



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs*

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December 15, 2025

1<sup>ST</sup> AMENDED CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS  
ESTABLISHING A SPECIAL REVIEW PROCEDURE

Project Name	: University of Massachusetts Amherst Campus Master Plan
Project Municipality	: Amherst, Hadley, Gloucester, Newton
Project Watershed	: Connecticut River, North Coast, Charles River
EEA Number	: 15069
Project Proponent	: University of Massachusetts Amherst
Date Noticed in Monitor	: November 7, 2025

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (G.L. 30, ss. 61-62L) and Section 11.09 of the MEPA regulations (301 CMR 11.00), as Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, I hereby issue this first amendment of the Special Review Procedure (the "1<sup>st</sup> Amended SRP") to guide the MEPA review process for future development projects at the University of Massachusetts Amherst as it continues to implement its Campus Master Plan.

**Campus Master Plan**

From 2011 to 2012, the University of Massachusetts Amherst (the "University" or "UMass Amherst") engaged in a campus master planning process that culminated in the issuance of a 50-year planning document known as the *University of Massachusetts Amherst Campus Master Plan ("CMP") 2012*. The CMP continues to serve as a guide for sustainable future development that reinforces the University's past *Framework for Excellence* vision and *Amherst Rising to the Challenge* initiatives, along with informing the more recent *Imagining 2034* strategic planning process. The CMP establishes a framework for campus-wide systems for open space, circulation, and utilities to help ensure that UMass Amherst is building a cohesive campus, rather than just buildings. The CMP documents a clear vision and identity for the campus, with planning principles, goals, and recommendations to guide future growth.

The planning process was intensive, engaging University leadership, the campus community, the Towns of Amherst and Hadley, and numerous other interested stakeholders with the opportunity to review and comment on the CMP, resulting in appropriate modifications, revisions, and commitments

being infused in its current form. Given the characterization of the CMP as a dynamic document designed to inform future development on the campus and respond to the evolving needs of the University, the CMP document was not previously subject to a separate MEPA review process.

It is important to note that while the CMP sets forth a general vision for campus development, the geographical area included within the UMass Amherst campus has expanded since 2012. Specifically, UMass acquired the Mount Ida campus (to be renamed the Charles River Campus), located in the Town of Newton, in 2018, and in 1976, the UMass Trustees transferred the Gloucester Marine Station (GMS), located in the Town of Gloucester, to be used by UMass Amherst. However, the GMS has only recently begun to be developed, with its first site improvement project starting in 2025. (This site improvement project was reviewed separately by MEPA under EEA #16765). Given that the CMP is intended to be a vision for the entire UMass Amherst campus, the CMP Project Area is hereby expanded to include all three locations. See the amended Attachment A.

## **Project Description**

The University's 2010 *Framework for Excellence* informed the development of the CMP by outlining the high-level considerations necessary to move the University into the echelon of the most competitive research universities in the nation. It was not a detailed action plan, but rather a framework, with the expectation that campus units will develop their own plans to meet these high-level targets. The *Framework for Excellence* emphasized the University's need to upgrade existing infrastructure and build new facilities to sustain and maintain great services for faculty and students. In response to the vision laid out in the framework, the CMP identified a broad range of improvements to the campus, including renovations to and replacement of existing buildings, improved open spaces and pedestrian connectivity, improved transportation management, enhanced infrastructure, and new buildings of all types and uses.

Since 2012, UMass Amherst has funded close to \$2.1 billion worth of capital projects to implement the CMP, including deferred maintenance, renovations, and new structures on the Commonwealth's flagship state university. UMass Amherst shares responsibility for capital improvement planning with the Commonwealth's Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) and campus development projects are undertaken by the University, DCAMM, and the University of Massachusetts Building Authority (UMBA). Due to the numerous entities involved and the many projects to be undertaken throughout the Campus as a part of the CMP, the University recognizes the value of an integrated approach to state environmental review. The CMP continues to reflect the 50-year (2012 to 2062) vision for the campus and further refines the project planning process and anticipated project development.

As described below, the CMP originally informed the development of the UMass Amherst *Rising to the Challenge* initiative, which was a 10-year plan, originally encompassing years 2010-2019 but was revised and expanded to include planning years 2012-2021 (collectively the “2012- 2021 capital improvement projects”). The 2012- 2021 capital improvement projects were reviewed under the initial Special Review Procedure dated June 22, 2012 (the “2012 SRP”), which set forth the rules by which projects consistent with the fifty-year CMP would be reviewed. The 2012 SRP also allowed for review of projects that differed materially from the CMP through the filing of Notices of Project Change (NPCs).

Since the end of the 2012-2021 *Rising to the Challenge* capital improvement projects period, UMass Amherst commenced a new 10-year strategic planning process known as *Imagining 2034* that has resulted in the *For the Common Good Strategic Plan 2024-2034*.<sup>1</sup> The *For the Common Good Strategic Plan 2024-2034* is informed by respect for UMass Amherst's rich history as the Commonwealth's flagship campus and public land grant institution, by ambition for excellence, and a recognition of the responsibility to steward the University's financial and human resources. This 1<sup>st</sup> Amended SRP sets forth the rules by which future projects contemplated under the *For the Common Good Strategic Plan 2024-2034* will be reviewed.

## SRP Background

In 2011, an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) was filed for the Commonwealth Honors College (CHC) residential complex (EEA# 14714). While no further MEPA review was required for the CHC project, the Secretary required the establishment of an SRP to allow for a cumulative review of all projects contemplated to implement the CMP. As noted in the Certificate issued on the ENF, the Secretary recognized that “...the UMass Amherst campus continues to undertake projects to renovate existing space, expand and construct new buildings, and update site infrastructure, all in response to meeting the needs of an expanding enrollment and upgrading facilities to meet the overall goals of the University's mission. In order to ensure that these myriad future projects meet the requirements of MEPA review, I am requiring the UMBA to work with the MEPA office to prepare a Special Review Procedure (SRP) in accordance with 301 CMR 11.09 to set up a framework to review projects on the UMass Amherst campus in light of potential MEPA compliance obligations and the anti-segmentation provisions in the MEPA Regulations.”

Following the Secretary's request and recognizing the value that a MEPA SRP would provide in improving the state environmental review process of future capital improvement projects at UMass Amherst, the University, together with UMBA and DCAMM, consented to the establishment of the 2012 SRP. More recently, in keeping with the 2012 SRP, a consolidated Project Commencement Notice (PCN) was filed in 2023 for four projects, including the Computer Sciences Laboratories (CSL) Building, Sustainable Engineering Laboratories (SEL) Building, School of Public Health & Health Sciences (SPHHS) Building, and a Pavilion. A Certificate on the PCN issued on July 24, 2023 determined that no further MEPA review was required for the projects included in this consolidated PCN; however, the Secretary noted that “...given the 10-year [Capital Improvements Projects] period has ended, updates to the SRP may be warranted.”

Most recently, in keeping with the 2012 SRP, a consolidated Notice of Project Change (NPC) was filed in 2025 for two projects, including the Water and Energy Technology (WET) Center and Center for Early Education and Care (CEEC). A Certificate on the NPC issued on July 25, 2025 determined that no further MEPA review was required for the projects included in this consolidated NPC and noted that the “NPC includes a formal request for an SRP amendment, which will be issued with consent of UMass later this year.”

Upon further consultation with MEPA, UMass Amherst now consents to the establishment of this 1<sup>st</sup> Amended SRP to cover future projects contemplated under the *For the Common Good Strategic Plan 2024-2034*.

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.umass.edu/strategicplan/>.

## **MEPA Jurisdiction**

Development at UMass Amherst, including development at the expanded campus areas at the GMS and Mount Ida campus (to be renamed the Charles River Campus), is subject to review under MEPA because it will be undertaken and financed by an Agency (UMass Amherst) and, either on an individual or collective basis, projects may exceed MEPA review thresholds established at 301 CMR 11.03. Therefore, MEPA jurisdiction is broad and extends to all aspects of any project that are likely, directly or indirectly, to cause Damage to the Environment, as defined within the MEPA regulations.

## **SPECIAL REVIEW PROCEDURE**

### **General**

The size, complexity, and interrelated components of campus development projects, combined with the long-term planning, implementation, and multiple phases that these projects often entail, will benefit from this amended SRP. Therefore, I find that this 1<sup>st</sup> Amended SRP will benefit the environment and serve the purposes of MEPA by providing meaningful opportunities for public review, analysis of appropriate alternatives that avoid, minimize, and mitigate environmental impacts, and consideration of cumulative environmental effects, while at the same time recognizing the uncertainty surrounding the implementation of some future long-term projects.

### **UMass Amherst Campus Master Plan**

The fifty-year CMP will continue to guide future campus planning, decision-making, and development and be readily available for public reference in those regards. However, its purpose is to remain a living document that becomes part of the decision support system for ongoing planning efforts. In compliance with this 1<sup>st</sup> Amended SRP, UMass Amherst will provide an electronic copy of the current CMP as an attachment to the future Expanded Environmental Notification Form (EENF), as described below, related to the 2025-2034 capital projects that are the subject of this 1<sup>st</sup> Amended SRP.

### **Past UMass Amherst Rising to the Challenge (2012-2021) Projects**

The UMass Amherst *Rising to the Challenge* initiative was a 10-year plan, originally encompassing years 2010-2019, but revised and expanded to include planning years 2012-2021. The initiative included projects necessary to meet identified critical needs that were tangible from the perspective of determining project-specific and cumulative environmental effects, to the greatest extent possible. In accordance with 301 CMR 11.05(7), UMass Amherst presented the potential cumulative environmental impacts, analysis of alternatives, and appropriate mitigation measures for those projects, which it expected to be implemented within the 2012-2021 period in a EENF submitted to the MEPA Office in 2013 (EEA# 15069). This analysis included the anticipated cumulative impacts of the 2012-2021 capital improvement projects, including general evaluations of: transportation, parking, infrastructure impacts including stormwater, water supply, wastewater treatment, energy, utilities, telecommunication and technology, sustainability, wetlands, water quality, historical and archaeological

resources, greenhouse gas emissions, construction period impacts and appropriate mitigation measures to address unavoidable environmental impacts.

## **2025-2034 Capital Improvement Projects**

Since the end of the 2012-2021 *Rising to the Challenge* capital improvement projects period, UMass Amherst has developed the *For the Common Good Strategic Plan 2024-2034* informed by a respect for UMass Amherst's rich history as the Commonwealth's flagship campus and public land grant institution, by ambition for excellence, and recognition of the responsibility to steward the University's resources for the common good. In accordance with 301 CMR 11.05(7), UMass Amherst will file an EENF characterizing the potential cumulative environmental impacts, analysis of alternatives, and appropriate mitigation measures for those capital improvement projects that it expects to be implemented within the 2025-2034 period in keeping with the *For the Common Good Strategic Plan 2024-2034*. Similar to the 2013 EENF on the *Rising to the Challenge* 2012-2021 capital improvement projects, this analysis will include the anticipated cumulative impacts of the 2025-2034 capital improvement projects and appropriate mitigation measures to address unavoidable environmental impacts.

## **Project Area**

This 1<sup>st</sup> Amended SRP covers the entire UMass Amherst campus in which capital improvement projects are contemplated over the 2025-2034 implementation period. The expanded campus covers the geographic areas depicted in the amended Attachment A. If these areas are expanded again in the future, the SRP may be amended accordingly.

## **Expanded Environmental Notification Form**

As noted, UMass Amherst intends to file an EENF to introduce the 2025-2034 capital improvement projects evolving out of the *For the Common Good Strategic Plan 2024-2034*. The EENF will include conceptual disclosures of the anticipated cumulative impacts of all identified projects in the 2025-2034 time frame, and will include additional details on individual projects for which designs are advanced enough to allow for meaningful disclosures and review of environmental impacts. Projects included in the EENF may include those that are likely to receive state financial assistance and those that may be financed and developed through a private-public partnership. In partnership with the UMBA, UMass Amherst is currently exploring partnering with a developer(s) to create a comprehensive, long-range plan to modernize campus housing and maintain affordability for the next several decades. The EENF will be circulated for public comment and reviewed in accordance with 301 CMR 11.05(7) and 11.06(1). After reviewing the EENF and the public comments received, I will determine whether further review is required in the form of one or more Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs). If the impacts of all individual projects included in the EENF exceed mandatory EIR thresholds, there shall be a presumption that an EIR is required, though the Proponent may request a Single EIR by including the requisite level of detail in the EENF in accordance with 301 CMR 11.05(8). Conversely, if the impacts of individual projects do not exceed mandatory EIR thresholds or if the EENF consists primarily of a conceptual master plan with little to no detail about individual projects, there shall be a presumption that no EIR is required. The EENF shall not be subject to the EIR requirement set forth in 301 CMR 11.06(7)(b).

For any EIRs submitted, I reserve all rights granted to me by Section 11.08(8) of the MEPA regulations regarding determinations of the adequacy of the information presented, particularly as it relates to cumulative impact analysis and the need for any further MEPA review.

If an EIR is submitted after review of the EENF, a finding of adequacy on the Final EIR shall mean that Agency Action may be taken on the individual projects described in the EENF. The Proponent, UMass Amherst, shall develop an initial summary of Section 61 Findings for projects included in the 2025-2034 capital improvement plan, which shall be supplemented over time as additional projects are proposed.

### **Subsequent Filings**

For additional projects beyond those analyzed in the EENF covering the 2025-2034 capital improvement projects (“Additional Future Projects”), UMass Amherst or the developing entity will prepare more detailed information in the form of Project Commencement Notices (PCN's) or Notices of Project Change (NPC's), whichever is appropriate given the filing parameters outlined below. These subsequent filings must comply with MEPA regulations, protocols, or guidance in place at the time of filing, and this SRP shall not be construed as superseding any requirements other than those specifically indicated herein.

All PCNs and NPCs will be submitted to MEPA for Agency and public review. State Agencies will not take required agency actions for Additional Future Projects on the UMass Amherst campus until MEPA review of the applicable PCN or NPC is complete. In addition, should there be a material change to those projects that were found to adequately and properly comply with MEPA during the review of the EENF, UMass Amherst remains subject to the provisions of 301 CMR 11.10(1) and (6), with the expectation that, if deemed necessary, an NPC would be filed following the guidelines provided in this SRP. If UMass Amherst is uncertain whether a project change previously approved in the EENF or subsequent MEPA filings constitutes a “material change,” UMass Amherst may file a request for Advisory Opinion in accordance with 301 CMR 11.01(6).

A PCN will be filed for each Additional Future Project that is proposed to be undertaken consistent with the fifty-year CMP and *Imagining 2034* planning process. PCNs will include a detailed project narrative and a quantification of project-related impacts, as well as a comparison with the project as presented in the CMP and *For the Common Good Strategic Plan 2024-2034*. As appropriate, PCNs must also provide information on any additional planning efforts and/or modifications to the fifty-year CMP. I expect these updates to be provided in a timely manner that reflects the long-term planning nature of the CMP.

- PCNs will be noticed in *The Environmental Monitor* for public review and circulated in accordance with the provisions of this SRP.
- Upon review of any PCN and the comments received thereon, I retain the discretion as Secretary to require or not to require the preparation of an EIR, irrespective of whether the project exceeds mandatory EIR thresholds, consistent with this SRP. However, EIR thresholds shall remain informative in this regard. If an EIR is required, there will be a presumption that UMass Amherst

will prepare a Single EIR in accordance with 301 CMR 11.07(5), provided that the requisite level of detail is provided in the PCN in accordance with 301 CMR 11.05(8). PCNs shall not be subject to the EIR requirement set forth in 301 CMR 11.06(7)(b).

- Each PCN shall include an original analysis of greenhouse gas emissions conducted in accordance with the MEPA Greenhouse Gas Emissions Policy and Protocol, as may be amended at the time of filing, for any building or parking structure.
- Each PCN shall attach the output report generated from the RMA Climate Resilience Design Standards Tool and comply with any MEPA policies and protocols related to climate resiliency in place at the time of filing of the PCN.
- Each PCN must conduct community outreach consistent with the Public Process (described below) that was developed to be in keeping with UMass Amherst's ongoing commitment to community engagement and the MEPA Public Involvement Protocol for EJ Populations, as may be amended over time. Each PCN must also provide an analysis of EJ impacts consistent with the MEPA Interim Protocol for Analysis of Project Impacts on Environmental Justice Populations, or any successor protocol in effect at the time of filing.
- No PCNs will be required for property acquisitions, classroom or other program relocations, structure demolition, infrastructure improvements, utility or telecommunication replacement or relocation, internal roadway relocation and improvements, exterior or interior building renovation, and landscape improvements, if consistent with the fifty-year CMP.

An NPC will be filed for projects that are materially different from those presented in the CMP or *For the Common Good Strategic Plan 2024-2034*.

- NPC's will be noticed in *The Environmental Monitor* for public review and circulated in accordance with the provisions of this SRP.
- Upon review of any NPC and the comments received thereon, I retain the discretion as Secretary to require or not to require the preparation of an EIR, irrespective of whether the projects exceed a Mandatory EIR threshold(s), consistent with this SRP. However, EIR thresholds shall remain informative in this regard. If an EIR is required, there will be an assumption that a Single EIR will be required for the project, provided that the requisite level of detail is provided in the NPC in accordance with 301 CMR 11.05(8). NPCs shall not be subject to the EIR requirement set forth in 301 CMR 11.06(7)(b).
- Each NPC shall include an original analysis of greenhouse gas emissions conducted in accordance with the MEPA Greenhouse Gas Emissions Policy and Protocol, as may be amended at the time of filing, for any building or parking structure.
- Each NPC shall attach the output report generated from the RMA Climate Resilience Design Standards Tool and comply with any MEPA policies and protocols related to climate resiliency in place at the time of filing of the NPC.

- No NPC's will be required for property acquisitions, for classroom or other program relocations, structure demolition, infrastructure improvements, utility or telecommunication replacement or relocation, internal roadway relocation and improvements, exterior or interior building renovation, and landscape improvements, if consistent with the fifty-year CMP.

There will be no NPC required for a lapse of time (301 CMR 11.10(2)) so long as the CMP remains in effect and compliance with the 1<sup>st</sup> Amended SRP is ongoing; except, however, that in the event that no PCN or NPC is filed within any five-year period, the Proponent will submit an update on planning efforts and implementation of or modifications to the fifty-year CMP.

The NPC provisions in 301 CMR 11.10 shall continue to apply to any previously reviewed projects in the future EENF filed for the 2025-2034 capital improvement projects or any subject PCN or NPC filed pursuant to this 1<sup>st</sup> Amended SRP. Any NPCs filed for previously reviewed projects will follow normal MEPA procedures applicable to NPCs, and shall not be covered by the requirements listed above in this 1<sup>st</sup> Amended SRP.

### **Agency Action**

Any Participating Agency may take any required Agency Action for a project element(s) after a finding that the PCN or NPC for that element(s) of the project adequately complies with MEPA. As noted above, UMass Amherst will develop Section 61 Findings that should be supplemented over time as individual projects are proposed.

### **Public Process**

Each project-specific filing will be noticed in a newspaper of local circulation and must be provided to:

- all commenters on the aforementioned EENF describing the 2025-2034 capital improvement projects;
- all required parties under Section 11.16 of the MEPA regulations; and,
- all commenters on subsequent PCN or NPC filings made within the past three (3) years prior to the project-specific filing, if not included in the above.

A MEPA public consultation session may be held and noticed in *The Environmental Monitor* for each project specific filing, determined on a case-by-case basis. Notice of availability of each project specific filing will be disseminated in a broad-reaching fashion, including, but not limited to, email listserv, project website, flyers/mailings, public notice in local and collegiate newspapers, etc.

Because the UMass Amherst CMP process itself involved robust and structured community participation, I will not require the establishment of a Citizens Advisory Committee. In place of this, UMass Amherst has committed to the following community process:

- Hold an annual public meeting to provide an update on progress of the implementation of the CMP and *For the Common Good Strategic Plan 2024-2034* and to engage in a dialogue with

constituents and stakeholders (i.e., local community and environmental groups, elected officials, environmental organizations, etc.) on upcoming changes to and/or plans for the physical campus.

- Provide notification of all meetings through a broad-reaching manner including, but not limited to, email listserv, project website, flyers/mailings, public notice in local and collegiate newspapers, etc.
- Maintain and update the UMass Amherst Facilities & Campus Services website that includes progress and schedule milestones on individual projects.<sup>2</sup> Provide an email address for interested parties to use in submitting inquiries and feedback.
- Meet with public officials (e.g., state legislators and local officials) at least once a year to provide updates and to inform them of future plans.
- Continue to conduct regular internal workshops and briefings with campus members and groups that allow for dialogue and discussion on CMP Projects and issues.
- As part of subsequent filings, undertake additional measures to meaningfully engage Environmental Justice (EJ) Populations within the designated geographic area (DGA) of the project site(s), based on the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs *Environmental Justice Maps Viewer*<sup>3</sup> by:
  - (1) providing advance notification via the distribution of an Environmental Justice Screening Form (or successor document) to an EJ Reference List developed in consultation with the MEPA Office,
  - (2) translating the Environmental Justice Screening Form into all applicable languages identified using the “Languages Spoken in Massachusetts” tab of the EJ Maps Viewer as languages spoken by 5 percent or more of residents who have limited English proficiency (LEP) located in whole or in part within the DGA for the project(s),
  - (3) hosting a virtual community meeting upon request by anyone contacted through the advance notification, and
  - (4) providing oral interpretation during scheduled community meetings and MEPA site visits/consultations (provided requests for oral interpretation be made in advance with sufficient time to allow for cancellation of the service prior to the meeting).

### **Modification of the Special Review Procedure**

If the Proponent wishes to change any provision in this SRP, it may file a request for modification of the SRP in the form of an NPC. The Secretary will then review the request and issue an Amended SRP if appropriate. The Secretary may make technical amendments upon a written request from the Proponent.

### **Term of the SRP**

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.umass.edu/facilities/>.

<sup>3</sup> Available at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massgis-data-2020-environmental-justice-populations>

This SRP shall expire ten (10) years from the date of this 1<sup>st</sup> Amended SRP, or when activities under the SRP are completed, whichever is later. This term is subject to the project change and lapse of time provisions under 301 CMR 11.10. The parties shall meet and confer to determine whether to amend the SRP if the development program has not been completed within ten years of the date below.

**Conclusion**

The Proponent's signature below indicates consent to the establishment of this 1<sup>st</sup> Amended Special Review Procedure and the specific provisions outlined in this Certificate.

December 15, 2025

Date



Rebecca L. Tepper, Secretary  
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

December 15, 2025

Date



Javier A. Reyes, Chancellor  
University of Massachusetts Amherst

**Attachments:**

Attachment A: 1<sup>st</sup> Amended SRP Project Areas

**Comments received:**

12/08/2025     Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Waterways  
Regulation Program

**Attachment A: 1<sup>st</sup> Amended SRP Project Areas**



