



# **Ground Truthing Before Breaking Ground:**

A Step-by-Step Pathway for Navigating Pre-development in Historic Reuse Projects

**2026 Downtown & Historic Preservation Conference**

# **Ground Truthing Before Breaking Ground:**

**A Step-by-Step Pathway for Navigating Pre-  
development in Historic Reuse Projects**

# Village Trust Initiative



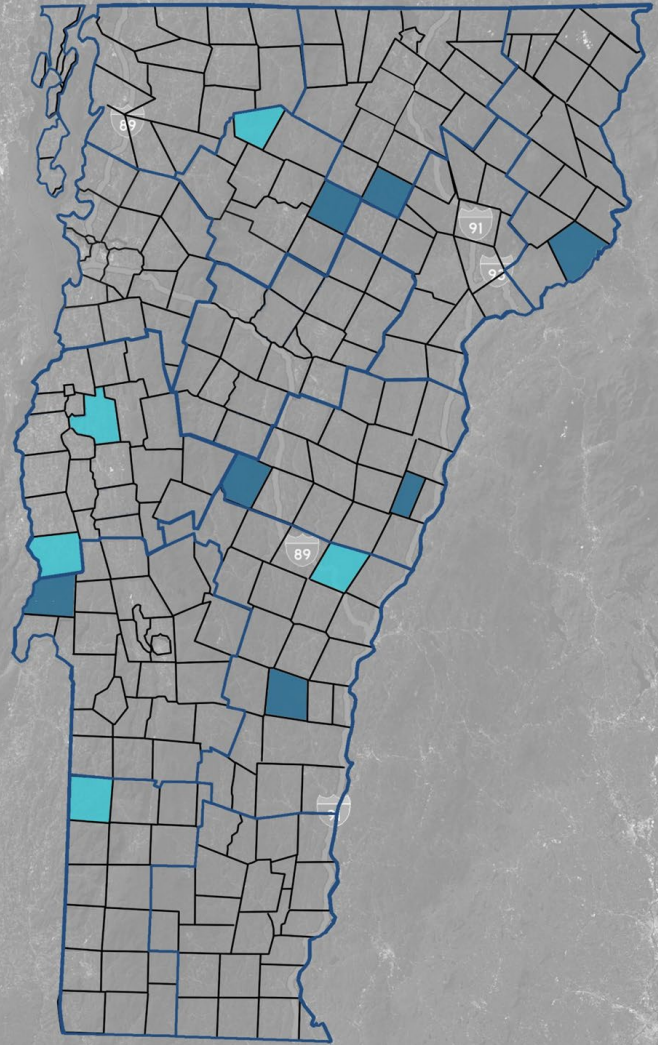
Preservation Trust of Vermont



Vermont  
Community  
Foundation



Vermont Council on  
Rural Development





**Albany General Store, the “Genny”**  
 Project team start: 2017  
 Construction Finish: 2021

**Village Trust Initiative**  
 Program Participation



**The Village Trust Initiative offers expertise and funding to help 20 small Vermont towns create or bolster a local Community Trust Organization to take on a transformational project in the community's village.**

**\*Wrap Around Technical Assistance Services and funding**



# **1. Build A Shared Community Vision**



*Snowsville Store in 1965, East Braintree. Owner Francis Blanchard on porch.*



# Snowsville

Braintree, Vermont



# Snowsville

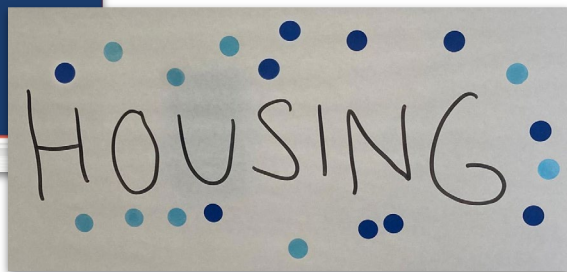
## Braintree, Vermont

# Bringing The Vision To Life





# Bringing The Vision To Life





# Gathering Input

## Your Community's Hopes and Dreams





## **2. Explore Project Defining Constraints**

# Funding Considerations: What Will Shape Your Project Requirements?

**The funding sources you anticipate will influence required studies, review processes, and project timeline.**



- Different funding sources may trigger:
  - Environmental Review (NEPA) requirements
  - Historic preservation review (Section 106)
  - Public engagement / notice requirements
  - Procurement and documentation standards
  - Additional studies or coordination

# Resources For Early Project Screening

## What constraints might shape your project?

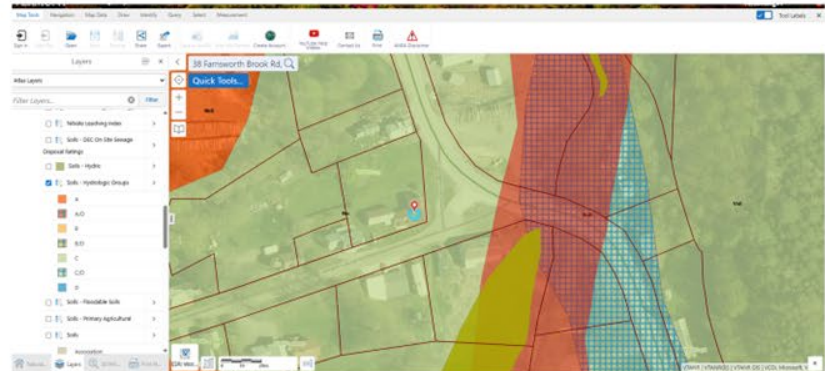
- [Agency of Natural Resources Atlas](#)
  - **Site contamination:**
    - Land Use Restrictions
    - Hazardous Sites
    - Brownfields
    - Dry Cleaner
    - Urban Soil Background Areas
  - **Environmental Constraints:**
    - Wetlands
    - Floodplains / River Corridor
  - **Regulatory Flags**
    - Act 250 Permits



# Resources For Early Project Screening

**Is there sewer service or soil with wastewater treatment capacity?**

- [Agency of Natural Resources Atlas](#)
  - Sewer service areas and treatment plants
  - Floodplains / River Corridor
  - Wetlands
  - Private wells and public water supplies
  - Source Protection Areas
  - Soils - Hydrologic Soil Groups
    - A-B = Favorable
    - C-D = constrained, may require mound system, pre-treatment



# Resources For Early Project Screening

- **NEPAAssist** – helps identify federal resource / regulatory triggers early

|                                                                                      |                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Within 0.5 miles of a Federal Land?                                                  | no                                                            |
| Within 0.5 miles of an impaired stream?                                              | no                                                            |
| Within 0.5 miles of an impaired waterbody?                                           | no                                                            |
| Within 0.5 miles of a waterbody?                                                     | yes                                                           |
| Within 0.5 miles of a stream?                                                        | yes                                                           |
| Within 0.5 miles of an NWI wetland?                                                  | <a href="#">click here</a><br><i>May take several minutes</i> |
| Within 0.5 miles of a Brownfields site?                                              | no                                                            |
| Within 0.5 miles of a Superfund site?                                                | no                                                            |
| Within 0.5 miles of a Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) site?                            | no                                                            |
| Within 0.5 miles of a water discharger (NPDES)?                                      | no                                                            |
| Within 0.5 miles of a hazardous waste (RCRA) facility?                               | yes                                                           |
| Within 0.5 miles of an air emission facility?                                        | no                                                            |
| Within 0.5 miles of a school?                                                        | no                                                            |
| Within 0.5 miles of an airport?                                                      | no                                                            |
| Within 0.5 miles of a hospital?                                                      | no                                                            |
| Within 0.5 miles of a designated sole source aquifer?                                | no                                                            |
| Within 0.5 miles of a historic property on the National Register of Historic Places? | no                                                            |

# Resources For Early Project Screening

## ANR Permit Navigator Provides preliminary list of possible state permits and approvals

### Permit Navigator

- ✓ Getting Started
- ✓ General Questions
- ✓ Project Questions

- 3.1 Act 250
- 3.2 Air: Compliance/Field Services
- 3.3 Air: Permitting and Engineering
- 3.4 Dams
- 3.5 Fish and Wildlife
- 3.6 Groundwater Reclassification or Groundwater Withdrawal
- 3.7 Hazardous Waste
- 3.8 Indirect Discharge/Underground Injection Control
- 3.9 Lakes and Ponds Management and Protection
- 3.10 Public Drinking Water Systems
- 3.11 Residuals Management & Emerging Contaminants
- 3.12 Rivers
- 3.13 Surface Water

Please download or print your results to save them for later. If you provided your name and email address, then staff from ANR or Act 250 may reach out and offer additional assistance.

[Download](#)

[Print](#)

### Your Permit Navigator Results

PNR-0000014161

[Copy Result Number](#)

[Generate Link](#)

On the following page, you will find the following results based on the information that you provided. If the information you provided changes, for example if you change the location or size of your project, you should start over as the results below are no longer valid

#### Permits Likely Needed

Stream Alteration and Stream Crossing Structures

Waste Transporter Permit

Wastewater System & Potable Water Supply

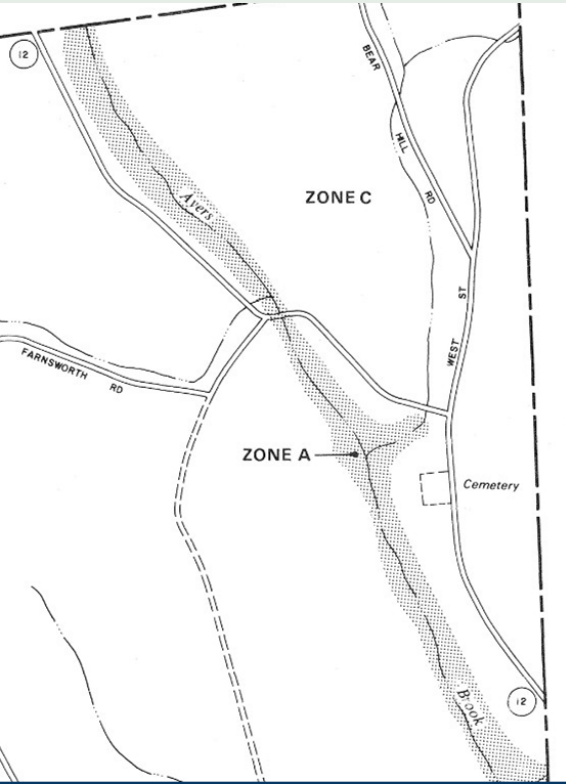
If you'd like to start over, please [click here](#)

**Disclaimer:** The Permit Navigator Results Summary is based on the information provided, and is not intended as an official or binding permitting determination by the ANR or the NRB. The Agency and the NRB reserve the right to require additional permits and/or approvals depending on the specific details of the project.

☒ By checking this box I confirm that I have read and understood the disclaimer.



# Back To Snowsville...



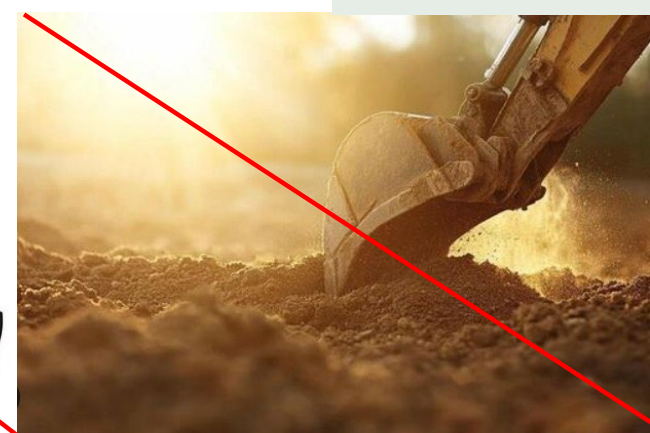


# **3. Complete Funding Source Review Requirements**



# Choice Limiting Actions

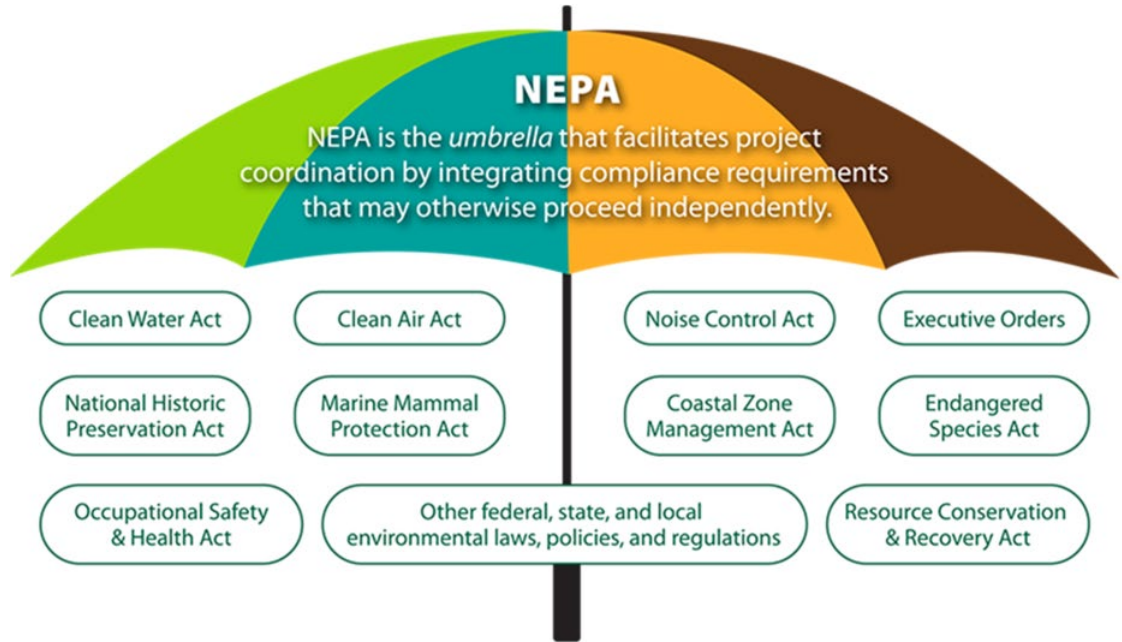
**"Never do what you can't undo  
until you've considered well  
what you can't do once you've  
done it." — Robin Hobb**



# NEPA Coordinates Requirements

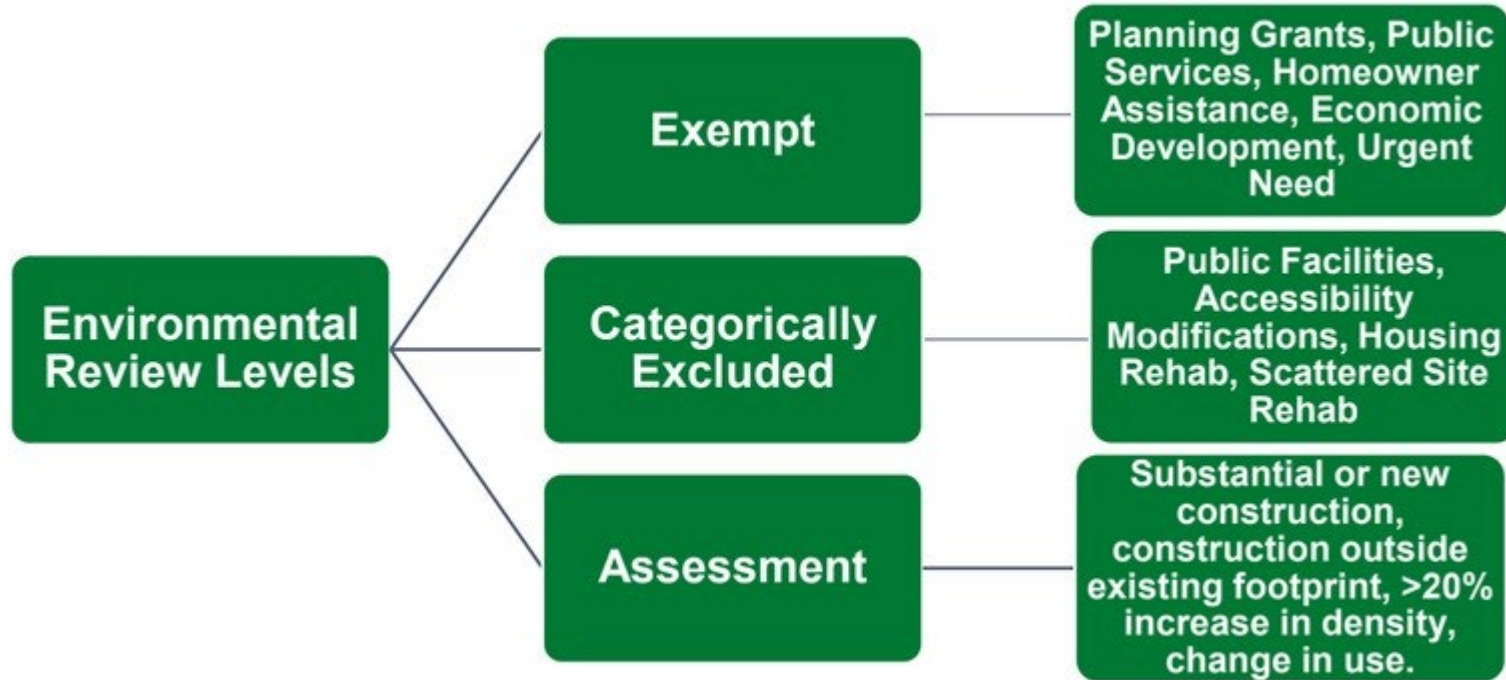
**Brings together multiple laws  
into one review process**

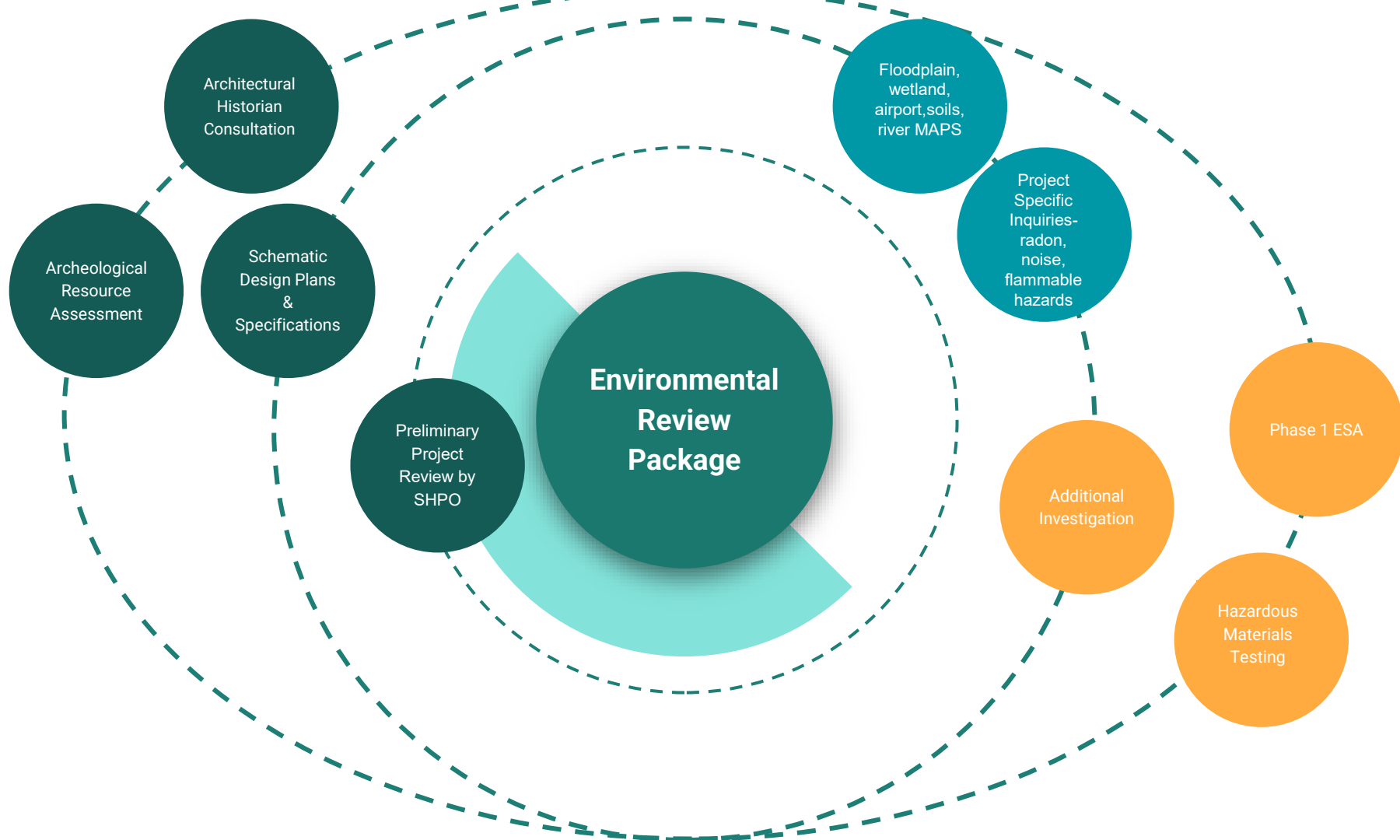
**Early screening helps  
anticipate which requirements  
will apply**

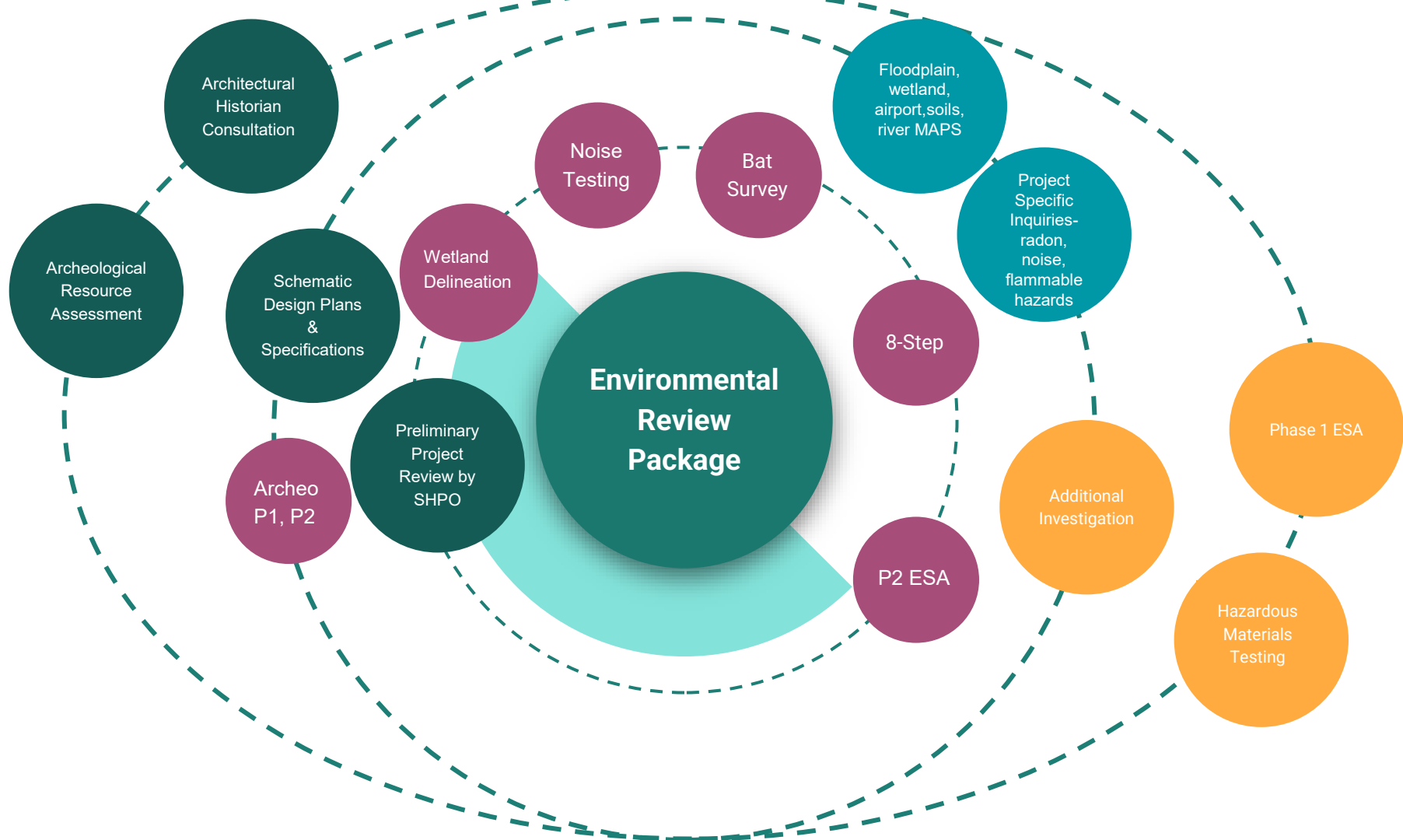




# Determining The Level Of Review

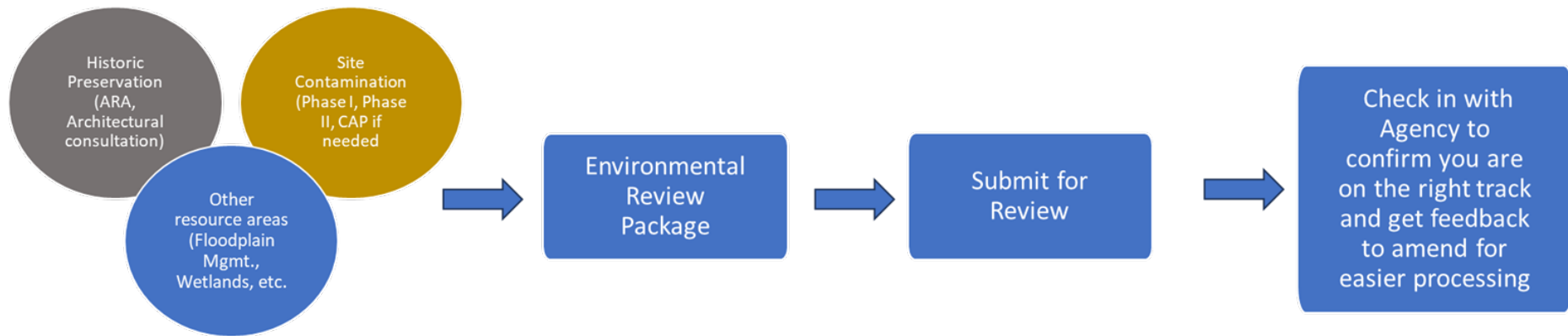








## **4. Submit Your Environmental Review Package**



# Public Comment and Public Objection Periods

## CATEX

| January |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su      | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|         | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| 7       | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14      | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21      | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28      | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |

-  -Notice Published
-  -First Day of Comment Period
-  -Last Day of Comment Period
-  -Certification by MAO
-  -First Day of Objection Period
-  -Last Day of Objection Period
-  -ER Release Effective Date

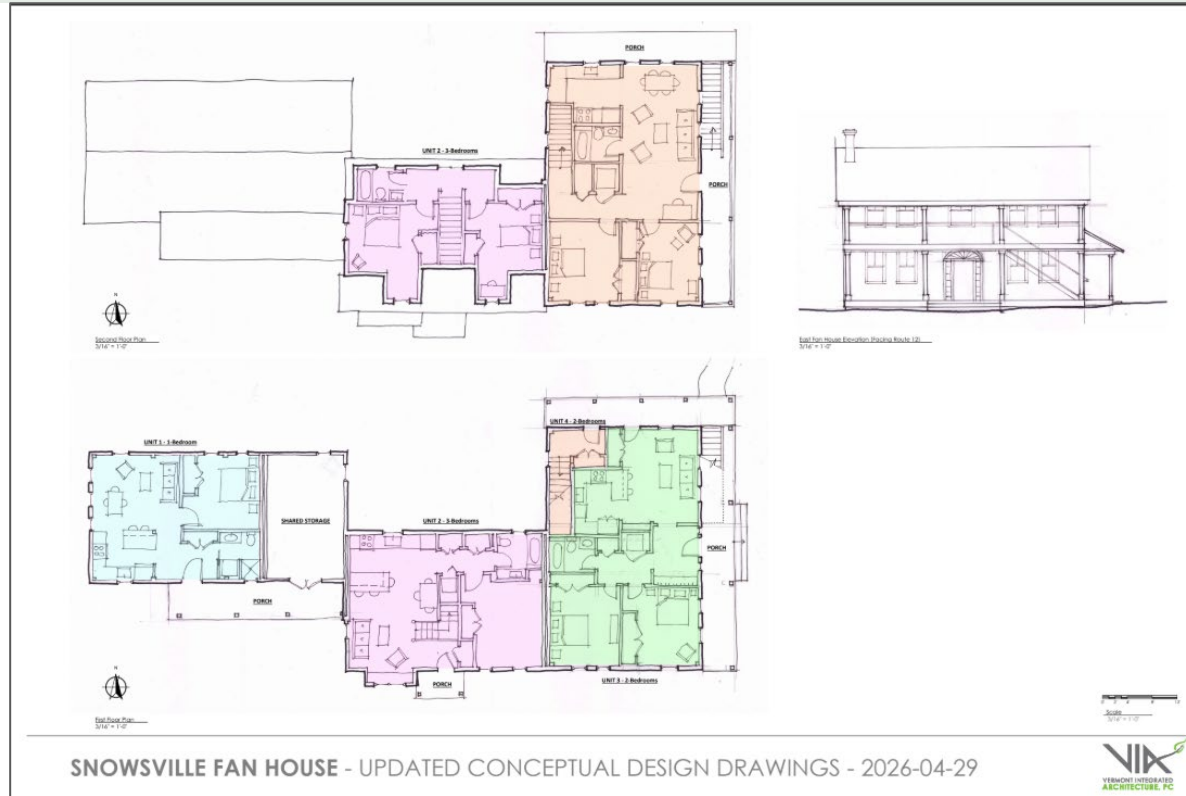
## Environmental Assessment

| January/February |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su               | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|                  | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| 7                | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14               | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21               | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28               | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1  | 2  | 3  |

## **4. Celebrate Milestones With Your Community**



# Step by Step, You Can Make It Happen!



# Questions?

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