



Development CITY OF AUSTIN
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Stakeholder Meeting

Building Plan
Review and Inspections

May 24, 2023

Overview

- Organizational Update
- 2023 Priorities & Initiatives
- Division Updates
 - Volume & Performance
 - Process Improvements
 - Critical Initiatives



Executive Level Org Chart



José G. Roig
Interim Director

- Office of the Director
- Equity and Inclusion



Angela Means
Deputy Director
Customer & Employee Experience



Elaine Garrett
Assistant Director
Code Compliance



Keith Mars
Acting Assistant Director
Land Development Review



Daniel Word
Assistant Director
Code Compliance



Rick Holloway
Assistant Director
Construction & Environmental
Inspections



Tracy Allen
Assistant Director
Support Services



Brenda de la Garza
Acting Assistant Director
Building Plan Review

2023 Priorities

- Improving turnaround times in **site plan review**
- Onboarding our **Public Projects Team** and **improving affordable housing outcomes**
- Smoothing out the procedural edges with our partner departments and working to **better align interdepartmental work**
- Reconnecting with **stakeholders** across all sectors of the community



Critical Initiatives

- **Site Plan** process work and partnership with **McKinsey & Company**
- Launch of **Public Project Team** services
- Expanded reporting on **performance measures**
- Procurement of a **replacement for City permitting system (AMANDA)**
- Amplified **recruitment** efforts
- Expanded **community engagement**, including launch of a customer satisfaction survey



An aerial photograph of a city skyline. In the foreground, a river flows through a park-like area with trees showing autumn foliage. A bridge with graffiti on its structure spans the river. In the background, a dense urban skyline features several prominent skyscrapers under a clear blue sky. A semi-transparent white banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text 'Regulatory Policy & Administration' in a bold, dark blue font.

Regulatory Policy & Administration

Regulatory Policy & Administration



Critical Initiatives

- Created a **Code Cabinet** that will focus on code amendments and serve as an internal code resource
- Split **Site Plan Lite** amendment to support quicker consideration of proposal allowing a **site plan exemption for 4 units or less**
- Hired a **Rules Administrator** to streamline the technical criteria manual (TCM) and rules adoption process
- Creating a **Technical Advisory Review Panel** to review TCMs and identify opportunities for improvement

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Intake & Service Center

Intake



Volume & Performance (YTD)

Residential Applications

3,874
processed



Commercial Applications

1,555
processed

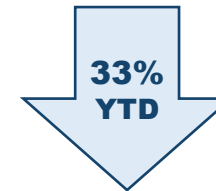


Tickets	Chats
12,549	7,229

Time in Queue

Residential

2
days



Commercial

1
day



Service Center



**Volume &
Performance
(YTD)**

**Residential
Permits**

21,646
issued



**Commercial
Permits**

7,147
issued



Tickets

14,173

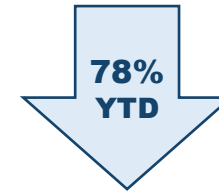
Chats

17,079

Time in Queue

Web Form

4
days



AB+C Portal

1-2
days



Intake & Service Center



Process Improvements

- Improved access to **chat icon** on webpage
- Added **emergency option** for **AB+C applications**
- Updated **webforms and created webpages** with thorough instructions for each
- Updated the **residential application and webpage** to capture additional information
- Working to launch **targeted document submittal** to improve efficiency and reduce the time in queue

An aerial photograph of a city skyline. In the foreground, a river flows through a park-like area with trees showing autumn foliage. A bridge with graffiti on its structure spans the river. In the background, a dense urban skyline features several prominent skyscrapers, including a tall, modern building with a unique, angular facade. The sky is clear and blue.

Building Plan Review

Building Plan Review



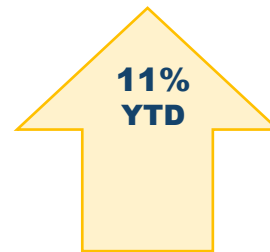
**Volume &
Performance
(YTD)**

Residential

**5,501
reviews**



**90%
on-time**



Commercial

**7,446
reviews**



**98%
on-time**



Building Plan Review



Process Improvements

Residential

- Posted **standard comment library** in a shared location and in a new format making comments accessible to all disciplines to support consistency in review and allowing hyperlinks
- **Coordinating Review process now more evenly divided** between zoning and technical review disciplines resulting in improved coordinating review times
- Developing a **new distribution process** to reduce time spent between application submittal and review

Building Plan Review



Process Improvements

Commercial

- Developed new review product “**EVQT**” (**Electric Vehicle Quick Turnaround**) to address a growing need
- Developed **customer information webpage for daycares** to help with common questions
- Assisted with **training of Public Projects staff** to ensure consistency between teams
- Reconfigured **TimeTrade appointment channels** to four distinct channels (B/M/E/P) for more direct access to specific disciplines

Building Plan Review



Process Improvements

Commercial (continued)

- **Requiring plumbing review for utility site plan** after site plan corrections to reduce issues with locations depicted for grease traps and site utilities
- Implemented a **pre-submittal meeting documentation process** which reviewers may utilize to communicate information from appointments for future reference

Building Plan Review



Critical Initiatives

Residential

- Re-evaluating the process for extending an expired **plan review application**
- Evaluating **Project Dox** as the case management system for the **Volume Builder Program**

Commercial

- Developing a comprehensive checklist of **review requirements for commercial swimming pools**
- Creating **shell building “Do’s and Don’ts” guidelines** to clarify what is allowed under a shell permit

Building Plan Review



Critical Initiatives

Structural

Projects that are high-rise, or Risk Category 3 or 4, **require structural observations to be performed per IBC 1704.6.1**, including submittal of a completed **Structural Observation Report**



Expedited Building Plan Review

Expedited Building Plan Review



**Volume &
Performance
(YTD)**

Residential

Volume

**226
applications**



**Appointment
Wait Time**

**9
business days**

**% Approved in
Cycle 1**

79%



Expedited Building Plan Review



**Volume &
Performance
(YTD)**

Commercial

Volume

**183
applications**

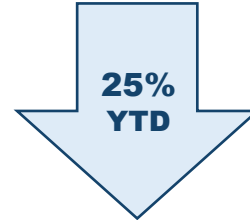


**Appointment
Wait Time**

**21
business days**

**% Approved in
Cycle 1**

53%



Expedited Building Plan Review



Process Improvements

- Amplified **recruitment efforts** to fill critical vacancies in **plumbing, mechanical and residential technical** review
- Working with partner departments to **supplement staffing** while we recruit for Fire and Structural reviewers
- Partnering with IT to **streamline Street Impact Fee Review process**
- Routing **Major Revisions** for plans that went through Expedited **back through Expedited** for consistency and continuity

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Tree Review (Building)

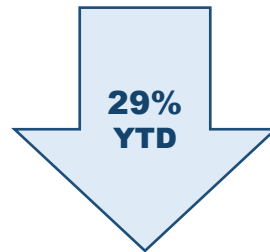
Tree Review (Building)

Residential

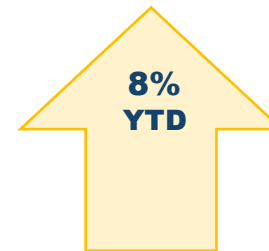


**Volume &
Performance
(YTD)**

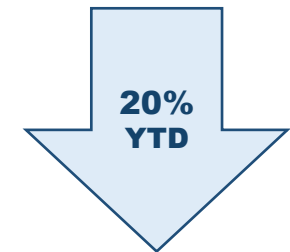
**1,814
reviews**



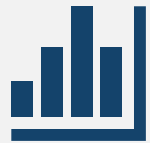
**90%
on-time**



**12 dy
process time**



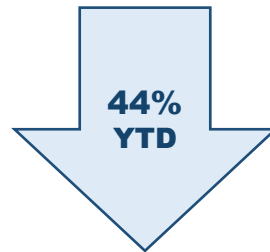
Tree Review (Building)



**Volume &
Performance
(YTD)**

Standalone

**1,002
reviews**



**98%
on-time**



**14 dy
process time**



Tree Review (Building)



Process Improvements

- Updated **Environmental Criteria Manual (ECM)** Sections 3.5 and 3.6 to remove outdated material and improve guidance for mitigation and preservation, and updating the **comment library**
- Added **Arizona Ash** to the **ECM Mitigation-Exempt Species** list
- Created a **new tree permit category** for standalone single-family sites that may not be under construction but may need to permit/clear a tree violation

Tree Review (Building)



Process Improvements

- Worked with building plan review to **improve demolition process** to ensure accuracy and expedite when new application is received
- Hosting **monthly Tree Smart Lunch and Learns** that provide information to stakeholders

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Building Inspections

Building Inspections



**Volume &
Performance
(YTD)**

Residential

121,979
inspections

7%
YTD

80%
on-time

9%
YTD

Commercial

45,356
inspections

1%
YTD

91%
on-time

5%
YTD

Building Inspections



Process Improvements

Residential

- Continued investment in **inspector education and certifications**
- Increased **training in the field** to maintain consistency in recognizing life safety deficiencies and increase the number of daily inspections
- Developed an **internal flow chart** for inspection processes for **modular homes** to clarify requirements
- Worked with AFD to restrict scheduling of required pre-requisite fire inspections prior to building inspections to minimize out of sequence inspections

Building Inspections



Process Improvements

Residential (continued)

- Conducting **bi-weekly site meetings** led by supervisors or designated inspectors to improve consistency in inspections
- Working to implement **radio buttons at Pool Layout and Pool Final Building process** to reduce the number of unaccounted for 3rd party paperwork
- Creating an **Inspections Handbook** for all inspectors that will function as a **quick reference resource** in the field

Building Inspections



Process Improvements

Commercial

- Continued investment in **inspector education and certifications**
- Increased **training on code requirements and the associated documentation** to increase consistency in inspections
- Enhanced **building pre-construction inspections** to emphasize **building safety** and address **common inspection issues**

Building Inspections

Commercial (continued)



Process Improvements

- Expanded the **timed inspections program** to include **commercial properties** (when requirements are met) resulting in time savings for applicant
- Improved **gas system testing process for outages** resulting in greater efficiency
- Added an **emergency on-call service** and developed an associated SOP for **after hour pulled gas meter inspections** providing expanded access for emergencies

Building Inspections



Process Improvements

Commercial (continued)

- Developed a **new Multifamily Permanent Power Checklist** to streamline permanent power inspections
- Developed a **new Medical Gas SOP** to clarify requirements and streamline the process for applicants and plan review
- Updated the **Annual Permit SOP** to improve consistency for applicants and inspectors
- Increased **inspector availability** for topic specific stakeholder meetings

Building Inspections



Process Improvements

Commercial (continued)

- Conducting **regular meetings with review staff** to improve consistency between review and inspections
- Preparing for **adoption of the 2023 electrical code** and kicking off internal discussions for **2024 International Codes and Uniform Codes**

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Environmental Inspections

Environmental Inspections



**Volume &
Performance
(YTD)**

Residential

Routine

**10,464
inspections**

**119%
YTD**

Called (Tree BP)

**6,132
inspections**

**8%
YTD**

Environmental Inspections



Volume &
Performance
(YTD)

Commercial

Routine

9,690
inspections

8%
YTD

Called (EV BP)

1,194
inspections

16%
YTD

Called
(Landscape)

343
inspections

31%
YTD

Environmental Inspections



Process Improvements

- Implemented a **Notice of Violation** process for sites not under development for greater compliance flexibility
- **Streamlined the 311 process** for EV complaints, providing direct access to the service platform to improve response time
- Launched an **Environmental Inspections Lunch and Learn** series to educate the community
- Transitioned the **Sound Enforcement Team** to Entertainment Services for better functional alignment



CITY OF AUSTIN
Development
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Thank you!