



# Stage 1 Business Analysis

California Department of Technology, SIMM 19A.3 (Ver. 3.0.8, 02/01/2022)

## 1.1 General Information

**1. Agency or State entity Name: 0650 - Planning and Research, Office of**

If Agency/State entity is not in the list, enter here with the [organization code](#).

**2. Proposal Name and Acronym: Modernization of the Environmental Notice and Document System (MENDS)**

**3. Proposal Description: (Provide a brief description of your proposal in 500 characters or less.)**

The State Clearinghouse (SCH) of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) proposes to modernize its business processes and improve its ability to interact with customers and stakeholders throughout the State-level review of environmental documents and notices pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This will be accomplished by creating business processes that employ modern methods of document collection, review, and public comment using a web-based interface, workflow automation, collaborative working spaces, and self-service reporting. Ideally this approach will build upon technology that is already in use within the SCH but may include seeking an entirely new system to wholly replace what is already functioning.

**Proposed Project Execution Start Date: 7/1/2024**

**4. S1BA Version Number: Version 1**

## 1.2 Submittal Information

**1. Contact Information**

Contact Name: Christine Asiata Rodriguez

Contact Email: [Christine.Asiata@opr.ca.gov](mailto:Christine.Asiata@opr.ca.gov)

Contact Phone: (916) 445-0613

**2. Submission Type: New Submission**

If Withdraw, select Reason: [Choose an item.](#)

If Other, specify reason here: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

**Sections Changed, if this is a Submission Update: (List all sections changed.)**

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

**Summary of Changes: (Summarize updates made.)**

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

3. Attach [Project Approval Executive Transmittal](#) to your email submission.
4. Attach [Stage 1 Project Reportability Assessment](#) to your email submission.

## 1.3 Business Sponsorship

### 1. Executive Champion (Sponsor)

Title: [Chief Deputy Director, Governor's Office of Planning and Research \(OPR\)](#)

Name: [Scott Morgan](#)

Business Program Area: [State Clearinghouse](#)

### 2. Business Owner

Title: [State Clearinghouse Manager](#)

Name: [Christine Asiata Rodriguez](#)

Business Program Area: [State Clearinghouse](#)

### 3. Product Owner

Title: [State Clearinghouse Manager](#)

Name: [Christine Asiata Rodriguez](#)

Business Program Area: [State Clearinghouse](#)

*TIP: Copy and paste or click the + button in the lower right corner on any section to add additional Executive Champions, Business Owners, or Product Owners with their related Business Program Areas as needed.*

## 1.4 Stakeholder Assessment

The Stakeholder Assessment is designed to give the project team an overview of communication channels that the state entity needs to manage throughout the project. More stakeholders may result in increased complexity to a project.

**1. Indicate which of the following are interested in this proposal and/or the outcome of the project. (Select 'Yes' or 'No' for each.)**

State Entity Only: Yes

Other Departments/State Entities: Yes

Public: Yes

Federal Entities: Yes

Governor's Office: Yes

Legislature: Yes

Media: Yes

Local Entities: Yes

Special Interest Groups: Yes

Other: Yes

**2. Describe how each group marked 'Yes' will be involved in the planning process.**

SCH will lead multiple User Groups (UG) across the above-noted stakeholder groups to assist OPR in identifying and defining process improvements for this project. The UG will consist of representatives from the Government Operations Agency, the Legislative Analyst's Office, subject matter experts from various Departments/State/Local Entities, and Special Interest Groups knowledgeable in existing CEQA processes. Utilizing UG will ensure OPR captures, analyzes, and takes into consideration all stakeholders' needs during this project's planning and execution stages.

## 1.5 Business Program

**3. Business Program Name:** Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), State Clearinghouse (SCH).

**4. Program Background and Context:** (Provide a brief overview of the entity's business program(s) current operations.)

The California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA (Public Resources Code Division 13, Sections 21000 – 21189.57), was enacted in 1970 to supplement the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), passed in 1969 to address instances of government-approved projects causing harmful environmental impacts. CEQA requires review of an activity undertaken by a public or private entity if 1) the activity will cause a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect change in the environment, and 2) if the activity is subject to discretionary approval by a government entity.

The CEQA Guidelines govern the operation of the State Clearinghouse (SCH) and define its roles and responsibilities (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sections 15000-15387).

Statute requires the SCH to coordinate State agency review and comment of CEQA environmental documents (i.e. Draft Environmental Impact Reports, Negative Declarations, or Mitigated Negative Declarations) and notices (i.e. Notices of Exemption (NOE) or Notice of Determinations (NOD)). In that capacity, OPR receives approximately 13,000 notices and environmental documents per year from State, local, and federal agencies.

Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21159.9 and SB 122 (Jackson, 2016) require OPR to establish and maintain a database to assist in the preparation of those environmental documents and to establish and maintain a central repository for the collection, storage, retrieval, and dissemination of notices required by CEQA. Public agencies across the state must submit CEQA notices and environmental documents to the SCH for posting and circulation, setting of statutory review periods, and State agency review and comment. AB 819 (Levine, 2021) was recently implemented to help increase online accessibility of CEQA documents, particularly those subject to review at the local level only. As a result, in 2021 OPR began receiving an even higher volume of documents subject to AB 819. Pursuant to SB 122, OPR/SCH launched the current CEQA Database in March 2019 for both receiving and posting CEQA and other environmental documents and notices for anyone to access. The CEQA database has transformed the workflow of document distribution, which, until 2019 was done completely via hardcopy distribution and snail mail. The database is a crucial asset that enables OPR to fulfill its essential role in the CEQA process in a streamlined, paperless manner.

The database currently consists of two sites: CEQA Submit, the backend portal that registered individuals from government agencies and consultants utilize to submit documents to the SCH for publication and posting, and CEQAnet, the public-facing database that anyone can access to view those documents for review and comment.

OPR was informed by CDT that improvements and missing functionality will exacerbate issues to the current application. A new system will rectify and satisfy the long-term recommendations and time constraints.

## **5. How will this proposed project impact the product or services supported by the state entity?**

Every day, SCH staff receive dozens of calls and emails from CEQA Submit users (individuals representing government agencies) and visitors of CEQAnet who encounter issues with and are confused by the online submission system. In response to complaints of difficult user experiences, SCH have published a CEQA Database User Guide to attempt to aid users of both platforms, but it has not proven to be helpful as most people refuse to read the lengthy document and expect the database to be intuitive enough to not have to read it.

In addition to receiving complaints from registered users, SCH staff who utilize both platforms for daily document processing are confronted with issues caused by the system's limitations. As a result, SCH staff spend at least 5 hours of each workday both troubleshooting issues with registered users and performing manual data entry and quality assurance because of the database's lacking functionality. A rewrite of the CEQA database will foster a more streamlined document submission process that will enable agencies to submit documents more quickly, confidently, and with less issues, almost completely eliminating the need to contact the SCH directly for assistance. Additionally, it will make document review and publication a much more automated and efficient process for SCH staff.

In addition to improving the existing functions in the database, OPR will implement new features that allow users to efficiently submit their documents through the database without having to contact the SCH via email or phone. Some of the new features include but are not limited to: functionality that makes it easier to update to published projects; user ability to add uploaded comment letters or submit plain text comments to published projects (State agencies only); and automated notifications on new projects and updates that require lead, responsible, and trustee agencies' review. The ability for agencies to perform these functions on their own will expedite the CEQA process and save time for both the agencies and SCH.

Improved data collection and queries on CEQAnet will enable all stakeholders to search for key information on projects throughout the state and notify them of these projects. Although CEQAnet is already home to valuable data on projects, much of the data is inconsistent, contains errors, and is difficult to query. Improving these functionalities will make CEQAnet a much more powerful, accessible tool for entities and individuals to be more involved in the CEQA process and to collect information that they are interested in around proposed projects in the state.

*TIP: Copy and paste or click the + button in the lower right corner to add Business Programs, with background and context and impact descriptions as needed.*

## 1.6 Project Justification

### 1. Strategic Business Alignment

#### Enterprise Architect

Title: EA and ISO

Name: Chris Bode

Strategic Plan Last Updated? N/A

**Strategic Business Goal:** Streamline the State's comprehensive planning services for land use and community development, climate risk and resilience, high road economic development, and long-range research.

**Alignment:** Avoid costs associated with archaic document processing methods by modernizing the online system. Make known the potential environmental impacts of proposed projects and reduce those environmental impacts to the extent feasible. Assure relevant agencies review projects for potential environmental impacts—fostering climate resilience in communities and climate-smart planning and land use.

**Strategic Business Goal:** Deliver dependable and efficient services to the public, agencies, and organizations involved in CEQA.

**Alignment:** Improve program efficiencies by implementing database features that enable SCH to communicate and collaborate more easily with government agencies, organizations, and members of the public involved in CEQA.

*TIP: Copy and paste or click the + button in the lower right corner to add Strategic Business Goals and Alignments as needed.*

**Mandate(s):** State

Bill Number/Code, if applicable: Senate Bill (SB) 122, Jackson (2016).

Add the Bill language that includes system-relevant requirements:

This bill would require a lead agency to submit to the State Clearinghouse those environmental documents in either a hard-copy or electronic form as prescribed by the office. The bill would instead require the office to establish and maintain a database for the collection, storage, retrieval, and dissemination of environmental documents and notices prepared pursuant to CEQA and to make the database available online to the public. The bill would eliminate the requirement to provide copies of documents to the California State Library.

Bill Number/Code, if applicable: Assembly Bill (AB) 819, Levine (2021).

Add the Bill language that includes system-relevant requirements:

This bill would instead require a lead agency to submit to the State Clearinghouse, in an electronic form, [a draft environmental impact report, proposed negative declaration, or proposed mitigated negative declaration] for all projects and would require the lead agency to post those documents on its internet website.

**Mandate(s):** Federal

Bill Number/Code, if applicable: Title 40/Section 1500.1

Add the Bill language that includes system-relevant requirements:

CEQA allows for use of NEPA documents in place of CEQA documents. Submission through OPR is required to use those provisions. See CEQA Guidelines Section 15225(2).

Parts 1500 through 1508 of this title provide regulations applicable to and binding on all Federal agencies for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (Pub. L. 91–190, 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) (NEPA or the Act).

*TIP: Copy and paste or click the + button in the lower right corner to add Bill Numbers/Codes and relevant language as needed.*

**2. Business Driver(s)**

**Financial Benefit:** Yes

Increased Revenue: No

Cost Savings: Yes

Cost Avoidance: [Yes](#)

Cost Recovery: [No](#)

Will the state incur a financial penalty or sanction if this proposal is not implemented? [No](#)

If the answer to the above question is “Yes,” please explain:

### **Improvement**

Better Services to the People of California: [Yes](#)

Efficiencies to Program Operations: [Yes](#)

Improved Equity, Diversity, and/or Inclusivity: [Yes](#)

Improved Health and/or Human Safety: [Yes](#)

Improved Information Security: [Yes](#)

Improved Business Continuity: [Yes](#)

Improved Technology Recovery: [Yes](#)

Technology Refresh: [Yes](#)

Technology End of Life: [Yes](#)

## **1.7 Business Outcomes Desired**

### **Executive Summary of the Business Problem or Opportunity:**

OPR continues to struggle fulfilling its statutory obligation to maintain a database for the retrieval and publication of documents subject to CEQA and other environmental review processes (SB 122), as well as provide a stable platform for local agencies to post their documents for public access even if they are not subject to CEQA review (AB 819). OPR must conserve time and resources spent getting documents published for all stakeholders that interact with the database. The public needs a more intuitive and guided system with more integrated quality assurance and accurate data collection and storage so registered users, reviewing agencies, members of non-governmental organizations, and the public can confidently submit and access CEQA and other environmental documents with ease and independence.

#### **Objective ID: 1.1**

**Objective:** Reduce average number of hours spent answering database functionality-related questions by 50% within 1 year of the completion of the future database rewrite. SCH staff spend an average of 5 hours per day helping registered CEQA Submit users troubleshoot user experience-related issues with the database.

**Metric:** Daily average time spent corresponding with registered users on database difficulties

**Baseline:** 5 hours/day

**Target Result:** Less than 2 hours/day

**Objective ID:** 1.2

**Objective:** Reduce recall frequency to 25% within one year of the completion of the future database rewrite caused by unclear submission instructions and lack of guidance written into the Database. Registered users often submit their documents incorrectly on their first attempt, causing SCH staff to send back (“recall”) their submissions about 50% of the time.

**Metric:** Frequency of recalls on first submission attempt

**Baseline:** 50% of first submissions recalled

**Target Result:** 25% of first submissions recalled

**Objective ID:** 1.3

**Objective:** Reduce time spent performing manual quality assurance to zero hours per day within one year of the completion of the future database rewrite. SCH staff must spend an average of four hours combined per workday going back through the previous day’s document submissions to manually perform quality assurance due to a lack of built-in quality assurance and completeness checks in the database.

**Metric:** Hours spent performing manual quality assurance of submissions

**Baseline:** 4 hours per day

**Target Result:** 0 hours per day

**Objective ID:** 1.4

**Objective:** Reduce maximum amount of time SCH staff spend responding to requests to manually update published documents. Due to lacking functionality of the current database, registered users are not able to make updates to their published documents themselves. Instead, users must email SCH and request that SCH staff make the updates, resulting in lengthy email correspondences that take up working hours.

**Metric:** Time spent corresponding with registered users on updates to published projects

**Baseline:** Up to 2 hours to manually update a document

**Target Result:** 10-15 min. per updated document

**Objective ID:** 1.5

**Objective:** Eliminate wait time and paper check processing procedures for California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) CEQA filing fees. SCH is currently required to receive and process physical CEQA filing fees from State agencies, which causes delays in the document publication process and forces staff to use working hours to process payments in an outdated, inefficient way.

**Metric:** Average number of checks received and processed per week



**Baseline:** 7 checks per week

**Target Result:** 0 checks per week

**Objective ID:** 2.1

**Objective:** Reduce weekly average time spent corresponding with IT department on specific data queries. The current search functions on CEQAnet, the public-facing portal, make it difficult to yield certain results. As a result, OPR must often contact CDT for specific and accurate queries.

**Metric:** Weekly time spent corresponding with IT on specific data queries

**Baseline:** 2 hours/week

**Target Result:** 1 hour per week

**Objective ID:** 2.2

**Objective:** Eliminate the need to order offsite documents completely by improving the data storage system on CEQAnet. SCH receives Public Records Act (PRA) at least once a month, forcing staff to order off-site paper copies of documents to send in response to the PRA requests.

**Metric:** Time spent ordering documents offsite

**Baseline:** 2 hours/month

**Target Result:** 0 hours

**Objective ID:** 3.1

**Objective:** Increase public awareness about the CEQA Database and about CEQA in general by making CEQAnet easier to navigate, better organized, and more accurate and consistent in its data collection and storage. CEQAnet houses information about tens of thousands of projects throughout the state that have undergone the CEQA review process, but not many people know about the site.

**Metric:** Number of individuals visiting and clicking around on CEQAnet daily.

**Baseline:** PENDING NUMBER

**Target Result:** PENDING

*TIP: Copy and paste or click the + button in the lower right corner to add Objectives as needed. Please number for reference.*

*TIP: Objectives should identify WHAT needs to be achieved or solved. Each objective should identify HOW the problem statement can be solved and must have a target result that is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound. Objective must cover the specific. Metric and Baseline must detail how the objective is measurable. Target Result needs to support the attainable, realistic, and time-bound requirements.*

## 1.8 Project Management

### 1. Project Management Risk Score: 2.4

(Attach a completed [Statewide Information Management Manual \(SIMM\) Section 45 Appendix A Project Management Risk Assessment Template](#) to the email submission.)

### 2. Project Approval Lifecycle Completion and Project Execution Capacity Assessment

Does the proposal development or project execution anticipate sharing resources (state staff, vendors, consultants, or financial) with other priorities within the Agency/state entity (projects, PALs, or programmatic/technology workload)?

**Answer:** Yes

Does the Agency/state entity anticipate this proposal will result in the creation of new business processes or changes to existing business processes?

**Answer** (No, New, Existing, or Both): Both New and Existing Processes

## 1.9 Initial Complexity Assessment

### 1. Business Complexity Score: 2.1

(Attach a completed [SIMM Section 45 Appendix C](#) to the email submission.)

### 2. Noncompliance Issues: (Indicate if your current operations include noncompliance issues and provide a narrative explaining how the business process is noncompliant.)

Programmatic regulations: Yes

HIPAA/CIIS/FTI/PII/PCI: No

Security: No

ADA: Yes

Other: No

Not Applicable: No

Noncompliance Description:

CEQA mandates require lead agencies to submit their draft environmental documents to OPR, but some agencies are unaware and/or do not comply with ADA requirements and submit non-ADA compliant documents to OPR. OPR has a disclaimer that OPR does not own and is not responsible for non-ADA compliance documents uploaded to the system.

### 3. Additional Assessment Criteria

If there is an existing Privacy Threshold Assessment/Privacy Information Assessment, include it as an attachment to your email submission.

How many locations and total users is the project anticipated to affect?

Number of locations: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Estimated Number of Transactions/Business Events (per cycle): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Approximate number of internal end-users: 7

Approximate number of external end-users: 6,552

## 1.10 Funding

### Planning

1. Does the Agency/state entity anticipate requesting additional resources through a budget action to **complete planning** through the project approval lifecycle framework? [Yes](#)

If Yes, when will a budget action be submitted to your Agency/DOF for planning dollars?

[Approved by DOF for FY 2022/2023](#)

2. Please provide the Funding Source(s) and dates funds for planning will be made available:

[General Fund; approved June 27, 2022.](#)

### Project Implementation Funding

1. Has the funding source(s) been identified for **project implementation**? [Yes](#)

If known, please provide the Funding Source(s) and dates funds for implementation will be made available:

Will a budget action be submitted to your Agency/DOF? [Yes](#)

If "Yes" is selected, specify when this BCP will be submitted: Before [Fall 2023](#)

2. Please provide a rough order of magnitude (ROM) estimate as to the total cost of the project: [Less than \\$10 Million](#)

**End of agency/state entity document.**

**Please ensure ADA compliance before submitting this document to CDT.**

**When ready, submit Stage 1 and all attachments in an email to [ProjectOversight@state.ca.gov](mailto:ProjectOversight@state.ca.gov).**

## Department of Technology Use Only

Original "New Submission" Date: [9/13/2022](#)

Form Received Date: [9/13/2022](#)

Form Accepted Date: [9/13/2022](#)

Form Status: [Completed](#)

Form Status Date: [11/2/2022](#)

Form Disposition: [Approved](#)

If Other, specify: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Form Disposition Date: [11/2/2022](#)

Department of Technology Project Number (0000-000): [0650-018](#)