

## Overview of MEPA environmental review process

The office of the [MA Environmental Policy Act \(MEPA\)](#) conducts state environmental reviews of proposed projects when certain criteria are triggered.

Source: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-environmental-policy-act-office>]

Under the MEPA statute, Secretary Rebecca Tepper of the [Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs \(EEA\)](#) reviews the potential environmental impacts of state agency actions that exceed certain regulatory thresholds. Source: <https://www.mass.gov/about-the-executive-office-of-energy-and-environmental-affairs> ]

The North Airfield Development proposal triggered a MEPA review based on these criteria:

- The proposed development involves a state agency, Massport
- It involves a land transfer by a state agency, Massport.
- It would generate more than 10 acres of impervious area.

Source: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/does-my-project-require-mepa-review> ]

MEPA does not have the authority to approve or deny proposals.

MEPA is an information-gathering and disclosure process, intended to obtain as much data from developers as possible, to provide future permitting bodies with sufficient information to make informed decisions.

The MEPA process contains these basic elements:

- **ENF** (Environmental Notification Form) – developers' project description
- **Scope for DEIR** (Draft Environmental Impact Report) – issued by EEA Secretary Rebecca Tepper, directing the developers to provide further data in specific areas in their DEIR.
- **DEIR** (Draft Environmental Impact Report) – the developers draft a DEIR based on the Secretary's requested info
- **Scope for FEIR** (Final Environmental Impact Report)
- **FEIR** (Final Environmental Impact Report)

Following the ENF, DEIR, and FEIR there are public meetings and public comment periods.

Since 2/24/23, when Secretary Tepper issued her Scope, the developers have been engaged in drafting a DEIR which they expect will be completed in September. (See MEPA timeline)

MEPA requires developers to provide three scenarios for a proposal, and a comparison of their environmental impact:

- No-Build Alternative (see ENF, Section 2.1.1)
- Build Alternative (ENF, Section 2.1.2)
- Preferred Alternative (--by the developer) (ENF, Section 2.1.3)
- Comparison of Environmental Impacts (ENF, Section 2.2)

See ENF on MEPA environmental review page.

Because Massport is a state agency, developments that occur on Massport-owned land are not subject to local permits or regulations. This means that the four towns in which Hanscom Field is located (Bedford, Concord, Lexington and Lincoln) have no control over Massport developments (except over wetlands issues, in some cases).

The proposed North Airfield development is unique in that about two-thirds of the proposed project site is located on Massport land in Bedford (and hence, immune to local regulations), and about one-third is located on private property, the former Navy hangar parcel in Bedford, currently owned by Runway Realty Ventures, LLC (RRV) – which **would** be subject to local permitting and regulations in Bedford. This may provide a source of leverage for the Town of Bedford and its residents, which needs to be studied and explored.

(See Anticipated Permits & Regulations, below)  
(See “The Moving Parts” in Proposed Development section)

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North Airfield Development is identified by: EEA #16654