

What is the difference between a Reevaluation and a Supplemental EIS?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), federal legislation from 1969, requires that all federally funded projects be evaluated from the perspective of environmental impacts prior to proceeding with implementation of the project. For the I-49 Connector project, the NEPA process was completed in 2003 with the issuance of a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD). FHWA requires a Reevaluation if activities to advance a FHWA project have not occurred within 3 years. For this project, it has been more than 3 years between the ROD and project design/implementation. In these situations, a Reevaluation is important to consider any changes to the project area, project design features, and/or laws or regulations that may have occurred which could affect the original EIS findings and ROD. When the DOTD re-started the conceptual design phase in July 2015, 12 years had passed since the ROD was issued, so a Reevaluation process was initiated.

In consideration of community input, potential refinement concepts are now being assessed and certain design features of the selected alternative RR-4 will likely be modified. These design features could include interchange locations and types, bridge locations and types, railroad underpasses, and cross-street connectivity. FHWA and DOTD have agreed that a Supplemental EIS process, instead of a Reevaluation, is appropriate for assessing and documenting the community-driven refinement concepts. Below are factors involved in both the Reevaluation and SEIS processes. It is important to note that even with this change in environmental process, DOTD remains committed to full implementation of the I-49 Connector.

<i>Factors that are the same for both the Reevaluation and SEIS process</i>	<i>Additional factors to consider in an SEIS</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive community input and meetings, including public meetings • Inventory of environment and changes from original EIS • Identification of any regulatory changes • Identification of potential community-driven concept refinements • Technical evaluation and public input on concept refinements • Identification of selected concept refinements to be adopted into project • Adjustments to original 21 commitments and mitigation measures contained in the ROD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of a Draft SEIS document • Public Hearing • Preparation of a Final SEIS document • Preparation of a Supplemental Record of Decision document