent long-term comprehensive plan (LTCP) process. When the term “the MAC” is used in this plan, it means the collective staff and board of commissioners and committee members acting in their respective roles and carrying out their respective responsibilities. When a specific staff or commissioner role is intended, that role is included in the reference.

The stakeholder engagement strategy is created to help the MAC achieve all of the following objectives:

- **Strengthen the MAC’s relationship with its stakeholders**
- **Foster collaboration**
- **Build stakeholder trust and support**
- **Proactively identify areas of interest and concern in a collaborative setting**
- **Support and document a thorough and effective process and create a robust documentation record**
- **Formalize a system to reach a wide variety of stakeholders and interest groups**
- **Develop a model for future similar processes**
- **Create opportunities for members of the MAC’s Board of Commissioners to recognize stakeholder engagement in the EA/EAW process**
- **Streamline agencies’ review**

By nature, this Stakeholder Engagement Plan is dynamic. Once the technical work on the EA/EAW begins, there may be circumstances that require an amendment to the plan in order to better achieve the above objectives. If the plan is amended, stakeholders will be made aware of the change through the project webpages and a notification through an electronic news (E-news) subscription service (see Section 6 Project Outreach Platforms).

2. Project roles and responsibilities

The stakeholder engagement framework is designed to create a shared ownership of the community engagement process for the Lake Elmo Airport EA/EAW. There are several major stakeholder groups described here including the MAC, the FAA, the Community Engagement Panel (CEP) and the interested public. The framework is built on the following roles and responsibilities.

The MAC: As the owner and operator of the Lake Elmo Airport, a critical part of the MAC airport system, the MAC is the sponsor of the EA and has the overall responsibility for the conduct of the EA and the EAW. The MAC developed the Scope of Work, and approved this Stakeholder Engagement Plan in consultation with stakeholders and regulatory agencies. The MAC contracted with Mead & Hunt, Inc. (the M&H Team) to provide technical consulting services for this project. In this role, the M&H Team provides information and makes recommendations to the MAC. The MAC is the final decision maker regarding all aspects of the EA/EAW including but not limited to the conduct of the EA; the composition of the CEP (See Section 3); and the alternatives considered for the EA. The MAC takes action on the final EAW as the responsible government unit under MEPA.

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA): The FAA is the federal regulatory agency responsible for the national system of airports and the national air space. The FAA has well defined roles and responsibilities in the airport EA process. The FAA is responsible for publishing the Federal Register notice, handling public comments received from the notice and taking action on the EA document once it is submitted to the FAA. The FAA takes action on the final EA as the lead agency under NEPA.

Community Engagement Panel (CEP): The CEP is an advisory board representing major community stakeholder groups that is more closely involved in the EA/EAW project than the public at large. The CEP serves several important functions including: representing a broad range of stakeholder groups in the EA, receiving information about the EA/EAW and sharing it with constituencies; providing input to the EA/EAW as the voice of key stakeholders; and in some cases, providing technical advice to the M&H Team. Experience has shown that environmental review projects can benefit from the creation and participation of a CEP as part of the EA/EAW process. See Section 3 for more information on the CEP.

It is important to note that the CEP is advisory only to the EA/EAW. That is, the CEP may offer opinions, advice and guidance, but the MAC has the sole discretion to act on the CEP recommendations.

Interested Public: Members of the public who have an interest in the EA/EAW have a role to play and a responsibility for its outcome. Members of the general public are encouraged to stay informed of the EA/EAW progress by visiting the project webpages, registering for project notifications through the E-news subscription service, participating in public milestone events, submitting comments on the EA, and attending the public hearing for the EA. See Section 6 for a discussion of communication outreach tools.

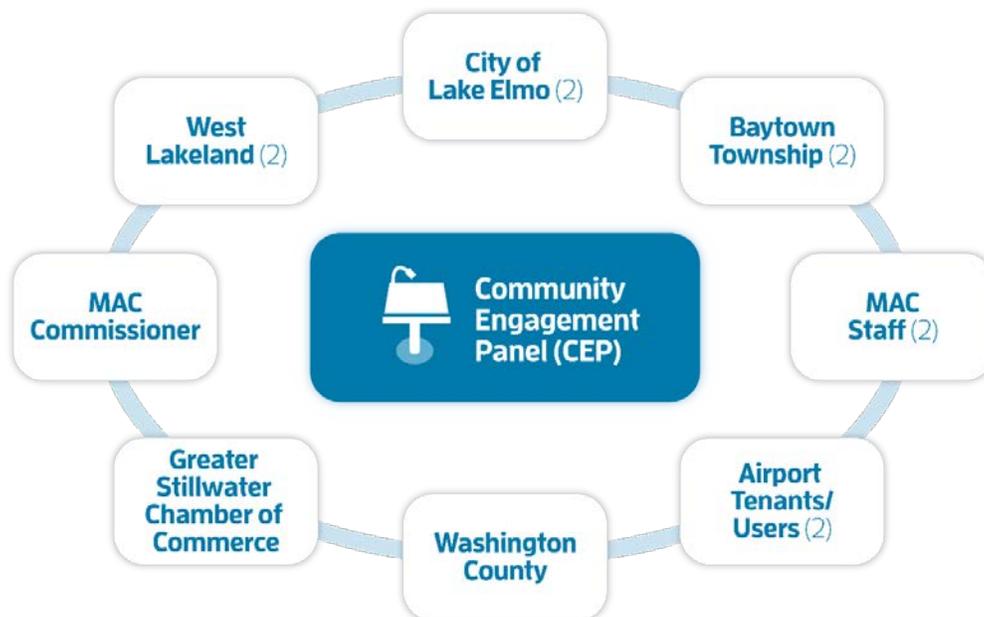
3. CEP membership – key stakeholder groups

In order for the CEP to be effective and to be representative of all of the key stakeholders, it must be composed of a diverse group of stakeholders including, but not limited to, community representatives, aircraft operators, and affected jurisdictions. While representation needs to be broad, the CEP needs to remain a reasonable size so that deliberations are efficient and meetings are effective.

Key stakeholder groups will be represented on the Community Engagement Panel (CEP) by the following representatives:

- **City of Lake Elmo (2 representatives)**
- **Baytown Township (2 representatives)**
- **West Lakeland Township (2 representatives)**
- **Airport Tenants/Users (2 representatives)**
- **Greater Stillwater Chamber of Commerce**
- **MAC Commissioner**
- **MAC staff (2 representatives)**
- **Washington County**

The MAC will identify specific members to serve on a CEP and extend an invitation to participate. A kick-off CEP meeting will be held in February 2017 to provide background information on the environmental process and this stakeholder engagement plan, and will prepare community leaders to respond to inquiries from their constituent groups. See Section 2 for a description of the roles and responsibilities of the CEP.



4. Approach to development of project messaging

The MAC, using plain language, will develop materials and messages that are clear and relevant to lay members of the community. The M&H Team will work collaboratively with the MAC staff on these efforts. While this approach will strive for brevity and clarity, the information will also be complete – erring on the side of too much information rather than too little. This will be achieved through strategies that include:

- **Use of plain language – minimizing the use of acronyms and technical jargon that would likely be unfamiliar to a public audience**
- **Providing definitions of unfamiliar or technical terms when used in project messages**
- **Providing explanations related to the requirements of the EA/EAW at each stage of the process**
- **Providing explanations of aviation terms and regulations and airport operations that are relevant to project messages**
- **Using easy-to-understand graphics, tables and charts in addition to narrative descriptions**
- **Reviewing public comments received in response to public messaging and providing additional explanation or clarification when needed through follow up outreach.**

The M&H Team may develop suggested messaging text and presentations, and the CEP may be invited to comment on draft material. However, the MAC is the owner of the EA/EAW process and will make all final decisions related to printed content and graphic material produced for the project.

5. Timing, notification, and format for engaging stakeholder groups

The EA/EAW process will be organized around four project milestones:

- **Milestone 1: Introduction to the NEPA process**
- **Milestone 2: Purpose & Need and Alternatives**
- **Milestone 3: Environmental Effects**
- **Milestone 4: Public Hearing**

Milestone 1 also includes an introduction to the state MEPA process. A milestone is a point in the process that will culminate in a public meeting event (See Section 7) followed by a significant project decision point for the MAC. The public input received during each milestone phase will help to inform the next project decision. For example, the input received during **Milestone 1: Introduction to the NEPA process** will be considered when developing the Purpose and Need of the project and selecting alternatives to be considered.

In order to create an open and transparent process and to encourage public involvement, the MAC will follow a standardized process for engaging stakeholder groups during each milestone. That process is described here. More information about each public outreach tool is provided in Section 6.

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Project Webpages. A set of project webpages will be maintained during the EA/EAW process to share information. The pages will be accessed through the current Lake Elmo website page of the Metroairports.org website.

Monthly Project Updates. A monthly project update will be sent out through the E-news subscription service to all project subscribers. Additional notifications will be sent out if information is time sensitive.

Initial Project Schedule. An initial project schedule is included in this Stakeholder Engagement Plan based on current expectations and assumptions (see Section 7). A current project timeline will be maintained on the project website and will be updated as needed to reflect project progress. If changes are made, that information will be shared on the project website and included in the next monthly project update sent through the E-news subscription service.

MAC Commission/Committee Meetings. The MAC and the M&H Team will make presentations to the members of the MAC Commission or Planning, Development, and Environment (PDE) Committee in advance of milestone events. Presentation dates, times and locations will be posted on the project website at least one week before the meetings. The public may attend these meetings and public input will follow the established protocols governing public comments during the meeting. Presentation materials including PowerPoint slides, graphic boards, and handouts will be posted to the project website no later than 3 days following the meeting. Meeting minutes and video recordings will be made available by the MAC based on the standard practice of the MAC for these meetings.

CEP Meetings. A CEP kick-off meeting will be held in February 2017. Subsequently, the MAC will schedule five meetings (about every two to three months) with the CEP starting in May 2017. Four of these meetings will take place following the public input events to allow for a group discussion (debrief) of “what we heard” at the previous public input event and also a kickoff for the next project milestone phase. One additional CEP meeting will be held that does not occur following a public input event. At least two weeks prior to each CEP meeting, the M&H Team will work with the MAC staff to identify specific goals and objectives for the meeting. The dates, times and locations of these meetings will be posted on the project website and the meetings will be open to members of the general public who may attend as observers. If a change is made to the CEP meeting date, a notification will be sent through the E-news subscription service to all project subscribers. Presentation materials including PowerPoint slides, graphic boards, and handouts will be posted to the project webpage no later than 3 days following the meeting. The M&H Team will be responsible for developing draft meeting minutes for the MAC. The MAC will post the approved meeting minutes to the project webpage within 14 days.

Public Meeting Events. As noted above, each milestone will culminate in a public meeting event. A date, time and location will be determined for each public meeting event at least 21 days before the event. As soon as a date, time and location are determined for the event, the information will be shared in several ways:

- **Posted on the project website**
- **Sent out through the E-news subscription service to all project subscribers**
- **Emailed to CEP members and members of the MAC Commission**

- **Publishing a notice in the following papers: St. Paul Pioneer Press, Stillwater Gazette, and Oakdale/Lake Elmo Review**

This section describes a standardized method of communicating with the general public about the EA/EAW process. This system is described and shared so that interested citizens can stay informed at every point in the process. The following sections provide more information about each of the communication outreach platforms, the public milestone events, and ways to provide input into the EA/EAW process.

6. Project outreach platforms

The MAC, in coordination with the M&H Team, will communicate through the following platforms:

In-Person Presentations: In-person presentations will be made by members of the MAC staff and the M&H Team prior to key milestone events at regular MAC Commission or Committee meetings and at CEP meetings following key milestone events. Presentations are expected to include PowerPoint slides, handout material and question and answer sessions. The public may attend these meetings and public input will follow the established protocols governing public comments during the meeting.

Additional presentations by members of the MAC staff and the M&H Team may be made to City Council/Committee meetings, Township Board meetings, County Board meetings, and Metro Council meetings on request. If these events are scheduled, they will be noted on the project webpage and a notice will be sent out via the E-news subscription service to all subscribers.

Special presentations for elected officials: Special presentations for elected officials will be held at noon or early afternoon on the day of each public milestone event to provide a preview of information to be presented. Invitations will be sent directly to elected officials approximately two weeks in advance of the event.

Project Newsletters: Project newsletters will be developed and printed in advance of the four project milestone events. Each newsletter will include information about the upcoming milestone event such as date, time and location as well as messages and content associated with the public milestone event and supporting graphics and photographs. Each newsletter will also provide information about subscribing to the E-news subscription service and about the project webpages.

The first of the four newsletters will be mailed directly to homes and businesses in the City of Lake Elmo, Baytown Township and West Lakeland Township. A printed copy of all four newsletters will be available at public locations at least seven days before each public milestone event and will be posted on the project webpage. (The second, third and fourth newsletters will not be distributed through a direct mail.)

Newsletters will contain four (4) pages and ½ page will be reserved for mailing space. Printed newsletters will be produced on an 11 x 17 sheet size, folded in half.

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Project Website:

A set of project website pages will be maintained during the EA/EAW process to share information. The pages will be accessed through the current Lake Elmo website page of the Metroairports.org website. At a minimum, the webpages will include:

- **Public meeting information**
- **Public project documents (reports, newsletters, presentations, fact sheets, etc.)**
- **Frequently asked questions**
- **Information on how to provide public comment**
- **Information on how to sign up for the E-news subscription service notifications (see below)**

E-news subscription service: A project account will be made available by the MAC for the Lake Elmo Airport EA/EAW project using the E-news subscription service. Stakeholders and members of the public will be informed of the opportunity to subscribe. Also, email addresses will be collected at public meetings and added to the E-news subscription service account if permission is granted on the sign-in sheet (check box to be added). A monthly project update will be sent out through the E-news subscription service to all project subscribers. Additional notifications will be sent out if information is time sensitive.

Public Notices: Public notices will be developed in advance of key milestone events by the MAC with input from the M&H Team and will be distributed by the MAC to media outlets in and around the project area. Public notices will include information about public meeting logistics as well as EA/EAW project messages.

7. Project milestone events

Critical project milestones are established based on decision points in the EA/EAW process that require stakeholder consideration. At each milestone, there is a strategic engagement event in the project timeline which will provide an opportunity for public participation and input. The format for each event may vary. At least two weeks prior to each milestone event, the M&H Team will work in cooperation with the MAC staff to identify specific event goals and objectives and recommend a meeting format based on the goals and objectives. Possible formats include an open house event, a presentation with a question and answer session, or a public hearing with a formal public comment option.

The EA/EAW engagement process is built around the four project milestones. The timeline presented here is a general framework based on assumptions and expectations that may change over the course of the project. If the timeline changes, the new timeline information will be posted to the project webpage and a notification will be sent out through the E-news subscription service.

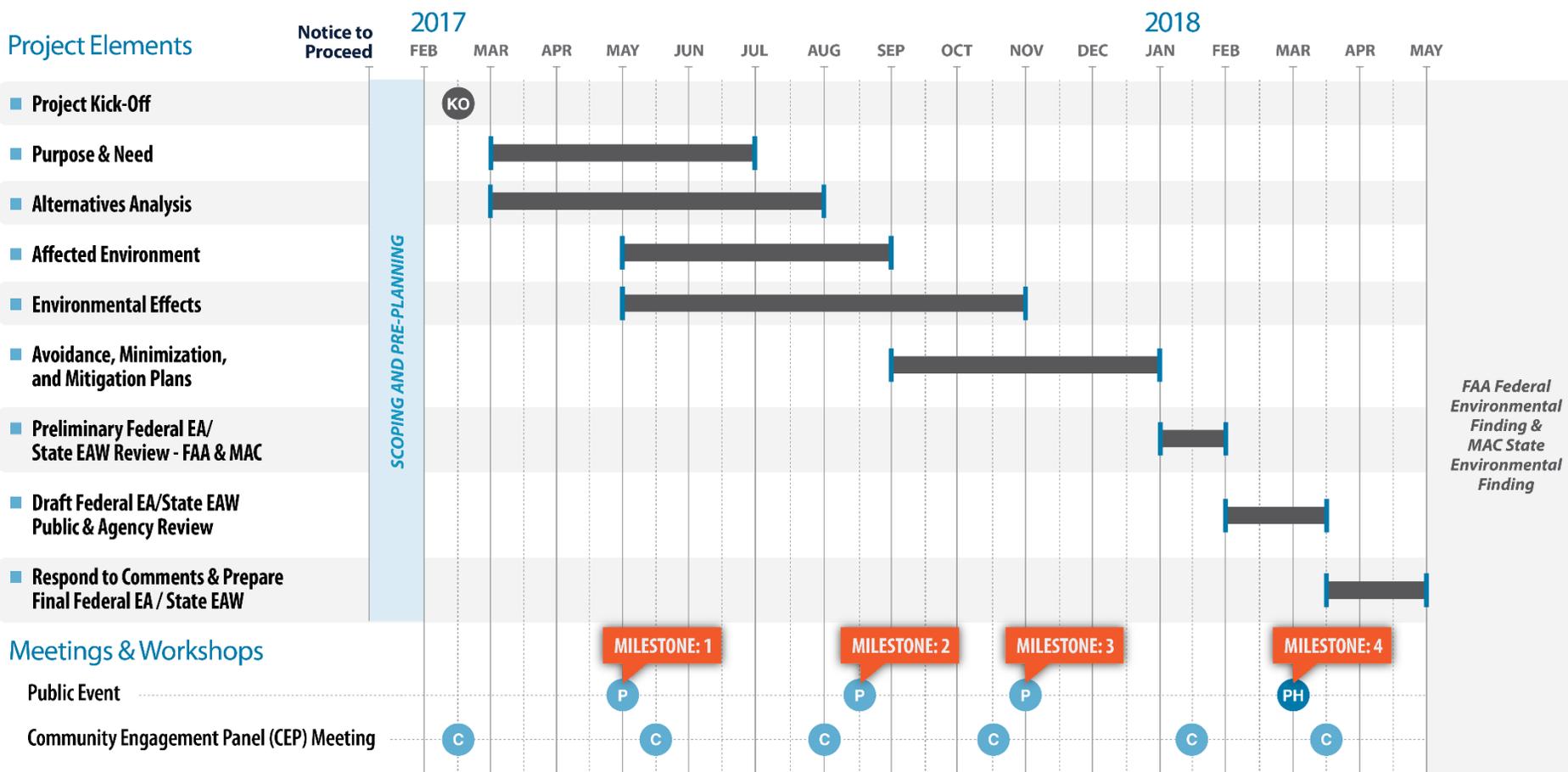
- **Milestone 1: Introduction to the NEPA process.** This first milestone event is a project kick-off meeting that introduces the MAC staff and the M&H Team to the community and helps

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the public understand the MAC's commitment to a transparent, open process. This milestone will explain the NEPA and MEPA processes, including the anticipated project timeline, opportunities for public input, environmental analysis categories, how and why alternatives are considered, how an EA/EAW differs from the airport planning process and the possible outcomes of the EA/EAW process. This milestone event is expected to take place in Month 2 of the process – allowing time during Month 1 for preparation and community outreach.

- **Milestone 2: Purpose & Need and Alternatives**. This second milestone event will be held to present the Purpose & Need of the project and to introduce the alternatives that will be considered in the EA. This milestone event is expected to take place in Month 5 of the process, although work will begin toward it beginning in Month 1.
- **Milestone 3: Environmental Effects**. This third milestone event presents the outcome of the technical analysis of the environmental categories for the preferred alternative and the no-action alternative. This milestone event is expected to take place in Month 8 of the process.
- **Milestone 4: Public Hearing**. The fourth milestone event occurs during the 30-day public review of the draft EA/EAW. The draft document, including information about the preferred alternative, will be presented at this event. The M&H Team will develop specific public hearing protocol guidelines that will be distributed to all participants. For example, the guidelines would include an announcement such as “all comments are being recorded and will be responded to in writing in the draft EA and posted on the project website.” This milestone event is expected to take place in Month 12 of the process. Following the public hearing, the draft EA document is expected to be revised and submitted to the FAA in Month 14 of the process. The EAW will also be completed and submitted to the State of Minnesota.

EA Project Timeline



Note: Schedule updated October 24, 2017. Subject to change.

- Time Frame
- Public Event
- Kickoff Meeting
- Community Engagement Panel (CEP) Meeting
- Public Hearing



Environmental Assessment
Lake Elmo Airport

8. Communication platforms – public input

Throughout the EA/EAW process, the MAC and the M&H Team will gather input through a variety of specific input streams:

- **Public comment via the project website**
- **Written public comment mailed to an address posted on the project website and provided via other methods (i.e. newsletters, at public events)**
- **At public engagement events. Note: The public comment process will vary depending on the event format and may include written comment forms, a verbal statement made during a public comment window, or a comment made to a court reporter.**

While many opportunities will be provided for public input, the MAC staff and the M&H Team will not respond directly to individual comments. Rather, comments will be addressed in one or more of the following ways:

- **Comments may be addressed as part of the FAQs offered on the project website.**
- **Comments will be reported in the draft EA with a written response.**
- **Comments may be answered verbally as part of a question and answer session in a public meeting.**

This policy supports the desired outcome of a transparent process by making the same information available to all members of the public, by presenting information that is consistent through the project and by creating a process to consistently document all comments and responses (see Section 9).

If a comment is received from an elected official or similar individual representing a group of stakeholders or citizens, the MAC may offer a written comment in response during the project. In this case, both the written comment and the written response will be posted on the project website for public review.

9. Approach to documenting and incorporating public feedback

Documenting: The M&H Team will collect, organize and save public comments received during the Lake Elmo Airport EA/EAW project and will also collect, organize and save responses provided by the MAC if applicable (see Section 8). A master spreadsheet will be developed to track input. The spreadsheet will note the submitter name, date received, and method of input (i.e. written letter, website comment, public meeting, response to comment, etc.) as well as information such as address, zip code or email address that may be provided with the comment.

Incorporating Public Feedback: The goal of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan is to foster collaboration and build stakeholder trust and support. Public comment is a valuable part of an EA/EAW and it each comment will be thoughtfully considered. During the course of the Lake Elmo EA/EAW, public comment will be considered and incorporated as follows:

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In some cases, concerns and objections expressed through the public comment process indicate a lack of understanding or a misunderstanding on a specific topic. In this instance, the MAC will refine the FAQs on the project website, issue a press release, include more information at the next milestone event and/or include the topic as an agenda item at a CEP meeting in order to get more information out to the public.

In some cases, public comments express support or opposition to the project and may include reasons for the opinions. These opinions are welcome and they may provide valuable insight for the EA/EAW in terms of both project benefits and areas where concerns may need to be mitigated.

In other cases, public comments may raise a new issue or provide information that needs to be considered in the EA/EAW evaluation process. These comments will be vetted by the MAC and the M&H Team and included in the EA/EAW evaluation process as appropriate.

A written response to each comment will be provided in the draft final EA except that similar comments on a common theme may be grouped together and addressed with one collective response.