

MHPG Environmental Review Record

Project Name: Lewis and Clark County Courthouse Elevator Upgrade Project

Project Location: 228 Broadway, Helena, MT 59624

Date: February 7, 2024

The Montana Historic Preservation Grant (MHPG) Program is a state action subject to the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). All applicants must follow the environmental review process to determine a finding level, discuss the project and finding level at a public meeting, and make a final determination. The following outlines the environmental review process that must be completed by the applicant.

1. Designate an Environmental Certifying Officer (ECO):

This individual will be responsible for ensuring the environmental review is completed and for signing the final environmental determination. An authorized representative may complete the environmental review process so long as the environmental certifying officer signs all relevant documents.

The ECO for Lewis and Clark County is Public Works Department Director Jenny Chambers

2. Determine and review the proposed scope of work:

Clearly define the proposed scope of work for the proposed project and the activities involved.

As part of ongoing efforts to rehabilitate the Lewis and Clark County Courthouse, an architectural landmark within historic Helena, this project is focused on ensuring ADA-compliant access throughout the 137-year-old building. Contractors will be retained to upgrade the existing outdated elevator system servicing the three-story building. As proposed, the existing 4-stop elevator will be replaced, a back-up emergency lift installed to the first floor via the existing connector tunnel from the jail facility, and a materials lift installed on the 3rd floor to facilitate document storage and building maintenance activities at the attic level.

3. Determine if the project is considered EXCLUDED from MEPA review:

Due to the nature of the project types, most MHPG projects will fall under Exempt or Excluded.

The proposed project is considered EXCLUDED from the EA or EIS requirement due to the low impact nature of the work, involving the replacement of the existing elevator in the same general location and the introduction of two additional small lifts. Neither the footprint of the building, nor the traditional use of the property will be changed.

Due to the project involving the introduction of “new work” in the form of a materials lift to the attic and the emergency lift to the first floor, the attached Environmental Review Checklist (Appendix C-2) was completed. Prior to construction, adverse visual impacts will be mitigated through amendment of design documents based on consultation with the MT State Historic Preservation Office (MSHPO) and the Lewis and Clark County Heritage Preservation Officer.

4. Hold a public hearing:

Public involvement is an important part of the environmental review process. All applicants must hold a public hearing regardless of the expected level of review. The public hearing agenda consists of the following items.

- Discuss the proposed project, alternatives, and the preliminary environmental finding.
- Accept public comments regarding the project and environmental process.
- Respond to any comments which can be easily addressed within the meeting timeframe.
- Propose a final environmental determination.
- Prepare hearing minutes to record all comments and items discussed.

A public hearing was scheduled and advertised for Tuesday February 20, 2024, at 9:00 am in the county commissioner’s meeting room.

5. Make a final environmental determination:

Once a public hearing is held and any relevant public comments addressed, a final environmental determination will be made.

Proposed EA determination- EXCLUDED.

6. Complete the Environmental Review Form (Appendix C-1):

Once a final determination has been made the Environmental Review Form (ERF) will be completed and signed by the Environmental Certifying Official (ECO).

7. Submit resolution certifying the Environmental Determination:

In addition to the Environmental Review Form, a resolution certifying the final environmental determination will be submitted for review and approval at a county commissioners meeting, tentatively scheduled for Thursday February 29, 2024.

8. All EA documents will be submitted with the MHPG application:

Appendix C-2 Environmental Review Checklist

The applicant must include a completed Environmental Review Checklist and Environmental Review Form, if the appropriate environmental level is determined, with MHPG application materials.

NAME OF PROJECT:	Lewis and Clark County Courthouse Elevator Upgrade Project
PROPOSED ACTION:	Replace existing elevator, extend access to attic, and install 1 st floor elevator back-up system.
LOCATION:	228 Broadway Street Helena, Montana

Key Letter:		
N: No Impact; B: Potentially Beneficial; A: Potentially Adverse; P: Approval/Permits Required; M: Mitigation Required		
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		
Key	1	Soil Suitability, Topographic and/or Geologic Constraints (e.g., soil slump, steep slopes, subsidence, seismic activity)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	2	Hazardous Facilities (e.g., power lines, hazardous waste sites, acceptable distance from explosive and flammable hazards including chemical/petrochemical storage tanks, underground fuel storage tanks, and related facilities such as natural gas storage facilities & propane storage tanks)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	3	Effects of Project on Surrounding Air Quality or Any Kind of Effects of Existing Air Quality on Project (e.g., dust, odors, emissions)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	4	Groundwater Resources & Aquifers (e.g., quantity, quality, distribution, depth to groundwater, sole source aquifers)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>

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Key	5	Surface Water/Water Quality, Quantity & Distribution (e.g., streams, lakes, storm runoff, irrigation systems, canals)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	6	Floodplains & Floodplain Management (Identify any floodplains within one mile of the boundary of the project.)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	7	Wetlands Protection (Identify any wetlands within one mile of the boundary of the project.)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	8	Agricultural Lands, Production, & Farmland Protection (e.g., grazing, forestry, cropland, prime or unique agricultural lands) (Identify any prime or important farm ground or forest lands within one mile of the boundary of the project.)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	9	Vegetation & Wildlife Species & Habitats, including Fish and Sage Grouse (e.g., terrestrial, avian and aquatic life and habitats)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	10	Unique, Endangered, Fragile, or Limited Environmental Resources, Including Endangered Species (e.g., plants, fish, sage grouse or wildlife)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>

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Key	11	Unique Natural Features (e.g., geologic features)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	12	Access to, and Quality of, Recreational & Wilderness Activities, Public Lands and Waterways, and Public Open Space
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
HUMAN ENVIRONMENT		
Key	1	Visual Quality – Coherence, Diversity, Compatibility of Use and Scale, Aesthetics
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	2	Nuisances (e.g., glare, fumes)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	3	Noise -- suitable separation between noise sensitive activities (such as residential areas) and major noise sources (aircraft, highways & railroads)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	4	Historic Properties, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources
		<i>Response and source of information:</i>

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A/M		<p>Potentially Adverse: As proposed the project will replace the existing 4-stop elevator and require minor changes to the existing elevator shaft on the 3rd floor to allow installation of a new materials lift to facilitate access for document storage and building maintenance activities in the attic area. The attic is not open to the general public.</p> <p>The existing elevator and shaft was installed in 1984 at the same time the adjacent county jail building was constructed. The two buildings are connected at the first-floor level by a modest raised tunnel structure, also constructed in 1984, located at the rear of the courthouse. The proposed 1st floor back-up emergency lift will connect to the existing tunnel. No changes to the exterior of the historic building are proposed. Interior changes will be limited to the existing non-historic elevator shaft enclosure.</p> <p>Mitigation: To mitigate adverse impacts, construction design documents will be submitted to the MT SHPO and Lewis and Clark County Heritage Preservation Officer for consultation before works begins, tentatively scheduled for 2025.</p>
Key	5	Changes in Demographic (population) Characteristics (e.g., quantity, distribution, density)
		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
N		
Key	6	General Housing Conditions - Quality, Quantity, Affordability
		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
N		
Key	7	Displacement or Relocation of Businesses or Residents
		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
N		
Key	8	Public Health and Safety
		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
B		Project will ensure ADA compliant handicap access to the building by replacing an older, unreliable elevator system with a new elevator and providing for an emergency backup lift to the 1 st floor.
Key	9	Lead Based Paint and/or Asbestos
		<i>Response and source of information:</i>

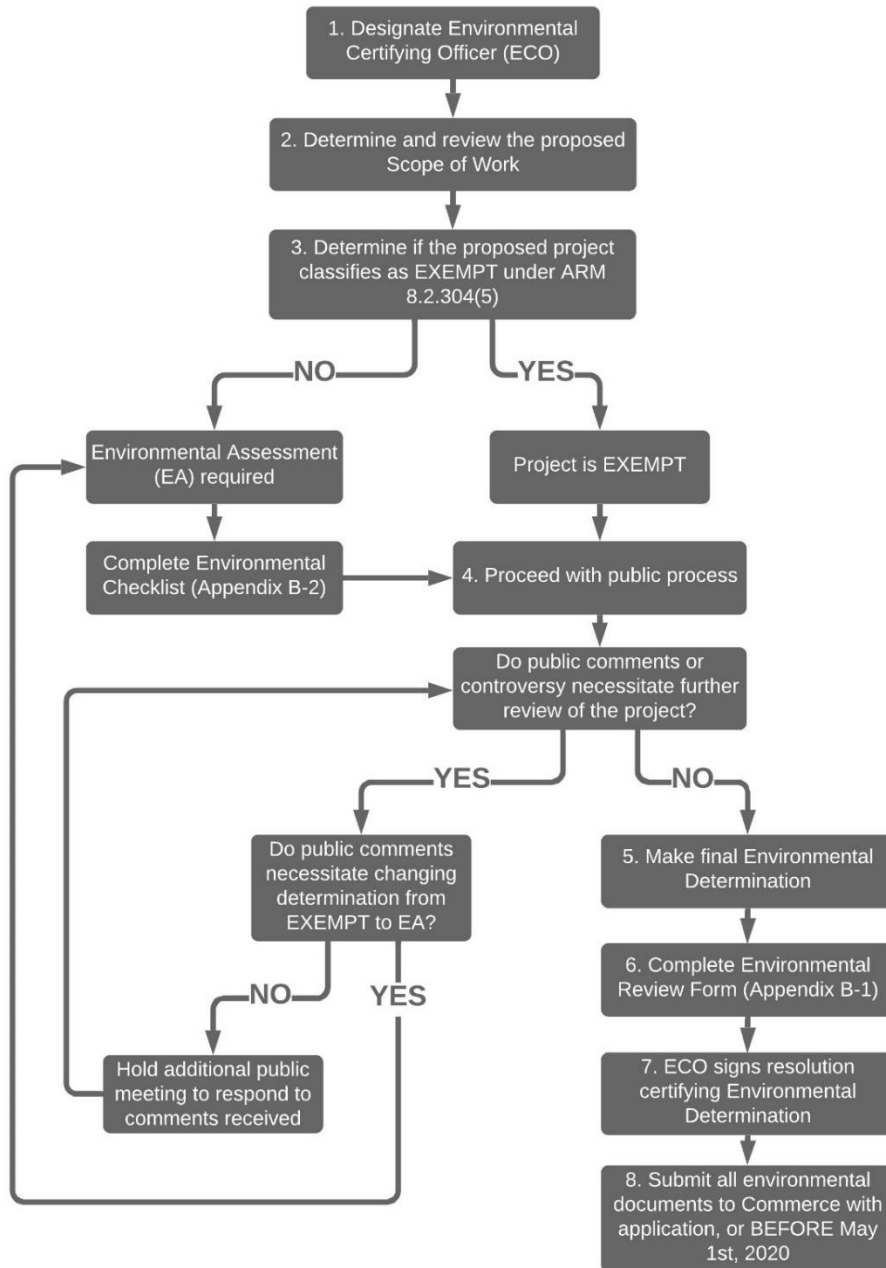
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N		
Key	10	Local Employment & Income Patterns - Quantity and Distribution of Employment, Economic Impact
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	11	Local & State Tax Base & Revenues
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	12	Educational Facilities - Schools, Colleges, Universities
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	13	Commercial and Industrial Facilities - Production & Activity, Growth or Decline.
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	14	Health Care – Medical Services
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	15	Social Services – Governmental Services (e.g., demand on)
B		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
		Project will ensure ADA-compliant handicap access to county government services by replacing an older, unreliable elevator system with new elevator and providing for an emergency backup lift to the 1 st floor.
Key	16	Social Structures & Mores (Standards of Social Conduct/Social Conventions)
		<i>Response and source of information:</i>

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N		
Key	17	Land Use Compatibility (e.g., growth, land use change, development activity, adjacent land uses and potential conflicts)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	18	Energy Resources - Consumption and Conservation
B		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
		The existing 40-year-old elevator will be upgraded with more energy efficient components, resulting in a significant reduction in power consumption and on-going operating costs.
Key	19	Solid Waste Management
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	20	Wastewater Treatment - Sewage System
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	21	Storm Water – Surface Drainage
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	22	Community Water Supply
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	23	Public Safety – Police
		<i>Response and source of information:</i>

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N		
Key	24	Fire Protection – Hazards
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	25	Emergency Medical Services
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	26	Parks, Playgrounds, & Open Space
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	27	Cultural Facilities, Cultural Uniqueness & Diversity
B		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
		Project will improve handicap access for users and visitors to this historic building.
Key	28	Transportation Networks and Traffic Flow Conflicts (e.g., rail; auto including local traffic; airport runway clear zones - avoidance of incompatible land use in airport runway clear zones)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	29	Consistency with Local Ordinances, Resolutions, or Plans (e.g., conformance with local comprehensive plans, zoning, or capital improvement plans)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>
Key	30	Is There a Regulatory Action on Private Property Rights as a Result of this Project? (consider options that reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.)
N		<i>Response and source of information:</i>

Environmental Review Process Outline

For Exempt and Environmental Assessment Projects



TO BE COMPLETED FOLLOWING PUBLIC HEARING

**Appendix C-1
Environmental Review Form**

On a separate piece of paper, please answer the following as they apply to your proposed project:

1. **Alternatives:** Describe reasonable alternatives to the project.
2. **Mitigation:** Identify any enforceable measures necessary to reduce any impacts to an insignificant level.
3. **Is an EA or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) required?** Describe whether or not an EA or EIS is required and explain in detail why or why not.
4. **Public Involvement:** Describe the process followed to involve the public in the proposed project and its potential environmental impacts. Identify the public meetings -- where and when -- the project was considered and discussed, and when the applicant approved the final environmental assessment.
5. **Person(s) Responsible for Preparing:** Identify the person(s) responsible for preparation of this checklist.
6. **Other Agencies:** List any state, local, or federal agencies that have over-lapping or additional jurisdiction or environmental review responsibility for the proposed action and the permits, licenses, and other authorizations required; and list any agencies or groups that were contacted or contributed information to this Environmental Assessment (EA).

(1) Authorized Representative, Title

Date

(Name of) Applicant

(2) Authorized Representative

Date:

* If an authorized representative (1) completes the checklist and this form, a executive of the applicant (2) must also sign authorizing acceptance of the review process. Explanation or statement of how/why that representative was authorized should also be included.

TO BE COMPLETED FOLLOWING PUBLIC HEARING

**Resolution to Accept the Determination that *(level of environment finding)* is Appropriate
for the *(applicant, type of project)***

WHEREAS, the (Name of applicant) has completed an review to identify potential environmental impacts to the (describe purpose of project);

WHEREAS, the draft Environmental Review Record was made available for public comment and the findings were presented and reviewed at a public meeting;

WHEREAS, no substantive public comment was received, (or public comment was received and responded to);

WHEREAS, The (Name of applicant) has determined that the (type of Project) will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment and accordingly the (Name of Applicant) has determined an Environmental Impact Statement (or Environmental Assessment and EIS if project is Categorical Exclusion); is not necessary;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the (Council, Board, Commissioners) as follows;

That (Name of Applicant), Montana adopts the final Environmental Determination for the (type of project).
Passes and approved on this date of (date)

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Attested: _____