



Comments Submitted by
Professor Christopher Yukins
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to
New York City Commission on Government Efficiency
Hearing on “Speeding Up Public Procurement”
Staten Island, New York
July 6, 2026

To the Members of the Commission on Government Efficiency:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit comments on the reforms to the New York City Charter being [considered](#) by the Mayor’s [Commission on Government Efficiency](#). I write regarding the topic of today’s [hearing, speeding up New York City’s public procurement](#).

My Background: I serve as the Lynn David Research Professor in Government Procurement Law at George Washington University Law School in Washington, D.C., one of the leading public procurement law programs in the world. I have taught at GW Law since 2002, including on state and municipal procurement law. My comments here reflect my own views and do not represent those of GW Law or any other institution.

I have extensive ties to New York City. I am a member of the New York State bar, and I served as a judicial clerk to Judge Lawrence W. Pierce of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in Manhattan. My wife and I lived in New York for many years, as I practiced law there and she served as a dean of graduate schools of education in New York City.

Model Procurement Code (MPC): I work on a number of procurement law initiatives, both nationally and internationally. I previously served as an advisor to the U.S. delegation in a sweeping reform of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) [Model Law on Public Procurement](#). I also serve as the Academic Advisor to an [ongoing reform](#) of the 2000 American Bar Association (ABA) Model Procurement Code (MPC), which is coordinated by the ABA Public Contract Law Section, the National Association of State Procurement Officials ([NASPO](#)) and [Partners for Public Good](#).

First adopted in 1979, the ABA Model Procurement Code has guided public procurement laws in the United States for nearly half a century. More than 20 states, from New Mexico to South Carolina, have enacted legislation based on the MPC, and many other major governments – including New York City – have relied on the Model Procurement Code as a guiding standard to promote best-value procurement and the ethical stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

Commission’s Potential Procurement Reforms: As the Commission’s June 2026 [preliminary report](#) pointed out, the last major reform of the City’s charter in 1989 drew directly on the ABA Model Procurement Code. The Model Procurement Code was subsequently overhauled in 2000, and as noted is now being [reformed again](#). Those changes to the Model Procurement Code may help inform the Commission’s proposed amendments to the [chapter](#) in the City’s Charter which addresses procurement.

The Commission’s preliminary report suggested a number of [potential](#) procurement reforms in response to [public concerns](#). Those reforms often intersect with changes considered under the Model Procurement Code and around the world.

- 1. Reducing Paperwork:** The Commission’s preliminary report suggested that, to reduce burdens on small businesses and other vendors, the Commission may consider streamlining vendors’ qualification questionnaires. Because vendors typically work in broader markets, the City could draw on other governments’ initiatives to share contractor qualification information (including anti-corruption information and past performance data). The City, following a [model being developed](#) in the European Union, could use other governments’ qualification information to reduce vendors’ burdens while at the same time reducing the City’s own performance and corruption risks. The Open Contracting Partnership, among others, is [working closely with governments](#) across the world to make procurement data publicly available and machine-readable – cornerstones to efficiency, accountability and a healthy public procurement system.
- 2. Eliminating a requirement for public hearings:** The Commission suggested eliminating required public hearings before certain contract awards (see Section 326 of the Charter). If, as discussed above, the City follows the global trend towards open contracting – making critical procurement information publicly available – the current comment period will be far more efficient than public hearings.

- 3. Delegating authority to contracting officials:** The Commission’s preliminary report recommended that the Mayor be permitted to delegate procurement approvals to agency chief contracting officers. This would echo a nationwide trend to giving contracting officials more authority, to allow them to innovate and to be more responsive to the needs of government users and the public. The Model Procurement Code’s current reforms are, at their core, driven by the advancing professionalization of procurement officials, and New York City could improve procurement outcomes by embracing that trend. In practical terms that means (among other things) investing in the professional advancement of procurement officials, through training offered by NASPO, NIGP, the National Contract Management Association (NCMA) and other professional training providers.
- 4. Innovation and Procurement:** The Commission’s preliminary report noted the need to reform procurement “to better match the challenge of acquiring effective technology, strengthening the City’s in-house roster of technologists, and breaking down IT barriers across City agencies and functions.” In the procurement community, this policy question breaks down into three inter-related components: (i) innovation *in* procurement (improved procurement processes to buy better technology); (ii) procurement *of* innovation (buying the best technology); and (iii) [procurement for innovation](#) (using public procurement to spur cutting-edge technologies in the broader economy). The Commission may want to consider reforms from each of these perspectives. Improving procurement processes to welcome new market entrants, for example, may make it easier for New York City to access new technologies and could boost high technology start-up firms in the City.
- 5. Streamlining Reports:** The Commission’s preliminary report suggests that the Charter might be amended to reduce unnecessary reports by City procurement officials. First, the Commission suggests that the Charter’s requirement that the Procurement Policy Board “submit an annual report . . . setting forth the professional standards for agency contracting officers . . . including any applicable certification process” is outdated and could be replaced by more modern methods of training and certification. The Trump administration’s [“Revolutionary FAR Overhaul”](#) has done extensive work in this area. Federal reformers have developed “practitioner albums” that can be readily updated to meet procurement officials’

evolving needs for training and guidance; New York City may want to follow a similar approach. Second, the Commission suggested that the plans and hearings required by the Charter for client services contracting could be streamlined. (This streamlining may be especially appropriate because the City’s [procurement regulations](#) separately require that, before a client services solicitation is issued, a “concept plan” be published.) Publishing plans for future procurement is a sound practice, but as the [Guide to Enactment](#) which accompanies Article 6 of the UNCITRAL model law explains:

The purpose of [non-mandatory publication] is to highlight the importance of proper procurement planning for procuring entities and suppliers and contractors alike. The article recommends the publication of information on future procurement, which may contribute to transparency throughout the procurement process and eliminate any advantageous position of suppliers or contractors that might otherwise gain access to procurement planning phases in a non-transparent way.

Thus it makes sense to call for advance notice of distant procurements only when doing so would enhance the integrity of the competitive process or would provide essential transparency to client communities and the broader public.

Conclusion/Contact Information: Thank you again for this opportunity to submit comments on these important reforms. Should you or your staff have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at cyukins@law.gwu.edu.

Respectfully submitted,

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