

New Construction Design Review Process

The **HPD Design Guidelines for New Construction 2026** (the "Guidelines"), released in July of 2026, establish the design and building performance criteria by which HPD evaluates proposed developments for multifamily new construction, supportive, and senior housing projects.

Applicability

The HPD Guidelines for New Construction 2026 apply to any HPD-financed project submitted for Design Consultation on or after October 1, 2026.

The design standards established in the Guidelines shall not supersede any legal or statutory design requirements (e.g. New York City Building Code, Zoning Resolution, etc.), and all HPD construction projects remain subject to plan review by the Department of Buildings.

MILESTONE 1: WORKBOOK SUBMITTAL AND DESIGN WAIVER REQUEST

Early schematic design

- Review Guidelines and identify applicable requirements for the project.
- Submit the [New Construction Design Guidelines Workbook](#) ("Workbook") per guidance below and in the Workbook.

Design Waivers

- Project teams are encouraged to submit Sustainability or Resiliency Waivers as early as possible, and may do so by filling out the Design Waiver tab in the above linked Workbook and emailing sustainability@hpd.nyc.gov and/or resiliency@hpd.nyc.gov with "Address (HPD ID)-Workbook and Waiver(s)" in the subject line, cc'ing the assigned HPD PM.
 - **For Resiliency Waivers:** fill out all fields that identify a project's unique climate risks and include supporting documents in the submission.
- Teams that anticipate needing a BLDS Waiver for the number of elevators are also encouraged to submit as early as possible, to NCDesignGuidelines@hpd.nyc.gov.
- The project team will be notified of each Waiver's approval or rejection, or if additional information is required.
- If there are any critical questions or flags identified through an early Sustainability or Resiliency Waiver request, an optional meeting may be scheduled.
- *Note:* Waivers for other architectural requirements (e.g. bicycle parking) will be addressed during the Design Consultation and do not need to be requested until Milestone 2. Any other Resiliency or Sustainability Waivers that were not requested in advance may also be submitted at Milestone 2.

MILESTONE 2: DESIGN CONSULTATION & DETERMINATION OF REVIEW PATHWAY

50% DDs, ~8-10 months before closing

Project teams will complete the [HPD BLDS New Construction Design Consultation Submission Checklist](#), and then notify their HPD PM, who will initiate the process through [eBLDS](#) (BLDS' platform for project submissions). Project teams will receive a notification when they can submit items via Box.com.

Design Consultation (DC)

Once a complete submission has been received, HPD technical teams will conduct a thorough review prior to meeting. The PM will coordinate scheduling the DC, which will include the Program, BLDS, Sustainability, and Resiliency teams from HPD; and the Developer, Architect, and other design professionals who have been engaged for the project, including Mechanical Engineers, Structural Engineers, Environmental and Sustainability Consultants. During the DC, BLDS will guide the project teams through their comments and discuss any outstanding issues or concerns. Project teams will have the opportunity to ask questions or get clarification on HPD requirements.

Review Pathway Determination

Following the DC, project teams will receive a Design Consultation Memo summarizing the meeting and describing the remaining issues to be addressed in the subsequent submission, if required. At this point, teams will also be notified of their review pathway, which may include a Sustainability and/or Resiliency Review separate from a BLDS Review. The review pathways are as follows:

- **BLDS Design Review:**
 - Expedited Pathway: no Design Review/additional resubmissions to BLDS required
 - Targeted Design Review Pathway: the full scope of BLDS architectural review except for Accessibility, if the project has an Accessibility Consultant
 - Full Design Review Pathway: the full scope of BLDS architectural review including Accessibility, if the project does not have an Accessibility Consultant
- **BLDS Environmental Review:**
 - SEQRA/CEQR Exempt Pathway: very limited scope of environmental compliances related to hazardous materials and noise.
 - SEQRA/CEQR Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS) Pathway: environmental review beginning with an EAS; an EIS *may* be required depending on the determination of the EAS review.
 - Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Pathway: the fullest scope of environmental review.
- **Sustainability Review:** follow-up submission and review focused on Sustainability-specific concerns.

- **Resiliency Review:** follow-up submission and review focused on Resiliency-specific concerns.

BLDS Expedited Design Review Pathway

To be considered for the Expedited Pathway, projects must meet *both* criteria below, at minimum:

- The Architect must have worked on at least one HPD-financed New Construction project that received BLDS Design Acceptance within the last three years
- The site must be privately owned (i.e., publicly owned sites do not qualify)

Additional criteria that may further increase the likelihood of qualifying for the Expedited Pathway include:

- Conforming to Loan Program Term Sheet requirements for unit mix
- Having an Accessibility Consultant as part of the design team (as indicated on the [Pre-Construction Accessibility Statement](#))
- Having a Developer that has closed on an HPD New Construction project within the past five years
- Having a well-resolved design that complies with the Design Guidelines

Note: meeting both sets of standards above does not immediately guarantee that a project will be qualified for the Expedited Pathway.

Projects selected for the Expedited Pathway will receive BLDS Design Acceptance upon issuance of the Design Consultation Memo. In such cases, the project team will be expected to comply with any outstanding comments outlined in the Design Consultation Memo, and it will remain the project team's responsibility to ensure that the project's design and construction comply with all laws, rules, regulations, and codes mandated by city, state, and federal authorities having jurisdiction, including the Guidelines.

Note: HPD may periodically audit projects that received BLDS Design Acceptance through the Expedited Pathway to track compliance and quality.

BLDS Environmental Planning SEQRA/CEQR Exempt Pathway:

To be eligible for the BLDS Environmental Planning [SEQRA/CEQR Exempt Pathway](#), projects must meet *all* criteria below:

- In accordance with Table 1 (below):
 - Projects in low-density zoning districts must not exceed 250 incremental units; this limit applies if any part of the proposed action is within a low-density zoning district;
 - In medium-to-high density zoning districts, projects must not exceed 500 incremental units;
- Projects must not be located in M2 or M3 districts;
- Projects must not facilitate more than 50,000 incremental square feet of commercial, community facility, or other non-residential, non-industrial use;

- Projects cannot facilitate any incremental industrial floor area;
- Projects must not facilitate the construction of only one single-family residence on a parcel of one-half or more acres
- Projects must be connected to existing public water and sewer systems at the commencement of habitation;
- Projects must be located at a previously disturbed site:
 - Site must have been substantially altered by an occupied, formerly occupied, or demolished building or by another improvement or use at least two years prior to the application for the action;
 - Site is not currently being used for agricultural purposes and has not been used for agricultural purposes within: (a) the immediately preceding two years, or (b) three of the last five years before the action; and
 - Site must be located outside of a [Coastal Erosion Hazard Area](#).

Table 1: Eligibility for SEQRA/CEQR Exemption by Zoning Districts

CATEGORY	ZONING DISTRICTS	INCREMENTAL DWELLING UNIT THRESHOLD
Low-Density Districts	• R1 through R5 • C3 or C4-1 • Special Coney Island District/M1-2 • Contains existing housing and is M1-1D, M1-2D, M1-3D, M1-4D, M1-5D	250 incremental DUs
Outside Low-Density Districts	• R6 through R12 • C1-6 through C1-9, C2-6 through C2-8, C4-2 through C4-7, C5, C6, C7, C8 • All other M1 Districts	500 incremental DUs
Districts Not Eligible for Qualifying Actions	M2, M3	Ineligible

Projects that do not conform with *all* eligibility criteria above will be subject to the SEQRA/CEQR Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS) Pathway. Additionally, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) may be warranted based on the determination of the EAS. See Milestone 3 for more details.

Note: All projects, no matter the pathway taken, require the submission of a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), unless the site is going through the Brownfield Cleanup Program or subject to (E)-Designation for hazardous materials; noise screening is also required. See below for more details.

Sustainability and Resiliency Review

These reviews may be triggered by the following:

- Project team does not have a Sustainability Consultant
- Project team has a track record of failure to certify previous EGC or LEED projects

- Qualitative concerns related to the project's design of an all-electric building
- Project is located on a flood-prone site and does not meet resiliency design requirements or has not received Waiver approval at the time of Design Consultation

MILESTONE 3: DESIGN REVIEW (IF APPLICABLE)

100% DDs, ~6 months prior to closing

BLDS Design Review

- **Full Design Review** will be similar in scope and form to the review of the DC. Once BLDS completes the review, it will be returned to the project team, who must then resubmit an updated version for additional BLDS review; this process repeats until the project receives a Design Acceptance. Projects in this pathway can expect to achieve Design Acceptance by the third review. See the required documents in the [BLDS New Construction Design Review Submission Checklist](#).
- **Targeted Design Review** may be available for projects whose design teams include an Accessibility Consultant (as indicated on the [Pre-Construction Accessibility Statement](#)). In a Targeted Review, BLDS will continue to provide comments relating to compliance with the HPD Design Guidelines for New Construction but will not provide additional feedback related to Accessibility after the Design Consultation.

In such cases, the project team will be expected to comply with the comments outlined in the Design Consultation Memo and will be responsible for ensuring that the project's design and construction comply with all laws, rules, regulations, and codes mandated by city, state, and federal authorities having jurisdiction.

- **Post Acceptance Amendment (BLDS PAA)** may apply in certain cases where projects that have received a Design Acceptance after a Full or Targeted BLDS Design Review may need to submit a request for a design change, *before* loan closing. In such cases, project teams must alert their PM to submit a Post Acceptance Amendment (PAA) request to BLDS, who will review the requested changes and notify the project team of their decision. BLDS has the discretion to accept or reject such requests.

Note: Projects in the BLDS Expedited Pathway are not expected to submit PAAs. In extreme circumstances, project teams may reach out to their HPD PM for additional guidance.

Environmental Review

- **SEQRA/CEQR Exempt Pathway:**
 - Projects must submit a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment in accordance with ASTM Standards.
 - In areas with high ambient noise, site-specific peak-hour noise monitoring or recent comparable noise monitoring is required to determine the degree of window/wall attenuation needed to achieve an indoor closed-window condition not to exceed 45

dBA. Any window-wall attenuation requirements are to be memorialized through a Noise Attenuation Letter, signed and stamped by the Architect.

- **SEQRA/CEQR EAS Pathway:** Projects must complete the applicable CEQR EAS Form and additional supplemental assessments that are required based on the responses to the EAS Form. HPD Environmental Planning along with other City agencies, as warranted, will review the Draft EAS and provide comments and review revisions as necessary until HPD has determined that the EAS is complete and issues the Determination of Significance.
- **EIS Pathway:** HPD Environmental Planning will inform the project team if this pathway is required and provide project-specific next steps. Note: projects that require an EIS are subject to an environmental review period that will exceed six months.

Sustainability & Resiliency Review

- Projects undergoing a Sustainability Review or a Resiliency Review will receive guidance from the applicable team on how to address HPD concerns. Note that completing the Sustainability Review, including securing necessary Waivers, is required to receive HPD signature on EGC Pre-Authorizations.

Review Outside BLDS

- **Green Building Certification:** During the Design Review phase (Milestone 3), regardless of which BLDS Review Pathway a project may fall under, project teams should submit their Green Building Certification applications.
- **NYC Department of Buildings (DOB):** While it is recommended that initial DOB filing take place after the Design Consultation (Milestone 2), the two processes are independent. When filing, project teams are strongly encouraged to file their jobs at DOB's [Development Hub](#), rather than at borough offices. This helps streamline the process and ensures that affordable housing projects in HPD Programs can receive the additional assistance they may need. Teams should request a [Hub Consultation Request](#) to determine the best filing strategy for their project, and if applicable, request DOB guidance on filing for fee deferrals or exemptions.