

City Environmental Quality Review



Technical Manual

REVISION



**STAKEHOLDER
MEETING**



Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
The City of New York
2003

Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination

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Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination

Established by NYC Charter Section 192(e)

- Assists City agencies in carrying out environmental review responsibilities
- Provides training to City agencies in environmental review
- Repository for all City environmental review documents
- Liaison to state and federal agencies on environmental matters
- Advises the Mayor on matters of environmental policy
- Chairs CEQR Task Force and Technical Manual Steering Committee
- Develops and implements the City's strategy for compliance with Local Law 86 – Green Building Standards Law

CEQR TM Revision Organization

- **City Agency Steering Committee**

- Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination (MOEC)
- Law Department (Law)
- Department of City Planning (DCP)
- Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)
- Department of Sanitation (DOS)
- Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)
- Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC)
- Mayor's Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability (MOLTPS)

- **City Agency Working Groups**

- Expert agencies are in charge of revising their relevant CEQR TM Chapter. Other interested agencies provide input and all agencies have the chance to review the revised chapter.
 - For example, DEP has the relevant expertise to revise the Air Quality Chapter, and is responsible for revising that Chapter. DEP is working alongside the MOLTPS, DOT and DCP to revise the chapter. All agencies will have an opportunity to provide input on this Chapter.
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CEQR TM Revision Organization

■ Stakeholders

- MOEC invited Stakeholder groups, ranging from environmental organizations, civic groups, real estate professionals, and environmental consultants to “Stakeholder Sessions.”
- MOEC is asking for comment from all Community Boards, elected officials, and any interested citizens.
- MOEC will accept comments until June 26th

■ Timeline

- The CEQR Technical Manual revision is targeted to be complete by late Fall 2009.
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Complementary City Initiatives

- Management of the Environmental Review Process
 - In a complementary initiative, the City requests that the public provide its thoughts on the management of the environmental review process.
 - You may access the survey at the following websites:
 - www.nyc.gov
 - www.nyc.gov/oec
 - www.nyc.gov/dcp
 - www.nycedc.com
 - The survey will remain open for comment until **June 22nd**.
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Complementary City Initiatives

- Update the CEQR Rules
 - Consolidate 3 sources into 1 comprehensive document in order to create a more reader-friendly document.
 - MOEC does not anticipate any substantive changes to the Rules.
 - Completion of this process is targeted to coincide with the release of the revised Technical Manual.

 - Business Application for environmental review documents
 - MOEC plans to develop an application so that a project proponent can submit all environmental documents online, using web-based program. It should also be available late fall 2009.

 - CEQRview
 - MOEC is developing a searchable online database of every environmental review conducted pursuant to CEQR since 2000. It should be available late fall 2009.
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What is CEQR?

- Relationship to SEQRA, the State Environmental Quality Review Act
 - The City created CEQR and the TM because of the unique environmental conditions of our urban environment
 - The City's environmental review can be no less stringent than that of the State

 - CEQR applies to discretionary City Actions that are:
 - Executed by a City Agency
 - Funded by a City Agency
 - Approved by a City Agency
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The CEQR Technical Manual

History:

- Originally written in 1991
- Revised in 2001

Goals of the Manual:

- Provide clear information to agencies, the public, and consultants in undertaking and completing the CEQR process
 - Present technical guidance and methodologies for environmental review
 - This is ONLY guidance. The Manual does not mandate the use of these particular methodologies or thresholds.
 - Ensure city-wide consistency
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CEQR TM Impact Analyses Areas

- Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy
- Socioeconomic Conditions
- Community Facilities and Services
- Open Space
- Shadows
- Historic Resources
- Urban Design/Visual Resources
- Neighborhood Character
- Natural Resources
- Hazardous Materials
- Waterfront Revitalization Program
- Infrastructure
- Solid Waste and Sanitation
- Energy
- Traffic and Parking
- Transit and Pedestrians
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Construction Impacts
- Public Health

Current Concerns with the CEQR Technical Manual

- Some methodologies are outdated
 - The guidance is not always clear
 - More examples need to be provided
 - It is a static document
 - Environmental and legal conditions have changed since originally written
 - Consequently, the TM does not provide adequate guidance for all of the necessary analysis areas
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What the City Plans to Do

- Develop an interactive, dynamic, web-based Technical Manual, coupled to a web-based business application
 - Update the methodologies and data tables
 - Re-write the manual to be more understandable to the lay person
 - Incorporate the City's environmental sustainability goals, such as PlaNYC
 - Incorporate Climate Change into CEQR
 - This includes both guidance for:
 - An analysis on GHG emissions of a project; and
 - An analysis of climate change and methods to adapt to climate change
 - Encourage targeted review so that unnecessary analysis can be eliminated and the review can become more meaningful
 - Create a Short EAS Form similar to that of the state, and update the City's current EAS Form so that more meaningful analysis is conducted at the outset of project planning
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Areas of Focus for this effort

- Where do you feel improvements to the CEQR TM or the resulting environmental review documents can be made?
 - Suggested Stakeholder Comments could focus upon:
 - Areas of study not currently covered by the CEQR Technical Manual, that should be;
 - Defining analysis areas;
 - Provide more detailed analysis at the beginning of the process to reduce additional analysis at the back end;
 - Methodologies;
 - Significance thresholds;
 - Ways to make environmental review better suited for all users of the process; and
 - General guidance in the CEQR Technical Manual.
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Areas upon which this effort is not focusing

- Management of the Environmental Review Process
 - The City's Complementary Initiative will seek input on this issue—until June 22, 2009, go to www.nyc.gov to comment.
 - SEQRA and CEQR Legal Requirements
 - Includes areas of analysis required by statute
 - It is not the purpose of this revision to diminish environmental review.
 - Comments on Specific Development Projects
 - ULURP
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Stakeholder Input

- Please focus on the following questions:
 - What has been your experience with environmental review and reading environmental review documents?
 - What are the best aspects of the CEQR Technical Manual and the resulting Impact Analyses?
 - What are the worst aspects?
 - What impact analyses areas are necessary, but not currently included, for the purposes of environmental review? Why?
 - What additional guidance is necessary? Why?
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We Want Your Input

- Please email ceqrtm@cityhall.nyc.gov with your suggestions on the CEQR Technical Manual revision.
 - In the email, please indicate whether you would be willing to meet with MOEC for further discussion.
 - We will accept comments until Friday, June 26th.
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Contact MOEC

- Please email ceqrtm@cityhall.nyc.gov if you have questions.

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