



# 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](#). CDT

**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: 1/2/2025**

**4. S1BA Version Number: Version 2**

## 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: Updated Submission (Post-Approval)**

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.)**

1. Section 1.1 General Information; 2. Section 1.2 Submittal Information; 1.3 Business Sponsorship; 1.7 Business Outcomes Desired

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

1.1 Updated Project Start date and S1BA version number; 1.2 Updated submission type, sections changed and summary of changes; 1.3 Updated Executive Champion information, 1.7 Revised objectives 1.1 – 1.13 to aid requirements traceability.

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

Name: [Jennifer Holman and Christine Asiata-Rodriguez](#)

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 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 hours spent answering functionality-related questions. 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 1 hour/day

**Objective ID:** 1.2

**Objective:** Reduce the number of documents recalled. 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 and number of recalls

**Baseline:** 50% recall

**Target Result:** 10% recall

**Objective ID:** 1.3

**Objective:** Reduce time spent performing manual processes. SCH staff must spend an average of six 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:** Daily average time spent performing manual processes

**Baseline:** 6 hours per day

**Target Result:** 1 hour per day

**Objective ID:** 1.4

**Objective:** Reduce or eliminate paper check processing for California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) CEQA filing fees. This may negatively delay the start of statute of limitation (SOL) due to lost checks and time required for the check to be received by the SCH.

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

**Baseline:** 7 checks per week (½ hour processing time per check)

**Target Result:** 3 checks per week (½ hour processing time per check)

**Objective ID:** 1.5

**Objective:** Reduce the dependency on ODS (an office within CDT) for hosting and, code development, and documentation. Currently, the OPR cannot update code or access documentation within ODS as there is a lack of an IAA. The QualApps assessment recommended the long-term solution to rewrite the application.

**Metric:** Access to documentation, code repository, and architecture

**Baseline:** : No access to documentation, read only access to code repository, and outdated architecture

**Target Result:** Migration of document and code repository to OPR resources and new application with updated architecture.

**Objective ID:** 1.6

**Objective:** Visualize documented location on map to identify jurisdiction and regions to help streamline the state agency review process. Currently use external documentation and websites verify project location.

**Metric:** Display location on map

**Baseline:** 1 hour to identify jurisdiction and regions

**Target Result:** 5 minutes to identify jurisdiction and regions

**Objective ID:** 1.7

**Objective:** Improve the quality of data to provide complete and accurate information. Existing data cannot be modified and missing fields to correctly capture data.

**Metric:** Incomplete and/or inaccurate data

**Baseline:** 45% of data is incomplete/incorrect

**Target Result:** 10% or less

**Objective ID:** 1.8

**Objective:** Improve performance and responsiveness of the current system. Some webpages may take up to 15 minutes to load impacting end users.

**Metric:** Webpage rendering

**Baseline:** Up to 15 minutes to load webpages

**Target Result:** Load webpages within 10 seconds

**Objective ID:** 1.9

**Objective:** Improve user satisfaction, ease of use, and intuitiveness. The website is difficult to navigate and publish documents.

**Metric:** User satisfaction and time required to submit document and system administrator review and publish of the document

**Baseline:** 85% surveyed users have a negative experience. 2 hours to submit document and system administrator review and publish of the document

**Target Result:** 15% negative responses and 15 minutes to create and publish a document

**Objective ID:** 1.10

**Objective:** Reduce the time performing manual searching/modifying requested data and accuracy. Must ask developer to perform data queries and inability to administer document.

**Metric:** Time to query and administer the application

**Baseline:** 2 hours a day.

**Target Result:** 30 minutes a day

**Objective ID:** 1.11

**Objective:** Communicate with external systems. The current application lacks the ability to communicate with external systems.

**Metric:** Electronically share data with external systems and upload bulk submissions

**Baseline:** Unable to electronically share data with external systems nor upload bulk submissions

**Target Result:** Collaborate with external systems and accept bulk submissions

**Objective ID:** 1.12

**Objective:** Improve notifications to increase transparency, improve review period, and submission status. Manually send emails to users to inform when changes to a document are made.

**Metric:** Time spent to correspond to users

**Baseline:** 3 hours a week

**Target Result:** Less than 1 hour per week

**Objective ID:** 1.13

**Objective:** Meet statutory requirement to provide and maintain an online application to fulfill Senate Bill (SB) 122, Jackson. An online application must be available in order ensure documents and notice are publicly available.

**Metric:** Application which allows the submission and publishing of environmental documents and notices and publicly available.

**Baseline:** 100% documents received by the State Clearinghouse must be published through application

**Target Result:** Maintain 100% documents received by the State Clearinghouse must be published through application

*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: Statewide and some federal

Estimated Number of Transactions/Business Events (per cycle): 13,000 annually

Approximate number of internal end-users: 20

Approximate number of external end-users: 2,500 annually

## 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).**

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Department of Technology Project Number (0000-000): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)