

RESOLUTION OF THE MINNESOTA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD

Updating the environmental review continuous improvement process

Introduction

Minnesota's environmental review (ER) program was created in 1973 to provide usable information to communities, decision makers, and project proposers on the potential for significant environmental effects for a wide variety of projects. The board is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the state environmental review program and its rules. The board is directed to take appropriate measures to modify and improve the effectiveness as needed (Minn. R. 4410.0400).

Background

In support of its role and responsibility for program effectiveness, in June 2023 the EQB established a continuous improvement process. The goal of the continuous improvement process is to identify potential program improvements in a strategic, transparent, and efficient manner. The board resolved to adopt a six-step CI process to be completed at least once a biennium. The board also resolved to re-evaluate the procedural steps at least every four years, in order make any necessary adjustments. The CI process procedural steps were fully completed once and informed two subsequent EQB environmental review program workplans.

Updates

The EQB has re-evaluated the procedural steps based on initial implementation, subsequent workplanning, and Board discussions. That evaluation identified the need to:

- Adjust the frequency of the CI process to be fully completed once every four years, and
- Clarify CI process steps 2 and 3 to more accurately reflect EQB staff's current practice of collating ideas and considering multiple factors for annual workplanning (not solely the outcome of Step 3).

Resolution

The board resolves to adopt and use the following continuous improvement procedural steps, at least once every four years (beginning in 2026) for the environmental review program:

1. EQB staff solicit ideas for program improvements.
2. EQB staff review the scope of the improvements and adjust for step 3.
3. EQB staff evaluate and score improvements using a program effectiveness matrix.
4. EQB staff plan for implementation of improvements.
5. ERIS completes review of implementation planning.
6. Board completes review and directs staff to implement selected projects.

These steps will be re-evaluated at least every four years, so the board may make any necessary adjustments.

The board approved and adopted this resolution on November 19, 2025.

Nancy Daubenberger, Chair
Minnesota Environmental Quality Board

Date: _____