

ATTACHMENT 1

Analysis of the Opportunities to Improve Development Services

CITY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA



February 10, 2014

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1. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report, which follows, presents the results of the analysis of opportunities to improve development services within the City of Los Angeles.

This first chapter introduces the analysis – outlining principal objectives and how the analysis was conducted – and presents an Executive Summary.

1. STUDY SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The Matrix Consulting Group was originally tasked with conducting a comprehensive analysis of the functional transfer of development services to a new Department. The analysis was to be fact based and include the aspects of service provision defined by the City Council in Council File Number 13-0046. The analysis focused on:

- **The goals, objectives and missions of the functional transfer and the new Department** including the critical factors that will influence the new Department, a set of metrics and measurements to assess the outcomes of the new Department, the tools the City will utilize to measure the success of improvements to its development services system from the functional transfer, the improvements to be implemented, and the longer-term milestones to fully leverage the benefits of the functional transfer;
- **Recommended changes, deletions, and/or additions to the management and organization of existing development services (i.e. planning, plan check, permitting, inspection, etc.) functions** to best carry out the goals, objectives and mission of the new Department, including recommendations already included in the Joint Report, alternative recommendations to those in the Joint Report, and any new or additional recommendations;
- **Flowcharts** and other graphical illustrations documenting the recommended changes to existing functions and processes;
- **A written summary and analysis of the recommended changes to existing staffing patterns and resource allocations** to best carry out the goals, objectives and mission of the new Department including a detailed organizational chart and staffing plan for the new Department, reflecting any recommended changes to staffing;

- **A written summary and analysis of the recommendations, as appropriate, for creation of new classifications** and consolidations of existing City classifications;
- **A written summary and analysis of the recommendations for addressing staffing and resource needs related to economic upticks and downturns** in the local real estate and development industry
- **A written summary and analysis identifying the best practices from other cities in addressing the types of strategic changes proposed in the May 29, 2013 joint report on the functional transfer** that can be adapted to the City Los Angeles and other related information, such as how those best practices are integrated into the final recommendations for the functional transfer or how the approach followed by other cities does not apply to Los Angeles;
- **A written summary and analysis of the recommended amendments to the Mayor's *Development Reform Strategic Plan* and the *BuildLA* technology platform** in light of the functional transfer of development services departments and functions that were not contemplated in the Strategic Plan or *BuildLA* platform;
- **A written summary and analysis of the tasks, sub-tasks and timelines necessary to implement the new Department;** and
- **A fiscal impact analysis** including the one-time and the ongoing costs for the functional transfer.

The overall purpose of the analysis was to assist in developing a transition plan for the functional transfer. This included an analysis of the roles, responsibilities, and tools required to implement the new Department; internal and external customer / staff surveys for input of key stakeholders on the functional transfer; documentation of the strategies used by other cities in providing similar services; and the provisions of a report with findings and recommendations that will assist the City in successfully executing the functional transfer on-time and in a manner that ensures improved customer service and continued compliance with all applicable codes, regulations, and laws.

The scope and objectives of this study were amended by a motion adopted by the City Council in November 2013 to include options, other than the functional transfer, that would improve the City's development process, including best practices in other large municipalities, a cost benefit analysis, pros and cons of the functional transfer, other viable realignment options, and an implementation timeline.

2. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF POSITIVE ASPECTS TO THE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PROCESS IN THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES.

By its nature, an analysis like this tends to focus on the negative in identifying and evaluating improvement opportunities. Before addressing those opportunities, it is important to note that the analysis identified a number of positive features about the development services process in the City of Los Angeles. Examples of these positive features are presented below.

- **The Department of City Planning has embarked on re:code.LA, a comprehensive revision of LA's outdated zoning code.** First adopted in 1946, the current Code has grown from a simple, 84-page pamphlet to an unwieldy, 600+ page book that inadequately realizes a 21st century vision of a better Los Angeles for all residents. Over the next five years, the Department will create a:
 - Dynamic Web-Based Zoning Code – A clear and predictable zoning code that better meets the City's current and future needs, and that also provides an interactive on-line experience;
 - Guide to Zoning – A quick reference, easy-to-read guide to the new Code's land use and development regulations; and
 - Unified Downtown Development Code - New zoning tools that are customized for the heart of Los Angeles, downtown.
- **The Department of Building and Safety is issuing 90% of the building permits over the Internet or over-the-counter.** This far exceeds what the Matrix Consulting Group typically finds in other cities of any size population. This has not happened by accident; the Department has designed its business processes to provide this level of service.

- **The Department of Building and Safety provides a parallel design-permitting program.** With this program, the Department is plan checking building permit plans at the conceptual design phase and continues to provide plan check, correction verification, and code consultation services throughout various design phases. When the final building permit plan construction drawings are completed, the building permit is ready to be issued.
- **The City of Los Angeles is beginning the development of the *BuildLA* permit, inspection, and enforcement information system.** The creation of a more efficient, transparent, and predictable development system depends heavily on the application of this technology. “*BuildLA* is a web-enabled technology platform that will be used by multiple City departments to receive, assign, review, process, manage, and track all customer requests for services relating to the use and development of land. As envisioned, the *BuildLA* system will include an interactive customer web portal, a workflow management platform, electronic plan review capabilities, a supporting database, and integration or data sharing with several existing City systems.”¹
- **The Department of City Planning is updating some of the City’s community plans.** As of November 2013, the Department was updating seven community plans, four of which had been already approved by the City Planning Commission. These are presented in the table below.

Community Plan	Expected Completion
Granada Hills Community Plan	Approved by Planning Commission, Council adoption anticipated by December, 2013
Sylmar Community Plan	Approved by Planning Commission, Council adoption anticipated by December, 2013
West Adams Community Plan	Approved by Planning Commission, Council adoption anticipated by December, 2013
San Pedro Community Plan	Approved by Planning Commission, Council adoption anticipated by December, 2013
South LA Community Plan	Expected completion December, 2014
Southeast LA Community Plan	Expected completion December, 2014
Boyle Heights Community	Expected completion mid-2015

In addition, the updated Hollywood community plan had already been adopted.

- **The Department of Building and Safety established the *Restaurant and Hospitality Express Program* in 2011.** In response to Central City Association and the restaurant industry, the Department, in collaboration with the Bureau of Sanitation and the County Department of Public Health Department-Environmental Health, established a *Restaurant and Hospitality Express Program*. The goal of the program is to make the permitting and inspection process more efficient, enabling new Food Service Establishments to open on

¹ City of Los Angeles, Request for Proposals for a Comprehensive Technology Solution for Development Services (BuildLA), June 2013

time and on budget by eliminating duplication of efforts and providing regulatory consistency through enhanced communication of pertinent information between these agencies.

- **The Department of Transportation has developed *Traffic Study Policies and Procedures*, and published these policies and procedures to its web site.** These policies and procedures include traffic study requirements, the study preparation process, traffic count requirements, mitigation measures, etc. These policies and procedures were developed to ensure consistency in the preparation of the studies and in the planning of site access, on-site circulation, and off-site improvements for proposed land use development projects.
- **The Bureau of Engineering has developed a permit and procedure manual and published the manual to its web site.** The manual includes chapters regarding how to obtain a permit, where the applicant can get help, the A-permit process, the B-permit process, the E-permit and U-permit processes, etc.
- **The Bureau of Engineering served 74% of its customers at the Metro construction services center in 15 minutes or less in fiscal year 2012-13.** No other bureau or department provided as good a response to customers in the Metro construction services center as the Bureau of Engineering. Similarly, other than Department of Building and Safety Grading, no other bureau or department provided as good a response to customers in the Valley construction services center as the Bureau of Engineering.
- **The Fire Department and the Department of Building and Safety have worked together to reduce the extent of overlap in the plan checking of life safety requirements.** This streamlining of the plan check process was accomplished in September 2012. Under the new plan for plan checking, approximately 40% of the building permits that are currently routed to the Fire Department will be plan checked for life safety only by the Department of Building and Safety; this change affects “A” occupancy building permits, tenant improvements and exterior alterations that do not affect fire life safety, and building permits for the Los Angeles International Airport, except for the main terminal. This is an outstanding example of two departments working together for the benefit of the City's customers.

These examples of positive aspects of development services provide a sound basis for further, necessary improvements.

3. THE CITY HAS BEEN STUDYING OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME WITHOUT MUCH IN THE WAY OF RESULTS.

This analysis is not the first time that the City has studied and evaluated opportunities to improve and streamline development services. The list below presents citations of the previous studies that the Matrix Consulting Group is aware of.

Study	Date of Study
Permit Streamlining and Bureaucratic Reform in the City of Los Angeles: Report and Recommendations	February 1995
Garcia Report: "Permit Streamlining and Bureaucratic Reform in the City of Los Angeles: Report and Recommendations"	March 1995
Audit on the Department of Building and Safety's Construction Services Centers (Informally Known as the "One Stop Centers")	November 2000
Evaluation of Plan Check & Inspection System for Issuing Permits and Processing Clearances	March 2001
Analysis of the Department of Building and Safety's Plan Check and Inspection System	August 2001
Performance Audit of the Department of City Planning's Case Processing Function	October 2005
12:2 Plan Phase I	July 2008
Performance Audit of the City of Los Angeles' Process for Planning Conditions for Development	March 2009
LADOT Development Reform Operational Improvements	October 2010
Comprehensive Development Reform: Specific Recommendations from the Development Community	October 2010
Development Reform Strategic Plan: Building a Better LA	July 2011

The City is making progress. It is in the process of comprehensively updating its zoning code (re:code.LA) and developing an integrated automated permitting system (*BuildLA*) to serve the needs of departments involved in the City's permitting process

However, despite all of these studies, the City's development services do not effectively serve the City, its residents and businesses, and its economic interests.

- There is a lack of citywide, end-to-end leadership and accountability for the three key development services processes – discretionary, ministerial, and public

- improvement / engineering; accountability for end-to-end process performance is largely non-existent. There is a lack of citywide, end-to-end leadership to articulate process goals and metrics, a vision for the processes, to sponsor process redesign and improvement efforts, and plan their implementation, and to ensure compliance with the redesign.
- Business processes remain convoluted; the business processes have not been designed on an end-to-end basis to optimize performance from a customer's perspective, but rather from the perspective of the individual bureau or department (e.g., the clearance process used by numerous departments that require the customer to coordinate their own permit rather than the City).
 - The *Early Retirement Incentive Program* has resulted in an important loss of knowledge in bureaus and departments that has not been fully replaced. Ongoing training, in some bureaus and departments, is lacking.
 - The bureaus and departments, particularly top and middle management, do not collaborate on an ongoing basis in citywide process redesign initiatives.
 - The levels of service provided by the City, in terms of the cycle time for its different processes, do not meet best practices. Simply put, the amount of calendar time taken by the City for its discretionary, ministerial, and public improvement / engineering processes is too long.
 - Little in the way of metrics have been established for each process e.g., cycle time for issuance of permits.
 - All of the department and bureaus assigned to development services are not co-located for the convenience of customers. For example, the Department of City Planning does not have staff assigned to the West Los Angeles construction services center. This is a problem with other departments as well.
 - The City has underinvested in the development of its regulations and their enforcement. Most of the Community Plans are out-of-date. Discretionary review conditions of approval and environmental mitigation measures are not enforced. The City's CEQA guidelines are out-of-date; the guidelines were last updated in 2002.
 - The permit information technology is archaic and fragmented with five different permit information systems for the five different bureaus and departments involved in the development services process.
 - The City appears to lack sufficient staff resources in many of these bureaus and departments to effectively respond to its development services customers. The City has experienced the same financial challenges as other cities and counties in California. The local economy is beginning to recover, however, and it does

not appear that all of the bureaus and departments involved in the development services process are appropriately staffed to deliver a responsive level of service. At the same time, many of these bureaus and departments appear unprepared to put forth intelligent and well thought out analysis and recommendations regarding the required staffing for development services.

- On the whole, the City lacks the ability to deal with peak development services workload through the use of consultants or alternative staffing approaches. (However, the Bureau of Engineering has begun to use consultants for B-permits).

What will make this study any different from the previous studies?

If the City is to improve its development services, the City must develop a specific plan of implementation for this report with specific responsibility assigned to specific managers in the development services functions for implementation including specific timelines; the Office of the City Administrative Officer must monitor and report progress in implementation to the Office of the Mayor and the City Council on a semi-annual basis; and the specific managers must be held accountable for implementation of the recommendations by the Office of the Mayor.

4. AGENDA FOR IMPROVEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES.

In developing recommendations for the improvement of the development services process, the Matrix Consulting Group was guided by a publication of the *American Planning Association* entitled *Transparent Development Services*.² The publication discusses the components that a city must address to move “from a very opaque (fragmented and unclear) experience to the most transparent experience possible (intuitive and accountable).” The six components that a city must address include the following:

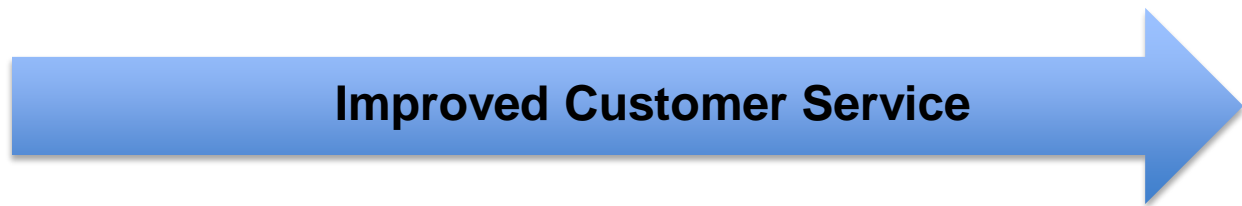
² American Planning Association, Zoning Practice, *Transparent Development Review Services*, October 2012.

- **Core Business Processes:** Are the processes in development services integrated and efficient, and do they reflect a culture that is sensitive to the customer's point of view?
- **People Interactions:** Are communication mechanisms for staff, customers, and citizens structured to share information freely, manage projects effectively, and resolve issues or conflicts as they occur (e.g., avoid late hits)?
- **Regulatory Framework:** Are the policies, codes, and support documents that drive the development services process understandable, objective, and reasonable?
- **Technology:** Does the technology available to participants provide for accurate and real-time permit information and project tracking, and do they assist in informed decision making?
- **Physical Space:** Does the physical environment for development services reflect a user-friendly, service-oriented approach for customers and citizens that interact with the process?
- **Organizational Structure:** Is the development services organization structured to be cost effective, provide appropriate resources for staff, and support a project management approach with accountability for performance?

Organizational structure is only one of the six components; Los Angeles has five other components that need to be addressed to enhance its development services.

The exhibit on the following page graphically depicts the progression that the City of Los Angeles should make to improve development services.³ The City, at the present time, is on the far left hand side of the chart. The City does not provide a development services system or process that is integrated and seamless; it provides a service that consists of silo-based services that a customer must maneuver through. It requires the customer to make several physical stops in different locations since City staff assigned to development services are not co-located. The customer is largely on their own to obtain clearances, to resolve inter-departmental disputes, and to manage the process.

³ American Planning Association, Zoning Practice, *Transparent Development Review Services*, October 2012.



Silo Based
Services



Co-Located
Services



Integrated and
Seamless
Services

Multiple Locations and Permitting	Key Department Adjacencies	Reorganization with Separate Discipline Counters	One-Stop and Expanded Coordination	Service-Based and Project Oriented Processing
Several physical customer stops	Less physical service locations	Multiple disciplines under a single General Manager	Most or all departments co-located for the customer	Management accountability and monitoring of system performance
Multiple permits issued by multiple departments with no clear entry point into the process	Some outlying bureaus and departments such as Department of Water and Power	Multiple counters by discipline (e.g., Building and Safety, Planning, Engineering, etc.)	Use of case managers as single point of contact for the customer	Critical staff in one place for walk-in customers
Customer on their own to solve interdepartmental disputes and manage the process	Improved coordination and communication	Improved coordination and problem solving	Improved coordination on individual applications, but still sequential handoffs	Seamless project processing using a parallel process
	Fragmented technology tools	More common technology tools	Common technology tools (e.g., BuildLA)	Single point of contact with issue resolution authority
				Assigned project team members
				Performance measurement program for accountability

The City should progress to the right of the chart. The City should have most or all of the departments co-located for customer service. The City should use case managers as a single point of contact for the customer with the case managers empowered with inter-departmental problem resolution authority. The City should, as planned, have a single permit technology platform (*BuildLA*). The City should have executive management accountability (process owners) for meeting cycle time metrics, using *BuildLA* to report actual cycle time performance against these metrics. The City should utilize a seamless project process with permits processed in parallel, and not sequentially.

This report itself contains over 320 recommendations. It is important for the City, as it begins to implement the recommendations in this report, not to get lost in the volume and number of recommendations, but to focus on the essential themes for improvement. These themes are presented below. Additional details regarding these themes are contained within the body of the report.

(1) Technology for Development Services

Technology is one of the essential building blocks for responsive development services. The technology that must be deployed for development services includes one common automated permit system to let everyone communicate (the City's departments involved in the permit process, the applicant and his / her architects and engineers, the neighborhoods where the proposed project will be constructed, etc.), accurate and real-time access to information, and an effective web site for on-line permitting and early assistance.

At the present time, the City of Los Angeles does not have a citywide permit information system, it has multiple permit information systems: generally one for every department involved in the City's permitting processes, none of which "talk" to each other.

The City of Los Angeles is in the process of developing a citywide permitting information system to serve the needs of all of the departments involved in the City's permitting process (*BuildLA*). This technology is essential to the delivery of improved development services for a number of reasons as noted below.⁴

- **Departments operate and manage review processes only within their own walls (or "silos"), with no view to processes in other departments.** Because a development project frequently requires review by multiple departments, the applicant is left to determine which processes are necessary and manage these processes themselves across departments. The City's technology does not facilitate the City's ability to manage these processes on behalf of the applicant.
- **The permit system relies in part (or, in some cases, entirely) manual and paper-based systems.** While most departments have an automated permit information system to log and track projects, nearly all permit applications are submitted and reviewed on paper. Overall, there are not any end-to-end workflow systems for managing permits, although some aspects have been better automated than others (e.g., Department of Building and Safety, Bureau of Engineering).
- **Lack of interdepartmental permit coordination.** Because departments operate within siloes, permit processes are not coordinated across departments. The City's technology does not enable the management of permit processes across departmental boundaries with the exception of PCIS.
- **An opaque permit process.** Paper-based and "siloe," permit processes create a development services environment with little to no transparency. After submitting their applications, it is difficult for applicants to determine who in the City is reviewing their project, the status of the review process, and how long the process will take. This lack of a citywide permit information system contributes to the unpredictability of the review process.
- **Absence of Citywide performance measurement and monitoring.** The

⁴ City of Los Angeles, Request for Proposals for a Comprehensive Technology Solution for Development Services (*BuildLA*), June 2013

absence of a citywide permit information system makes it impossible to establish, measure, and monitor performance metrics for permit processing. Absent metrics, it is difficult to identify process bottlenecks, assess the effectiveness of process changes, estimate case processing time, and allocate resources appropriately.

The City of Los Angeles needs to acquire and deploy a citywide automated permit information system – *BuildLA*. It will not be cheap, but it is worth the price.

However, there are a number of steps that the City should take to ensure its effective deployment and use. These steps are presented below.

- The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Department of Building and Safety, and Fire Department to review the Use Cases, as contained in the Request for Proposals for *BuildLA*, and ensure that the functional requirements are adequately defined before software development for *BuildLA* commences.
- The Office of the Mayor should continue to act as executive sponsor for *BuildLA*.
- The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop a formal, written governance agreement for *BuildLA* for the review and approval of the Office of the Mayor and each of the participating departments and bureaus.
- The City of Los Angeles should select and dedicate a full-time project manager to *BuildLA* for the life of the project. The *BuildLA* project manager should be an employee of the Department of Building and Safety.
- The Executive Sponsor and the Governance Committee should take steps, in the short-term, to address the shortcomings in the project concept and solution definition phase of *BuildLA* as noted within this report.
- The City of Los Angeles should establish a customer advisory committee for *BuildLA*. The *BuildLA* customer advisory committee should consist of individuals representing architects, developers, engineers, permit / land use consultants, contractors, neighborhood representatives / councils, and trades. The role of the *BuildLA* customer advisory committee should be to provide the customers' perspective in the development and implementation of *BuildLA*.
- All of the departments involved in the City's development services should be required, via a policy and procedure developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer, to utilize the *BuildLA* information system for all aspects of the permit process, including entitlement, ministerial, and public improvement processes.

It will require approximately three years to deploy *BuildLA* from the date of the award of the contract. There are two short-term measures that the City should take to enhance the customer's technology experience with the City in advance of the full deployment of *BuildLA*.

First, the City should acquire and deploy electronic building permit plan checking. This would eliminate the chore of lugging multiple rolls of paper and stacks of construction blueprints to the City's construction service centers.

Second, the City should, in the interim, integrate the five different permitting information systems in the five different departments by developing the *BuildLA* Portal, earlier and outside the *BuildLA* project. The *BuildLA* Portal is needed to successfully implement BuildLA, so this would not be a wasted effort. Additionally, building the foundation of the *BuildLA* Portal will be the first effort in providing a virtual integration of development services.

(2) Co-Location of Development Services

The overarching intent of the co-location of development services is to meet the following goals:

- Improve City efficiency by using the City's office space more efficiently;
- Improve the City's ability to provide consistent levels of service to all of its constituents by providing consistent types of services at each construction service center (building and safety, planning, engineering, fire, transportation);
- Locate staff so that they can be more conveniently accessed by the public rather than having to travel downtown or to multiple locations;
- Co-locate like-types of services to achieve economies-of-scale (e.g., one cashier to serve all of the co-located departments in the construction service center); and



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- Leverage the use of existing sites and facilities where logical e.g., service centers that are underutilized and have vacant space (e.g., 201 North Figueroa Street).

The question that needs to be asked is whether the existing physical environment provided by the City for permit applicants reflects a user- friendly, service-oriented flow in light of these goals? The answer is “no.”

The City of Los Angeles has established a number of construction service centers. These centers, and the departments located in these centers, are presented in the table below.

Location of construction services center	Department Located At Construction Services Center?				
	Department of Building and Safety	Department of City Planning	Department of Transportation	Bureau of Engineering	Fire Department
Van Nuys - 6262 Van Nuys Blvd	Yes, Room 251	Yes, Room 251	Yes, Room 320	Yes, Room 251	No
Downtown (Metro) - 201 North Figueroa St.	Yes, 1st Floor - Express Permits, 4th Floor – Counter Plan Check	Yes, for counter services, but the Neighborhood Projects staff are located at City Hall	Yes for counter services, but traffic mitigation impact study staff and B-permit staff are located at 100 S. Main Street, 9 th floor.	Yes, for B-Permits (3 rd floor) and Planning Referrals (2 nd floor)	Yes
West Los Angeles - 1828 Sawtelle Blvd.	Yes, on the 2 nd floor, but it does not include mechanical or electrical plan check	No	No	Yes, 3 rd floor	No (But it does have office hours)
San Pedro - 638 S. Beacon St.	Yes, on the 2 nd floor, but not mechanical or electrical plan check	No	Yes, on the 2 nd floor	Yes, on the 4th floor	No
South Los Angeles - 8475 S. Vermont Ave.	Yes, 2 nd floor, but not mechanical or electrical plan check	No	No	No	No

As the table indicates, the City does not have a full functioning construction services center in which all of the primary development services participants - Building and Safety, City Planning, Transportation, Engineering, and Fire – are co-located in the same center. The construction services center in Van Nuys would be a full functioning construction service center with the participation of the Fire Department. The downtown or Metro construction services center would be a full functioning construction service center with the participation of the Neighborhood Projects staff from the Department of City Planning and the traffic mitigation impact staff and B-permit staff from the Department of Transportation. The West Los Angeles construction service center would be a full functioning center with the participation of the Department of City Planning and the Fire Department.

The City should take a number of steps to fix this problem as noted below.

- The Metro Development Review Section for the Department of Transportation should be co-located with other development services functions at 201 North Figueroa Street (downtown).
- The West Los Angeles Development Review Section for the Department of Transportation should be co-located with other development services functions at 1828 Sawtelle Boulevard.
- The staff assigned by the Department of Transportation to B-Permit plan check should be co-located with other development services functions at 201 North Figueroa Street (downtown).
- The Department of City Planning staff responsible for discretionary review in Metro, currently located at City Hall, should be re-located to the Metro construction service center at 201 North Figueroa Street. There is sufficient vacant space for these staff.
- The Department of City Planning should assign development services staff to the West Los Angeles construction service center at 1828 Sawtelle Boulevard with responsibility for discretionary review for West Los Angeles.
- Rather than assign specialists for regular plan check (Electrical Engineering

Associates and Mechanical Engineering Associates) for the larger construction projects to the West Los Angeles, South Los Angeles and the San Pedro construction services centers, the Department of Building and Safety should utilize electrical plan check technology, as recommended in this report, to provide electrical plan check and mechanical plan check services over the Internet, so that applicants don't have to visit a construction service center at all. The entire plan check experience for regular plan check could occur over the Internet.

- The West Los Angeles, South Los Angeles and the San Pedro construction services centers should continue to provide plan check staff for express and counter plan check using generalists (Structural Engineering Associates) for structural, electrical, and mechanical plan check for smaller construction projects.
- The Office of the City Administrative Officer should evaluate whether sufficient workload exists to warrant the assignment of staff by the Department of City Planning and the Fire Department to the San Pedro and the South Los Angeles construction service centers, and the assignment of staff by the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Engineering to the South Los Angeles construction services center.
- The Department of Building and Safety should be assigned responsibility to act on behalf of the Department of City Planning and the Fire Department at the San Pedro and the South Los Angeles construction service centers, the Fire Department to the West Los Angeles construction service center, and the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Engineering at the South Los Angeles construction service centers to accept permit applications for applicants on behalf of these departments, rather than require the applicants to travel to full construction service centers at Metro, West Los Angeles, or Van Nuys.
- The Fire Department should assign development services staff to the Van Nuys construction services center, each and every business day for the entire business day to provide a full-range of fire plan check services.
- The Office of the City Administrative Officer should evaluate the costs and the benefits of expanding the office hours from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm to 7:30 am to 5:30 pm at construction service centers. This should initially be "piloted" at just one construction service center to gauge the reaction, and then, if successful, expanded to other construction services centers with high applicant volume.

Construction service centers that provide a full range of development services are not a new concept. These centers have been used successfully in a number of other large cities such as Phoenix, Arizona; San Jose, California; Portland, Oregon; and San Diego, California. It is time to deploy full functioning construction service centers in

Los Angeles.

(3) Business Processes Used for Development Services

PricewaterhouseCoopers developed a model, with the cooperation of the American Institute of Architects, to document the increase in local economic development activity and government tax revenues through more efficient development services permit processes.⁵ The specific findings of the application of this model are summarized as follows:

- Prompt permitting cycles will encourage economic development;
- Permitting delays raise tenant costs both in new buildings and existing buildings;
- With competition between jurisdictions for new development dollars, more efficient permit processes can attract investment from other areas;
- Accelerating permit processes can permanently increase local government revenues;
- Increased construction spending provides broader economic benefits; and
- Because of the economic importance of investment in structures, even modest efficiency gains in permitting processes can have large impacts.

The business processes used by the City of Los Angeles for processing of its permits are unnecessarily convoluted, slow, and inefficient. These processes unnecessarily impede the economic development of the City.

The Matrix Consulting Group identified a number of opportunities to enhance the efficiency of the permit processes utilized by the City. These opportunities are summarized below.

- **The City should designate responsibility – at the executive level – for ownership of the discretionary review process, the building permit process, and the engineering permit process – as these processes cross**

⁵ PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Economic Development of Accelerating Permit Processes on Local Development and Government Revenues, December 2005

departmental boundaries. This process owner should be a City executive (e.g., a General Manager) with end-to-end responsibility for one of these three processes (discretionary review, building permit, public or engineering permit) across departmental boundaries. These executives must have authority and responsibility for the design and redesign of these processes, the management of these processes across departmental boundaries, and the development of metrics and measurement systems to assess the success of these processes in serving the customer. The process owners are supposed to be highly placed, respected, and connected to make things happen. This would require three “process owners” – one for each of these three processes.

- **The General Manager of the Department of Building and Safety should be held accountable for streamlining the building permit processes.** Examples of opportunities to reengineer the building permit plan check processes include eliminating the clearance process through electronic building permit plan submission, review, and tracking; issuing solar photovoltaic permits over the Internet for systems under 4 kW; establishing a cashier station in the express permit center at the Metro construction service center so that the customer does not have to leave the express permit center on the 1st floor and proceed to the 4th floor to pay for the permit; reducing the number of counter stations that a counter plan check customer must visit to obtain a building permit; consolidating the responsibility for structural plan check, green code plan check, and disabled access plan check; etc.
- **The City Engineer should be held accountable for streamlining the engineering permit processes.** Examples of opportunities to reengineer the permit processes used by the Bureau of Engineering include, for example, the streamlining of the B-permit fee and deposit calculation process, and the Department of City Planning referral process used by the Bureau of Engineering to enable reallocation of sorely needed professional engineering staff to the Bureau’s District offices (this recommendation requires the deployment of *BuildLA*).
- **The General Manager of the Department of City Planning should be held accountable for streamlining the discretionary review process.** Examples of opportunities to reengineer the discretionary permit process include not requiring the applicant for a tentative parcel and tract map application to obtain preliminary information and approval from the Department of Building and Safety or the Bureau of Engineering prior to submittal of their application to the Department of City Planning; utilizing a process designed to inform an applicant at the time of submittal of a tentative parcel and tract map application and of a zoning administrator application when the application will be heard by the Advisory Agency or by the Zoning Administrator; not placing a Tentative Parcel and Tract Map application, Zoning Administrator application, or Neighborhood Project application on “hold” during the Initial Study and preparation of environmental documents, but processing the application and the Initial Study in parallel; etc.

- **The City should establish metrics for permit processing and discretionary review for each Department.** For example, metrics for the Department of City Planning for the discretionary review of tentative parcel maps should be 60 calendar days from the date the application is deemed complete, regardless of “holds” placed by the Department. For example, the metric for plan checking of B – permits should be 30 calendar days for 1st plan check, 20 calendar days for 2nd plan check, and 10 days for 3rd plan check. For example, the metric for plan checking of regular building permit plans should be 30 calendar days for 1st plan check, 20 calendar days for 2nd plan check, and 10 days for 3rd plan check.
- **The City should utilize case managers to manage permit processing and discretionary review on behalf of the applicant.** This is not pre-entitlement case processing, also known as case management in the Department of Building and Safety. This is assigning responsibility to a City employee (e.g., City Planning Associate, Structural Engineering Associate, etc.) for managing the permit process or discretionary review process to assure that the process – on a citywide basis – is timely, predictable, and coordinated. The case manager would manage the permit process or discretionary review process including the various disciplines (fire, engineering, planning, transportation, etc.), set cycle time metrics for the review of the permit or the discretionary review by this multi-disciplinary team (based upon cycle time metrics adopted by the City), and hold the multi-disciplinary team accountable for meeting those metrics using *BuildLA*. The case manager would be someone the applicant can always contact in the City to find out the progress in processing their permit or discretionary review, to ensure disputes regarding codes and regulations are settled, and to keep the permit process or discretionary review on a predictable schedule. And, up-front in the permit process or discretionary review, the case manager should give the applicant a road map of all the reviews the application will need.

The City has a complex set of regulations governing land use and development of private property, in addition to many State and Federal regulations. The departments assigned responsibility for development services are charged with implementing those regulations in reviewing, approving, and inspecting private development activity. The efficiency, cost, timeliness and quality of these services have a major impact on the business environment in Los Angeles and the quality of life of its citizens. Processes need to be continuously improved to reduce costs and increase predictability, while balancing the needs of the community (health, life, safety, economic prosperity, and

quality of life) with the rights of the property owner (reasonable expectation of the outcome of the review process).

(4) Regulatory Framework for Development Services

In evaluating the regulatory framework, the Matrix Consulting Group focused on whether the policies and codes that drive the discretionary review and building permit process are understandable, objective, and reasonable, and are they enforced?

The City of Los Angeles is addressing an important part of the regulatory framework. The City has already begun updating its zoning code.

Other measures should be taken, however.

- **The urban design practices of the Department of City Planning should be enhanced.** For example, the City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should provide classroom training in design review to the staff of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning on a semi-annual basis, and utilize major development projects as “learning opportunities” for staff in the application of the City’s design guidelines. The case planners within the Department of City Planning should conduct field inspections to verify compliance with the design review conditions of approval for discretionary review projects prior to the final building inspection and / or to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
- **The Department of City Planning should continue to update Community Plans based upon the ten-year cycle presented to the City Council in January 2008.** Most of the City’s Community Plans are obsolete, exceeding ten years of age. The median age of the City’s Community Plans is almost fifteen years. The Matrix Consulting Group recommends a “shelf life” of no more than ten years for Community Plans. The Policy Planning Bureau, Department of City Planning is not staffed to deliver on the commitment made in January 2008; additional staff will be required, not only to update the Community Plans on a ten-year cycle, but also to implement the Community Plans. The Hollywood Community Plan, for example, has twenty-four different “action items” within its Implementation Program (e.g., create design guidelines including a possible streetscape plan for commercial uses along Melrose Avenue between Highland and Orlando Avenues, inclusive of Melrose Place, to maintain and improve the pedestrian-oriented scale and character).
- **The Department of City Planning should enhance its administration of CEQA.** In any one year, the Department will process 300 to 350 mitigated

negative declarations. Given the volume of environmental documents, it is critical that the Department continue to enhance its administration of CEQA. For example, the Department of City Planning should update the CEQA guidelines utilized by the Department; the City should require that the applicant for discretionary review select a consultant of the applicant's choice, from a list of City-qualified consultants, to prepare an Environmental Impact Report or Traffic Mitigation Impact Study. The Department of City Planning should ensure that its planners receive CEQA training on an annual basis. The Department of City Planning should implement a CEQA monitoring or reporting program for mitigation measures associated with mitigated negative declarations or environmental impact reports, assigning this responsibility to its case planners.

- **The City should enhance the enforcement of its zoning regulations.** There are a number of signs of distress in the City's ability to effectively enforce its zoning regulations.
 - The Code Enforcement Bureau, for fiscal year 2013, made its initial site visit to the location of the code enforcement complaint within 30 calendar days for 69% of the complaints. The Bureau should be making the initial site visits within 7 calendar days for 85% of the complaints.
 - The Code Enforcement Bureau, for fiscal year 2013, closed an average of 79% of the cases in 90 calendar days for cases that were closed with voluntary compliance. The Bureau should be closing cases with voluntary compliance within 30 calendar days for 85% of the complaints.
 - With the exception of the proactive code enforcement delivered in low to moderate-income neighborhoods funded via Community Development Block Grants, the Bureau is not providing proactive code enforcement.
 - In the 12-month period from July 2012 to June 2013, the number of open cases increased by 10.3%. This is an indication that the existing level of staffing is outmatched by its workload.
 - The median caseload for each the code enforcement officer that provides reactive code enforcement services amounts to 337 cases. The Matrix Consulting Group uses a metric that no more than 60 active cases should be open per code enforcement officer at any one time, on average.
 - The Department of City Planning, this fiscal year, established a Code Compliance Unit. The Code Compliance Unit is responsible for identifying and addressing properties that have received entitlement permits, but are violating conditions of the entitlement subsequent to the issuance of the permit. The Department of Building and Safety is also enforcing conditions of approval for entitlement permits, subsequent to the issuance of the permit. This is an unnecessary duplication.

These unacceptable levels of service are the outcome of significant reductions in the authorized positions for the Bureau. Overall, considering the transfer of the Local Enforcement Agency to the Bureau in fiscal year 2011, the number of authorized positions for the Bureau has decreased by 67 positions or 38%.

The City of Los Angeles should restore the number of authorized positions to the Code Enforcement Bureau that existed in fiscal year 2009. This would require an increase of 60 code enforcement officers. In the short-term, the span of control of supervisors in the Bureau should be broadened, through attrition, and the management layers reduced, through attrition. The cost reductions resulting from streamlining the plan of organization should be reallocated to increasing the number of code enforcement officers for the Bureau.

The Bureau should be responsible for enforcement of conditions of approval for all of the City's Conditional Use Permits, after the issuance of the permit. (The Department of City Planning should verify that all conditions have been complied with prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for new construction or the issuance of the Conditional Use Permit). The City should adopt a fee to recover the costs associated with the monitoring of compliance. The Bureau will require additional staff to provide this new service.

(5) The Employees in the City's Development Services

In our experience, the City's employees in its development service functions will be the key to the successful transformation of development services. A new strategy for development services, imposed from above, will be at odds with the ingrained practices and culture and likely fail.

The success of this transformation requires that the concerns of the employees be identified and incorporated from the start, and revisited again and again throughout the implementation process. This will require five steps.⁶

- **First, the City should spell out the impact of the change on the employees in its development service functions.** This includes a discussion with employees of how the transformation is personally impacting them and what it means for them personally (e.g., changes in roles and responsibilities, skills and knowledge, performance expectations, customer centric behavior, etc.).

⁶ Booz and Company, Making It Stick: Delivering Sustainable Organizational Change, 2006

- **Second, the City should build a case for the transformation for employees and transmit that message.** It is easy to build a rational case for the transformation; the more difficult task is making a “gut” connection with employees. This requires that the development services leadership team identify what the change means for the employees personally, not only why it benefits the City. This includes a discussion of why are we changing, what is changing and what is staying the same, and what are the benefits to the City and to the employees themselves.
- **Third, the executive and middle managers need to role model the transformation.** The City and its development services leadership team must lead (not impose) this transformation. Leading the change means that the General Managers, departmental executives and middle managers must not only “lead” the transformation, but also be “in front,” modeling the new behaviors they are asking of their employees. This means that the General Managers, departmental executives and middle managers must lead, with their behaviors and actions, the transformation of business processes, the co-location of staff, the enhancement of the regulatory framework, etc. It is critical that the Office of the Mayor communicate the desired behaviors to the development services leadership team and holds that leadership team accountable for those behaviors.
- **Fourth, the City should use inter-departmental teams of employees to implement the recommendations.** Most transformations are done “to” employees, not “with” them or “by” them. While the development services leadership team can push transformation from the top, employee’s not involved in the transformation will likely dig in their heels. To counteract this tendency, the City should involve employees in the implementation.
- **Fifth, the City needs to embed the transformation through metrics.** Too often, cities declare victory in transformations too soon, To embed the transformation and ensure that it sticks, the City will want to articulate the expected metrics and hold the managers and supervisors of the development services functions responsible for meeting these metrics, to measure the expected results of the transformation (e.g., cycle time for permits) using *BuildLA*, to utilize inter-departmental teams to implement streamlines business practices, etc. This is not a one-time effort. It needs to be an ongoing effort.

Because deeply embedded cultures change slowly over time, working with the employees of the development service functions is the best approach for the success of the transformation.

(6) Organizational Structure of Development Services

Changes in the organizational structure for development services will not solve the challenges previously cited. Even if the City functionally transferred development service functions to a new department tomorrow, there would remain a lot of hard work to transform the City's development services process after that transfer

However, the City's approach to organizing its development services is part of the problem. The City has organized development services in a multiple number of independent "silos" each with its own General Manager. The City's "silo" approach to organizing development services has a number of drawbacks including:

- Managers avoid taking responsibility for mistakes and problems with service delivery of development services as a whole since it's "not my responsibility";
- Managers do not understand the perspectives and technical work language used by their peers in other development services units;
- There is only a minimal sense of belonging to the larger development services entity representing the City as a whole and its mission;
- Managers and employees in development services units only take care of themselves, focus on their own objectives and are less concerned with how this impacts other development service units or the entire City organization;
- Effective communication and coordination between development services units is lacking;
- There is resistance to change since there may be no real evidence that direct or indirect benefits will flow to the specific development services unit e.g., it may improve service, but it is just more work for me; and
- Opportunities for improving development services business processes on an end-to-end basis are simply overlooked since It's not within their operational focus to consider processes as a whole.

The City should functionally transfer development services to a new Department; just not now. The City is not ready for the functional transfer. A lot of work remains

before the City is ready. This includes *BuildLA*. This includes co-location of development services at the City's construction service centers. This includes enhancing the efficiency of the permit and discretionary review processes utilized by the City. This includes enhancing the City's regulatory framework. This includes working with employees in these development service functions to develop and implement new strategies for service delivery of development services, and getting employees used to working with each other across existing departmental boundaries in advance of the functional transfer.

However, other organizational changes should be made and made now. The Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should move from a mix of functionally and geographically based functions to three geographically based functions - West Los Angeles, Valley, and Metro. There are a number of advantages to geographically based teams as noted below.

- The planners have a better understanding of the neighborhoods they serve, and a better grasp of how to analyze the application in the context of those neighborhoods. As the department's 2010-11 strategic plan stated, the use of geographically based teams will help the planners look at the "big picture of how individual issues, projects and decisions affect the neighborhood as a whole. These teams will help ensure that planners stay up-to-date on neighborhood issues and maintain a local context for the projects they are reviewing."
- Grouping planners by geographically based teams encourages the formation of strong, collaborative teams in the Department that are engaged in the land use planning and decision-making regarding their geographical area.
- Customers and residents of the neighborhoods feel more at ease when speaking with planners who fully understand their neighborhoods.
- The geographically based teams develop planners with deeper cross-functional skills, who can process all types of discretionary review applications, and have better promotional opportunities as a result.
- The use of geographically based teams enables the Department to better respond to fluctuations in workload by case type since planners can be assigned

any type of case, and not just tentative parcel or tract maps or Zoning Administrator cases.

The Department of City Planning should assign the staff in the Development Services Bureau geographically. The staff assigned to the Subdivision Section and the Zoning Administrator Section should be reassigned to the Metro and Valley offices, and utilized to staff a new West Los Angeles office.

* * * * *

The following table presents a summary of the recommendations contained within this report. In developing the timing for implementation, the Matrix Consulting Group was guided by (1) a philosophy that most of the recommendations should be implemented by the end of calendar year (CY) 2015; and (2) that recommendations that can be more easily implemented should be implemented earlier (quick victories). The schedule for implementation is ambitious.

Before the City begins implementing this study, we suggest that it take the following actions:

Recommendation #1: The analysis of the impact of the opportunities to improve development services should be distributed to the appropriate executives, managers and supervisors in the affected departments for review and input.

Recommendation #2: The Office of the City Administrative Officer should review the proposed plan of implementation and the summary of recommendations in this report with these executives, managers and supervisors, modify the plan of implementation as appropriate, and submit the revised plan of implementation to the Office of the Mayor and the City Council.

Recommendation #3: After acceptance of the report and the implementation plan by the Office of the Mayor and the City Council, a semi-annual status report outlining implementation progress should be provided to the Office of the Mayor and the City Council by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.

Summary of Recommendations

Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
Chapter 1 - Introduction and Executive Summary					
1	The analysis of the impact of the opportunities to improve development services should be distributed to the appropriate executives, managers and supervisors in the affected departments for review and input.	27	Office of the CAO	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
2	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should review the proposed plan of implementation and the summary of recommendations in this report with these executives, managers and supervisors, modify the plan of implementation as appropriate, and submit the revised plan of implementation to the Office of the Mayor and the City Council.	27	Office of the CAO	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
3	After acceptance of the report and the implementation plan by the Office of the Mayor and the City Council, a semi-annual status report outlining implementation progress should be provided to the Office of the Mayor and the City Council by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.	27	Office of the CAO	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
Chapter 4 - Analysis of the Development Reform Strategic Plan					
4	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should be assigned responsibility for the reporting of the status of implementation of the recommendations within the <i>Development Reform Strategic Plan</i> to the Office of the Mayor and to the City Council every six months.	142	Office of the CAO	2 nd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
5	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should prepare and submit the first status report on June 2, 2014.	142	Office of the CAO	2 nd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
Chapter 5 - Analysis of Development Services Technology					
6	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Department of Building and Safety, and Fire Department to review the Use Cases as proposed in the Request for Proposals for <i>BuildLA</i> and ensure that the functional requirements are adequately defined before software development for <i>BuildLA</i> commences.	182	Office of the CAO	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
7	The Office of the Mayor should continue to act as executive sponsor for <i>BuildLA</i> .	183	Office of the Mayor	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
8	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop a formal, written governance agreement for <i>BuildLA</i> for the review and approval of the Office of the Mayor and each of the participating bureaus and departments.	185	Office of the CAO	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
9	The Office of the Mayor, Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Department of Building and Safety, and Fire Department should adopt the formal, written governance agreement for <i>BuildLA</i> , as developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer, after review and modification of the agreement as necessary.	185	Office of the Mayor	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
10	The City of Los Angeles should select and dedicate a full-time project manager to <i>BuildLA</i> for the life of the project.	191	Office of the Mayor	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	\$ / Staff
11	The <i>BuildLA</i> project manager should be an employee of the Department of Building and Safety.	191	Office of the Mayor	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
12	The Executive Sponsor and the Governance Committee should take steps, in the near-term, to address the shortcomings in the project concept and solution definition phase of <i>BuildLA</i> as noted within this report.	192	Office of the Mayor	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	\$
13	The Executive Sponsor and the Governance Committee should utilize the best practices developed by the Office of the City Auditor of Portland, Oregon as a guide to assure the success of <i>BuildLA</i> .	192	Office of the Mayor	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
14	The City of Los Angeles should establish a customer advisory committee for <i>BuildLA</i> .	195	Office of the Mayor	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
15	The <i>BuildLA</i> customer advisory committee should consist of individuals representing architects, developers, engineers, permit / land use consultants, contractors, neighborhood representatives / councils, and trades.	195	Office of the Mayor	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
16	The role of the <i>BuildLA</i> customer advisory committee should be to provide the customers' perspective in the development and implementation of <i>BuildLA</i> .	195	Office of the Mayor	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
17	The City should integrate the existing automated permit information systems in advance of the <i>BuildLA</i> "Go Live" through the development of the <i>BuildLA</i> portal.	200	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2015	\$
18	The Department of Building and Safety should be assigned lead responsibility for integrating the existing automated permit information systems using the <i>BuildLA</i> portal.	200	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
19	The City should acquire software to enable electronic submittal and plan check of building permit plans, Bureau of Engineering public improvement plans (e.g., B-permits), and discretionary review submittals.	205	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	\$
20	The City should work with and train its customers in how to submit building permit plans, Bureau of Engineering public improvement plans (e.g., B-permits), and discretionary review submittals plans electronically.	205	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
21	The City will need to train its staff in how to plan check plans electronically. This should include training for the City's system administrator from the Department of Building and Safety, training for plan check staff in how to utilize the software for plan checking, workflow training for the staff, etc.	205	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
22	The City should develop written guides for electronic plan submission, published on-line on the City's web site, regarding the requirements for electronic plan check building permit submittals.	205	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
23	The City should provide a single web site portal for all development-related permits.	207	DBS	3 rd Qtr. CY 2016	\$

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
24	The City should provide a link to the development services web site portal on the City's home page.	207	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
25	Once the City deploys <i>BuildLA</i> to replace its legacy permit information systems, applicants should be able to navigate to this one (1) web site portal for development services and pay application fees on-line, check the status of their permits on-line, view plan check comments made by staff, schedule or cancel inspections, check the results of inspections, apply for simple permits on-line, electronic plan submission, review, and tracking, automated e-mail notification so that applicants can receive automatic e-mail notifications of plan review or inspection activity etc.	207	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2016	\$
26	The one (1) web site portal for development services should include a dedicated web page for business that includes resources for starting a business, obtaining / renewing a business license, streamlined permit assistance (e.g., over-the-counter plan check), a link to the City's Economic Development Division with up-to-date information on available commercial and industrial land and buildings in the City, utility business incentive programs (e.g., solar energy program, energy audits, etc.), etc.	208	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
27	The one (1) web site portal for development services should also include streamed information regarding wait times for the construction service centers.	208	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
28	The Department of City Planning should expand the extent of scanning of its case files, and immediately begin scanning all of the case files that it receives going forward.	209	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2016	\$
29	The Department of City Planning should charge a surcharge on discretionary review fees to support the scanning of case files.	209	DCP	3rd Qtr. 2014	\$
30	The Department of Building and Safety should provide public access to all building records over the Internet with the exception of blueprints.	210	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	\$
Chapter 6 - Analysis of Discretionary Review Functions and Processes					
31	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit copies of all prior building permits and existing / related entitlements associated with the discretionary review application.	230	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
32	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a list of all Q conditions and D limitations for the proposed project site, and a copy of the zoning ordinance establishing these conditions and limitations.	230	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
33	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a copy of the appropriate County Assessor's map, City Clerk district map, or ZIMAS map for the project site.	230	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
34	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a completed copy of the design guidelines checklist.	230	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
35	With the exception of conditional use permits and variances, the discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit findings and justifications.	230	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
36	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a copy of building permits and certificates of occupancy for non-conforming rights.	230	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
37	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a copy of an Order to Comply issued by the Department of Building and Safety or the Department of Housing and Community Investment.	230	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
38	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit an envelope containing duplicate files of all materials for Council District 11 and Council District 12 offices, for those proposed applications located within those Districts. This information should be provided electronically to Council District 11 and Council District 12 offices.	230	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
39	The applicant for a tentative parcel or tract map should not be required to obtain preliminary information and approval from the Department of Building and Safety prior to submitting an application. The applicant should be able to submit the tentative parcel and tract map application to the Department of City Planning initially, and then have the application routed to the Grading Section, Department of Building and Safety by the Department of City Planning.	232	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
40	The Department of Building and Safety should clarify, as part of the tentative parcel and tract map application guide, when a soils report is typically required so that an applicant can have the soils report prepared before submittal of the application.	233	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
41	The applicant for a tentative parcel or tract map should not be required to complete and obtain approval of a <i>Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form</i> prior to submittal of the application. Instead, at the time of submittal, the staff from the Department of City Planning should determine whether the <i>Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form</i> is necessary. If it is necessary, the fee should be collected on behalf of the Bureau of Engineering at the time of submittal of the application, and the applicant should complete the <i>Planning Case Referral Form</i> while submitting the tentative parcel or tract map application. The Department of City Planning should then route the <i>Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form</i> to the Bureau of Engineering with the tentative parcel or tract map application packet.	233	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
42	The applicant for a tentative parcel or tract map should not be required to complete a <i>Community Plan Referral Form</i> for a project site in a specific plan or overlay zone or an area that requires Design Review Board approval. At the time of submittal, the staff from the Department of City Planning should determine whether the <i>Community Plan Referral Form</i> is necessary, have the applicant complete the form while submitting the application, and then route the form to the appropriate staff in the Department of City Planning with the tentative parcel or tract map application packet.	233	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
43	The Department of City Planning should electronically route discretionary review applications and associated application material to other City departments for review, as necessary, using an electronic plan check process. The implementation of this recommendation should be based upon the deployment of an electronic plan submission, plan check, and workflow on a citywide basis, as recommended previously. The Department of City Planning should develop instructions for electronic submittal of discretionary review applications and associated application material, and train their customers, architects, engineers, etc. on the process for electronic submittal.	234	DCP	4th Qtr. 2016	N / A
44	If other departments, in using the City's <i>Initial Study Assessment Guidelines</i> and <i>Initial Study Checklists</i> , have questions regarding the discretionary review application and its environmental impacts, those questions should be directed to the case planner in the Department of City Planning, who should collect these questions from these departments, contact the applicant, and obtain answers for these other departments.	235	DCP	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
45	The applicant for discretionary review applications should not work directly with other departments to conduct the Initial Study analysis of environmental issues to these other department's satisfaction. That should be the role of the case planner in the Department of City Planning.	235	DCP	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
46	The Department of City Planning should not place a discretionary review application on "hold", if an Initial Study is required.	237	DCP	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
47	The only time a discretionary review application should be placed on "hold" by the Department of City Planning should be when the discretionary review application is deemed incomplete from a <i>Permit Streamlining Act</i> perspective. This should be clarified in a departmental policy and procedure.	237	DCP	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
48	The environmental review process by the Department of City Planning should occur at the same time and in parallel with all other aspects of the discretionary review application review (with the exception of the environmental impact report). The Department of City Planning staff review of the discretionary review application for conformance with development regulations and policies should often be finished prior to the completion of the environmental document (with the exception of the environmental impact report). Public hearings to make decisions on projects should often be held soon after the environmental document has been finalized.	237	DCP	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
49	The parallel processing of the environmental review and the discretionary review should be utilized as an opportunity to eliminate duplication of public noticing in which the environmental review is provided a public notice and then, subsequently, the discretionary review application is noticed later and separately. If the environmental review process occurs at the same time and in parallel with all other aspects of discretionary review application review, then one public notice of the environmental review and the discretionary review could be provided at the same time.	237	DCP	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
50	The Department of City Planning should expand the use and application of the "slight modification" process into such areas as fence height, lot area regulations and parking, residential floor area, minor expansions of nonconforming uses, etc.	238	DCP	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
51	The Department of City Planning should have the ability to approve or disapprove slight modifications over-the-counter at the construction service centers with additional over-the-counter clearance, as appropriate, by the Fire Department, Bureau of Engineering, and the Department of Building and Safety, but also to refer these applications to a public hearing based upon the content and nature of the modification. These over-the-counter clearances should be provided at the construction services centers.	239	DCP	2nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
52	The expansion of the slight modification authority for the Department of City Planning should be accompanied by the development of checklists and application guides.	239	DCP	2nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
53	With the concurrence of the Board of Public Works, the consideration of requests for removal of street trees should be integrated into the discretionary review process by the Department of City Planning, with referrals to the Public Works Department regarding the requests for removal street trees for comments, conditions of approval, corrections, etc.	240	DCP	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
54	With the concurrence of the Board of Public Works, the staff of the Public Works Department should be provided the opportunity to address removal of street trees at any public hearing conducted by the Department of City Planning, but the Public Works Department should not conduct a separate public hearing regarding the removal of street trees with the Public Works Commission.	240	DCP	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
55	The Department of City Planning should incorporate information at its web site regarding street tree removals. It should include an overview of the process, with links to the tree removal permits on the web site of the Department of Public Works.	240	DCP	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
56	The Department of City Planning should develop a comprehensive list of covenants required during the discretionary review, and identify these as conditions of approval.	241	DCP	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
57	The Department of Building and Safety should collect the initial traffic study fees on behalf of the Department of Transportation at the time an applicant submits a Site Plan Review application or with the CEQA Initial Study application. This would require co-location of the case planners of the Department of City Planning in the City's construction service centers.	242	DCP	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	\$
58	The Department of City Planning should schedule (tentatively) tentative parcel and tract map applications for an initial Advisory Agency public hearing or Zoning Administrator applications for an initial Zoning Administrator hearing at the time of submittal, if the application is determined to meet submittal requirements.	243	DCP	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
59	The Senior City Planner in the Office of Zoning Administration should not examine the Zoning Administrator application to determine whether the proposed environmental clearance is adequate for the project (e.g., categorical exemption) or if an initial study is required. The intervention of the Senior City Planner should be unnecessary with case planners that have been properly trained in CEQA. This should be the responsibility of the case planner.	245	DCP	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
60	The Department of City Planning should fully implement the intent of the “one project, one planner” within its Strategic Plan and assign a single project or case planner to a specific discretionary review case throughout the entire discretionary review and environmental review. This project or case planner should field all planning-related questions about their assigned discretionary review projects. Questions about the environmental review of a project should also be directed to the same project or case planner, as the project or case planner should also conduct the environmental analysis for the projects they are reviewing (or coordinate the work of a consultant preparing an environmental impact review). This shift towards a “one project, one planner” approach, as recommended within the Department’s Strategic Plan, should enable the Department to provide more accessible, consistent, and personalized service to customers.	245	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
61	The Department of City Planning should develop and adopt a written policy and procedure regarding when a discretionary review should be referred or routed to other departments such as the Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Fire Department, etc. for the environmental review, completeness review, development of conditions of approval, etc.	246	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
62	The Department of City Planning should refer discretionary reviews beyond tentative parcel and tract map applications to other City departments (e.g., Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Fire Department, etc.) for the environmental review, completeness review, development of conditions of approval, etc.	247	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
63	The Department of City Planning should utilize a case management system.	251	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
64	The roles and responsibilities of the “case manager” in the Department of City Planning, in managing the review of the discretionary review application across department boundaries, should be clearly identified in a policy and procedure developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.	251	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
65	The Department of City Planning should develop a training program for its professional planning staff regarding how to function as a case planner including how to manage the discretionary review, the functions of the case planner in managing the discretionary review, the City’s zoning code and CEQA, etc.	251	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
66	The case planner within the Department of City Planning should require a full assessment of dedications by the Bureau of Engineering if the <i>Planning Case Referral Form</i> indicates that the Bureau of Engineering will require dedications associated with the discretionary review.	251	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
67	The case planner within the Department of City Planning should not bring the discretionary review application to a decision until the Bureau of Engineering has completed its assessment of dedications, if the <i>Planning Case Referral Form</i> indicates that the Bureau of Engineering will require dedications associated with the discretionary review.	251	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
68	The Bureau of Engineering should indicate that the Bureau has completed the assessment of required dedications within the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> .	252	BOE	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
69	All of the case planners in the Department of City Planning should be required to utilize the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> for all aspects of the discretionary review process.	252	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
70	The Department of City Planning should develop and adopt a written policy and procedure that requires case planners to utilize the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> to maintain a current, accurate case status and case history that includes all of the events related to a case (e.g., date the case is deemed complete, date the case was referred to other departments for comment and conditioning, date the case was deemed categorically exempt or the Initial Study was completed, etc.).	253	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
71	The written policy and procedure that requires case planners to utilize the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> , developed by the Department of City Planning, should assign responsibility to the Senior City Planners or City Planners in the Development Services Bureau for assuring ongoing maintenance of case status information in the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> , and require the Senior City Planners or City Planners to sample the caseload assigned to each of their team of case planners under his / her supervision to determine whether the cases are being maintained in the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> .	253	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
72	The case planner in the Department of City Planning should issue the letters of determination for a discretionary review application within ten (10) business days after the hearing regarding a discretionary review application, with an acknowledgement of the potential of appeals of the decision.	254	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
73	The Department of City Planning should prepare a written policy and procedure that requires the issuance of the letters of determination by the case planner within ten (10) business days after the hearing regarding a discretionary review application, with an acknowledgement of the potential of appeals of the decision.	254	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
74	The Department of City Planning should establish cycle time metrics for discretionary review.	256	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
75	The development of the cycle time metrics should be a collaborative effort by the development services staff of the Department of City Planning.	256	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
76	The cycle time metrics should be published to the Department of City Planning website and identified in the application guides published by the Department of City Planning.	257	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
77	The Department of City Planning should report its progress in meeting these cycle time metrics on its web site, and update the results on a monthly basis.	257	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
78	The <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> utilized by the Department of City Planning should be set up so that discretionary review applications cannot sit in "limbo" either upon application or upon assignment to a case planner without alerting supervisors and managers in the Department.	259	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
79	The Senior City Planners in the Development Services Bureau of the Department of City Planning should formally plan and schedule the discretionary review applications processed by their staff using the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> .	259	DCP	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
80	The Senior City Planners should be held accountable for the ongoing maintenance of this open case inventory using the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> and the completion of the processing of permits by their staff in accordance with the cycle time objectives using the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> .	259	DCP	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
81	The Department of City Planning should develop and adopt an Interdepartmental Development Review Committee to review medium to large-scale discretionary review applications. The Interdepartmental Development Review Committee should meet on a bi-weekly basis.	261	DCP	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
82	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop a citywide policy and procedure regarding the role and purpose of the Interdepartmental Development Review Committee.	261	DCP	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
83	The Department of City Planning should continue to work on developing and adopting standard operating procedures for the Department's business processes.	262	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
84	The Resource Management Bureau, Department of City Planning, should prepare an outline of the completed standard operating procedures manual (e.g., what procedures would be included) and a schedule for the completion of the standard operating procedures.	262	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
85	The Department of City Planning, in a collaborative effort with the Department of Building and Safety, Bureau of Engineering, Fire Department, Department of Transportation, and other departments involved in the development review process, should develop standard conditions of approval for discretionary review applications that, ultimately, should be integrated into <i>BuildLA</i> , and also should be published to the web site of the Department of City Planning.	263	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
86	The Department of City Planning should develop a full range of application guides or instructions for the various discretionary review applications.	265	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
87	The Department of City Planning should provide ongoing training to its staff the department has assigned to the construction service centers regarding how to determine whether a discretionary review application is complete.	265	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$ / Staff
88	The Department of City Planning staff assigned to the construction service centers should be rotated on a regular ongoing basis with the case planners that process and analyze the discretionary review applications.	265	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
89	The Department of City Planning should be responsible for writing, updating, maintaining, and interpreting the zoning code.	268	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
90	The intake for building permit counter plan check in the construction service centers should include a City Planner(s) from the Department of City Planning to provide zoning compliance review. These staff should share responsibility at building permit check-in with the Department of Building and Safety (which would be responsible for screening the plans for completeness and determining whether the plans can be checked over-the-counter).	271	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	\$ / Staff
91	The Department of Building and Safety should not be in the business of providing answers to zoning code questions at the construction service centers or during building permit plan check; that should be the responsibility of the Department of City Planning.	271	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
92	The positions allocated by the Department of Building and Safety to zoning check-in at the construction service centers should be eliminated, through attrition. The Department of City Planning should provide zoning check-in.	271	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	(\$)

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
93	The Department of City Planning should be authorized two professional-level planning positions for the Metro construction services center and two professional-level planning positions for the Van Nuys construction services center to staff the building check-in window in concert with the Department of Building and Safety, whose staff would be responsible for screening the plans for completeness and determining whether the plans can be checked over-the-counter. These Department of City Planning positions should advise the building permit applicant of the zoning approvals and zoning clearances that must be obtained, including whether the applicant must first obtain an entitlement permit from the Department of City Planning, and ensure that the applicant's property is appropriately zoned for the proposed construction.	271	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	\$ / Staff
94	The day-to-day responsibility for zoning compliance review in the issuance of express building permits and building permits issued over the Internet should continue to be a joint responsibility of the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning.	272	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
95	The Department of Building and Safety should continue to be responsible for zoning compliance review for building permits issued over the Internet and building permits issued as Express Permits (with some exceptions such as permits in the Coastal Zone and in Historical Preservation Overlay Zones).	272	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
96	The Department of City Planning should review all of the building permits that require a regular plan check for compliance with the Zoning Code, Community Plans, Specific Plans, etc. This will require that building permits requiring regular plan check be routed to the Department of City Planning for zoning compliance by the Department of Building and Safety at receipt of these plans using the electronic plan check system.	274	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
97	The extent of routing of building permit plans requiring counter plan check to the Department of City Planning should depend on the complexity of the type of project: complex projects should be referred to the Department of City Planning as a counter plan check and clearance.	274	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
98	The Department of City Planning, after it has received training in the Zoning Code from the Department of Building and Safety, should provide the zoning compliance review for the Parallel Design-Permitting Program.	275	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
99	The zoning compliance review by the Department of City Planning for the Parallel Design-Permitting Program should occur during the design process, at the same time that the Department of Building and Safety is plan checking for conformance with the building codes.	275	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
100	The division of roles and responsibilities between the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning for zoning compliance review during express, counter, and regular plan check and for the Parallel Design-Permitting Program should be clarified in a Memorandum of Agreement between the two departments, facilitated by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.	276	Office of the CAO	2nd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
101	The development of this memorandum of agreement should include the development of a matrix that defines when building permits should be routed to the staff of the Department of City Planning for plan check (aside from building check-in) for express, counter, and regular plan check.	276	Office of the CAO	2nd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
102	The Department of City Planning is not yet ready to begin the assumption of the responsibility for zoning compliance review. The staff of the Department of City Planning needs training in the Zoning Code and in reading construction drawings to assume this responsibility. The Department of Building and Safety should provide training and mentoring to the staff of the Department of City Planning regarding the Zoning Code.	277	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
103	The roles and responsibilities of the Fire Department and the Department of Building and Safety in plan checking of building permit plans, recently revised as noted in the "LADBS and Fire Department Plan Check Matrix", should be formalized in a Memorandum of Agreement developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.	277	DBS / Fire	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
104	The City should assign responsibility for pre-discretionary review to the Department of City Planning.	280	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
105	The Department of Building and Safety should continue to be responsible for preliminary review of by-right projects.	280	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
106	The Department Building and Safety should provide training and mentoring to the staff of the Department of City Planning regarding the Zoning Code before the Department of City Planning assumes responsibility for pre-discretionary review.	280	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
107	A City Planner position should be authorized for the Department of City Planning as a training officer for training of the department's staff in CEQA, the Zoning Code, departmental processes and procedures, etc.	282	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	S / Staff
108	The Department of City Planning should develop and implement a program to rotate staff between current planning and long range planning.	283	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
109	The Department of City Planning should insource the responsibility for conducting zoning hearings, initially for less complex zoning cases, <u>through attrition</u> , to staff other than the Associate Zoning Administrators.	285	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
110	The insourcing of the responsibility for conducting zoning hearings will require training of selected Department of City Planning staff regarding how to conduct hearings, and the development of written policies and procedures regarding how to conduct these hearings. These staff should be expected to field visit the site of the cases, read the staff reports prepared by the case planners for the Department of City Planning, conduct the public hearing, and make a decision. The case planners for the Department of City Planning should prepare the Letters of Determination.	285	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
111	The Department of City Planning should eliminate, through attrition, the seven (7) Associate Zoning Administrator positions allocated to conducting public hearings on zoning administration cases, making initial determinations, making final Letters of Determination regarding entitlements, etc.	286	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	(\$)

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
112	The cost savings for insourcing zoning hearings should be utilized to add a mix of twelve (12) additional City Planners, City Planning Associates, and Planning Assistants, as the seven (7) Associate Zoning Administrator positions become vacant. These staff should be utilized as case planners in the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning.	286	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	\$ / Staff
113	The case planner within the Department of City Planning should coordinate compliance with the CEQA Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.	287	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
114	The Department of City Planning should develop and deploy a program for the field enforcement of the CEQA Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. The case planner should assume responsibility for the coordinating enforcement of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program through the use of environmental consultants, whose costs would be paid by the applicant.	287	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	\$
115	The City should adopt a fee to recover the costs associated with the CEQA Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. The fees charged and collected from the permit applicant should be equal to the actual costs to the City of implementing the adopted Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.	287	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	\$
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116	The City should require that all development-related fees received in construction service centers be paid to and processed by the cashiers employed by the Department of Building and Safety.	322	Office of the CAO	1st Qtr. 2015	\$ / Staff
117	The City should create a simple universal payment process for all development-related fees that allows permit applicants to set up their accounts on line. In these instances, the permit applicant could pay their fees, without visiting the cashiers employed by the Department of Building and Safety, by allowing their fees to be posted and charged on-line to their account on the next business day.	322	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	\$ / Staff
118	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop a memorandum of agreement with all of the divisions, bureaus, and departments located in the construction service centers that would clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Building and Safety in collecting and processing all development-related fees received in construction service centers.	322	Office of the CAO	1st Qtr. 2015	N / A
119	For applicants who do not visit construction service centers often, the Department of Building and Safety should enable a building permit applicant to set up a temporary account during their visit and pay the total fees at the conclusion of their visit.	322	DBS	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
120	The reference within the Municipal Code that offers a money back guarantee if an express permit customer waits more than 30 minutes in the queue or more than 60 minutes to complete the permit processing from the time the service begins should be removed from the Municipal Code.	323	DBS	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
121	The Department of Building and Safety, in conjunction with the Fire Department and Department of City Planning, should develop standard building permit plans and checklists for solar photovoltaic permits for single-family dwellings for systems 4 kW and under.	325	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
122	The Department of Building and Safety should enable the issuance of solar photovoltaic permits over the Internet for systems under 4 kW with no reviews, besides the Department of Building and Safety, if these plans meet all requirements by using the standard plans and checklists.	325	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
123	The Department of Building and Safety should publicize the availability of on-line permitting for solar photovoltaic permits for single-family dwellings for systems 4 kW and under with the primary solar contractors in Los Angeles County.	325	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
124	The Department of Building and Safety should establish a cashier station in the express permit center at the Metro construction services center, as planned. The express building permit applicant should be able to obtain and pay for their permit in the same location.	326	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	\$ / Staff
125	The Department of City Planning should work with the Department of Building and Safety to simplify the express building permit process so that, where practical, the Department of Building and Safety can issue express building permits without clearance by the Department of City Planning.	328	DCP	2nd Qtr. 2015	N / A
126	The Department of City Planning should develop standard conditions of approval that could be utilized by the Department of Building and Safety to issue an express building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning (e.g., Christmas and pumpkin sale lots) and develop checklists, standard drawings, provide training, and initial quality control to simplify the express building permit process, where practical.	328	DCP	2nd Qtr. 2015	N / A
127	The staff assigned by the Department of City Planning to the construction service centers should provide the clearances for a building permit in a Historical Preservation Overlay Zone.	329	DCP	2nd Qtr. 2015	N / A
128	The Department of City Planning should work with the Department of Building and Safety to simplify the counter building permit process so that, where practical, the Department of Building and Safety can issue the counter building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning.	329	DCP	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A
129	The Department of City Planning should develop standard conditions of approval that could be utilized by the Department of Building and Safety to issue a counter building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning and develop checklists, standard drawings, provide training, and initial quality control to simplify the counter building permit process, where practical.	330	DCP	3rd Qtr. 2015	N / A
130	The building permit applicant at the Metro construction services center should <u>not</u> be required to (1) proceed to counter station 14 for screening of their building permit plans for completeness and determining whether their plans can be checked over the counter, (2) proceed to one of the four counter stations 9 through 12 to have their plan check fee calculated, and then (3) return to the cashier station adjacent to counter station 14 to pay the plan check fee.	331	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
131	One counter station on the 4th floor of the Metro construction services center should screen building permit plans for completeness, determine whether plans can be checked over the counter, and calculate the building permit plan check fees for counter plan check, if the plan check document is complete and can be plan checked over-the-counter. Only then, should the customer pay the plan check fee at the cashier station adjacent to station 14.	331	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
132	The Bureau of Engineering staff assigned to the 3 rd floor of the Metro construction services center should be located on the 4th floor of the Metro construction services center.	332	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
133	Building permit customers should not be required to go to the 3 rd floor at the Metro construction services center to resolve the clearances with the Bureau of Engineering, and then return to the 4th floor, and get back in line for service.	332	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
134	The building permit applicant on the 3 rd floor of the Metro construction services center should be able to immediately proceed to one of the counter stations 9 through 12 on the 4 th floor after obtaining clearances on the 3 rd floor. The Department of Building and Safety staff at counter stations 9 through 12 should verify that the clearances are resolved, verify that the contractor has a valid contractor's license, require the contractor to affirm a number of declarations directly in PCIS, and then sign the permit application with an electronic signature pad. The staff at these windows should then print out a copy of the building permit, stamp the plan as approved, and provide the plan to the applicant.	333	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
135	After the Department of Building and Safety staff at counter stations 9 through 12 of the Metro construction services center have stamped the plans as approved and provided the plans to the applicant, the building permit applicant should be able to go to the cashier's station adjacent to counter station 14 to pay their permit fee.	334	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
136	Station 14 of the Metro construction services center should screen the plans for completeness, calculate the fees, print out the application with the fee information, and have the applicant complete the notification form. After payment of fees, the cashier should accept the plans for regular plan check. The applicant should not have to return to counter station 13.	335	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
137	The Department of Building and Safety should assign responsibility for plan checking and inspection of structural, green code, and disabled access to structural engineering associates as part of regular plan check and to building mechanical inspectors as part of their regular building inspection. In other words, the responsibility for structural plan check should include the structural, green code, and disabled access: one structural engineering associate should be responsible for plan checking all aspects of a building permit plan. Similarly, one building mechanical inspector should be responsible for the inspection of all aspects of a building: structural, green code, and disabled access.	337	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
138	The Department of Building and Safety should train its plan check and inspection staff to make the transition for plan checking and inspection of structural, green code, and disabled access: it cannot happen instantly. It should continue to provide ongoing training to these staff in the green code and disabled access after the transition. The Department should not lessen its standards or expectations in making this transition.	337	DBS	2nd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
139	The staff that are performing these green code and disabled access plan check responsibilities at the present time should be reassigned responsibility for regular plan check for structural, green code, and disabled access.	337	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
140	The clearance process for regular building permit plan check should be replaced with electronic plan checking. The Department of Building and Safety should route these building permit plans for comment and critique to the other bureaus, divisions, and departments. The building permit applicant should not be required to obtain these clearances.	338	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2016	\$
141	The building code requirements for a clearance by the Department of City Planning for grading when the site is greater than one acre in hillside areas should be eliminated.	339	DBS	1st Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
142	The clearance by the Department of Transportation of construction nearby the Exposition Light Rail Line per ZI-2351 should be eliminated.	339	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
143	The Department of Building and Safety should provide the clearance for structural review of temporary shoring adjacent to a public street, and not the Bureau of Engineering. This will require the mutual development of checklists and standards - by the Department of Building and Safety and by the Bureau of Engineering - that would be utilized for the structural review of shoring. The roles and responsibilities for plan check of temporary shoring should be clarified in a Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of Building and Safety and the Bureau of Engineering, developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.	339	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
144	The responsibility for checking whether a building permit applicant has a waste hauler permit should be transferred to the Office of Finance from the Bureau of Street Services.	340	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
145	The stormwater pollution mitigation clearance by the Bureau of Sanitation and the Bureau of Sanitation clearance for <i>Low Impact Development</i> should be consolidated since the two clearances duplicate each other.	340	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
146	The duplication between the Bureau of Engineering and the Bureau of Sanitation for stormwater plan check of building permit plans should be eliminated. The responsibility for plan checking of building permits for stormwater – on-site, off-site, and for compliance with the <i>Low Impact Development</i> ordinance – should be assigned to the Bureau of Engineering. This will require staffing adjustments in both Bureaus. The cost incurred by the Bureau of Engineering for providing this service on behalf of the Bureau of Sanitation should be charged to the Bureau of Sanitation.	340	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
147	The Department of City Planning should provide public information for D and Q conditions on its website.	341	DCP	4th Qtr. CY 2015	\$
148	The Bureau of Engineering should provide public street dimensions on its website.	341	BOE	4th Qtr. CY 2015	\$
149	The Bureau of Engineering should provide information on its website for dwellings beyond 200' from a sewer mainline and dwellings within 200' from a sewer mainline that require connections.	341	BOE	4th Qtr. CY 2015	\$
150	The Bureau of Engineering should improve the accessibility of its information for the public by providing a link in ZIMAS directly to Navigate LA for a site's sewers, utility lines locations, required dedications and street dimensions for hillside areas.	341	BOE	1 st Qtr. CY 2016	\$

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
151	The Fire Department and the Department of Building and Safety should work together to link PCIS and the Fire Schedule Information System (Firelog) so that the Fire Department can obtain proof that the payment of the department's fee has been received by the Department of Building and Safety.	343	DBS / Fire	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
152	An applicant seeking a Title 19 or Title 24 plan check by the Fire Department should not be required to return to the Fire Department on the 3 rd floor at the Metro construction services center from the 4th floor of the Metro construction services center to provide proof of payment of the Fire Department's fee.	343	DBS / Fire	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
153	The Department of Building and Safety should evaluate the potential expansion of the use and application of the combination building inspector, the advantages and disadvantages, the associated costs and benefits, and develop recommendations for the consideration of the Office of the City Administrative Officer.	344	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2015	\$
154	Building permit plans should be assigned for regular plan checking one (1) business day after receipt for plan check.	345	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
155	The Department of Building and Safety should develop and install a case management system for the building permit plan check process, as planned.	349	DBS	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A
156	The responsibility and the authority of the Department of Building and Safety in managing the building permit plan check process <u>on a citywide basis</u> should be clearly spelled out in a written policy developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.	349	Office of the CAO	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
157	The Department of Building and Safety should provide a team leader for a multi-disciplinary team responsible for keeping the review of a building permit plans on track, making sure issues involving conflicting code or regulatory issues are resolved, charting a clear course for the applicant through the review process, and making sure issues regarding the plan are identified early in the review process.	349	DBS	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
158	The Building and Safety Department should set formal written building permit plan check cycle time metrics as a joint effort by each of the bureaus, divisions, and departments involved in building permit plan checking. Ultimately, however, the General Manager needs to review these metrics to determine whether processing targets are not unacceptably long.	350	DBS	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
159	The building permit plan check cycle time metrics should identify those bureaus, divisions, and departments that should be routed building permit plans by type of plan.	350	DBS	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
160	The building permit plan check cycle time metrics should be differentiated according to whether the plan check is the first review, or a recheck of a revised plan.	350	DBS	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
161	The building permit plan check cycle time metrics should be designed to enable the structural engineering associates in the Engineering Bureau of the Department of Building and Safety to hold the bureaus, divisions, and departments involved in the building permit plan checking process accountable for the length of time the bureaus, divisions, and departments take to review and approve plans.	350	DBS	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
162	The building permit plan check cycle time metrics should be published to the Department of Building and Safety's web page, and the Department should utilize <i>BuildLA</i> to report the progress of all of the bureaus, divisions, and departments in meeting these metrics on a monthly basis, including the Department of Building and Safety, publishing the results to its web page.	350	DBS	2nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
163	The Department of Building and Safety should evaluate opportunities to reduce the average transaction time for building permits in the construction service centers.	357	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
164	The Department of Building and Safety should take the lead in reducing the number of customer transactions by simplifying the processes used in the construction service centers.	357	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
165	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the City departments that assign staff to the construction service centers to evaluate the level of staffing necessary to meet the goal of serving 85% of the customers at the construction service centers within 15 minutes.	357	Office of the CAO	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	\$ / Staff
166	The Department of Building and Safety should report the total time for a customer to complete the process; in other words, the Department should report the total time required from start to finish for all of the transactions required to issue an express or counter plan check permit, not just the time per transaction.	357	DBS	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
167	The Department of Building and Safety should continuously stream the counter wait times at its construction service centers to its web site.	357	DBS	2nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
168	The Department of Building and Safety should report the average counter wait time and transaction time for the various counters in the construction service center to its web site on a monthly basis.	357	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
169	The City should designate a "Permit Center Manager" for each construction services center. This "Permit Center Manager" should be responsible for managing all of the service delivery by all of the disciplines in the construction services center (Building and Safety, City Planning, Engineering, Fire, etc.) in terms of the customer experience including the "wait" time. The responsibilities should include assuring timely service to all customers and assisting those customers experiencing excessive "wait" time by working with managers from other bureaus / departments to bring "backup" staff to the counter. That "Permit Center Manager" should be a manager(s) with the Engineering Bureau, Department of Building and Safety.	357	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
170	The responsibilities of the "Permit Center Manager" should be clarified in a Memorandum of Agreement developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer with all of the bureaus, divisions, and departments assigned to the construction service centers.	358	Office of the CAO	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
Chapter 8 - Analysis of Public Improvement / Engineering Functions and Processes					
171	The Bureau of Engineering should require the B-permit applicant to provide an <i>Engineer's Estimate of Probable Costs</i> for all public improvements and work in the public right-of-way at the time of submittal of the B-permit application using an on-line spreadsheet or a City-provided form that includes unit costs.	389	BOE	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
172	The Bureau of Engineering should utilize the <i>Engineer's Estimate of Probable Costs</i> provided by the B-permit applicant to determine and collect the plan check and inspection deposit at the time of submittal of the B-permit application. The Bureau of Engineering should then immediately begin plan checking of the B-permit.	390	BOE	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
173	If the fees paid by the B-permit applicant are under-estimated, the Bureau should require the applicant to pay additional fees for plan check and inspection before completion of plan check and inspection.	390	BOE	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
174	The Bureau of Engineering should route the B-permit to other bureaus and departments using electronic plan check software, and not the applicant. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.	391	BOE	4th Qtr. CY 2016	\$
175	The Bureau of Engineering should require the B-permits engineer of record to submit the B-permit plans electronically at initial submittal so that the Bureau can route these plans electronically using electronic plan check software. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.	391	BOE	4th Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
176	The Bureau of Engineering should not scan B-permit plans.	392	BOE	4th Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
177	Before the Bureau of Engineering makes this shift to electronic plan check software, it should develop standards for submittal of these plans that includes all aspects of affected infrastructure (e.g., paving, traffic signals, signing and striping, storm drains, sewer, etc.).	392	BOE	3 rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
178	The tentative tract map or parcel map application fee should be collected by the Department of Building and Safety at the time of the submittal by the applicant, and remitted to the Bureau of Engineering.	393	DBS	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
179	The Bureau of Engineering should not calculate the necessary tentative tract map or parcel map application fees for the Division to conduct the plan check, should not prepare a tentative tract map or parcel map application fee letter for the applicant, and should not require the applicant to travel to the Division's offices at 201 North Figueroa Street to pay the tentative tract map or parcel map application fee.	393	DBS	1 st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
180	The Department of City Planning should route the tentative tract map or parcel map application directly to the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, to the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, to the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division, and to Caltrans (if the development project is near a freeway or State highway). This should occur when <i>BuildLA</i> goes "live" so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, by the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, and by the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division.	394	DCP	4th Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
181	The staff at the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, at the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, and at the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division should plan check the tentative tract map or parcel map applications and respond directly to the Department of City Planning with the recommended conditions of approval. This should occur when <i>BuildLA</i> goes "live" so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, by the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, and by the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division.	395	BOE	4th Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
182	The two (2) Civil Engineering Associate II's in the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering assigned responsibility for routing the tentative tract map or parcel map packets to the District offices and collating these documents and submitting them to the Department of City Planning should be reallocated to the District offices, as workload warrants, for the plan checking of tentative parcel and tract maps. This should occur when <i>BuildLA</i> goes "live" so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, by the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, and by the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division.	395	BOE	1 st Qtr. CY 2016	(\$)
183	The responsibility for plan checking City Planning Department referrals, preparing reports to the Department of City Planning regarding conditions of approval / engineering recommendations, and preparing clearance memos to the Department of City Planning based upon a memo from the appropriate District Office and the Real Estate Group should be shifted to the District offices of the Bureau of Engineering. This should occur when <i>BuildLA</i> goes "live" so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering's District offices.	396	BOE	4th Qtr. CY 2015	(\$)
184	The Civil Engineering Associate II in the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering assigned responsibility for these tasks should be reassigned to the District offices of the Bureau of Engineering, as workload warrants, for the plan checking of City Planning Department referrals. This should occur when <i>BuildLA</i> goes "live".	396	BOE	1 st Qtr. CY 2016	(\$)

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
185	With the transfer of the responsibility for processing of the Department of City Planning Referrals and the processing of final tract and parcel maps to District Offices of the Bureau of Engineering and the staff that are responsible for the processing of these permit applications – the Civil Engineering Associates – the Civil Engineer should also be transferred to the District offices, as workload requires. This should occur when BuildLA goes “live”.	397	BOE	1st Qtr. CY 2016	(\$)
186	The Bureau of Engineering should clear the final map conditions by routing the final map to the departments and bureaus using electronic plan check software. The applicant should not be required to clear the map. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.	399	BOE	4th Qtr. CY 2016	\$
187	The Bureau should require the final map engineer of record submit final map plans to the Bureau electronically so that the Bureau can route these plans electronically. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.	400	BOE	4th Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
188	However, before the Bureau of Engineering makes this shift, it should develop standards for submittal of these plans that includes all aspects of affected infrastructure (e.g., paving, traffic signals, signing and striping, storm drains, sewer, etc.). This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.	400	BOE	3rd Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
189	Before the Bureau of Engineering begins to route these final maps and the documents necessary for clearances, it should work with these departments and bureaus to determine which clearances the Bureau of Engineering could provide itself without routing to other departments or bureaus, which clearances should be included as required submittals for the B-permit, which clearances should be required as part of the submittal for the final map, which clearances can be eliminated altogether, etc. This will require the roll-out of BuildLA to accomplish.	400	BOE	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
190	The Bureau of Engineering should accept the B-Permit plans on behalf of the Department of Transportation, and route the set of plans to the Department of Transportation. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.	401	BOE	4th Qtr. CY 2016	\$
191	The B-permit applicant should not be required to submit another set of B-Permit plans to the Department of Transportation B-permit Section located at 900 North Main Street on the 9 th floor.	401	BOE	4th Qtr. CY 2016	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
192	The Department of Transportation should obtain the services of a consulting traffic engineer with expertise in traffic signal plan checking to provide backup and relief, and utilize the consultant when their staff is on vacation or otherwise unavailable.	401	DOT	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	\$
193	The Bureau of Engineering should adopt cycle time metrics for B – permits: 30 calendar days for 1 st plan check from the date of submittal, 20 calendar days for 2 nd plan check from the date of re-submittal, and 10 days for 3 rd plan check from the date of re-submittal.	403	BOE	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
194	The Bureau of Engineering should track and manage actual cycle times for B – permits by 1 st check, 2 nd check, 3 rd check, etc.	403	BOE	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
195	The cycle time objectives for B-permits should be applied on a citywide basis for all of the bureaus and departments involved in plan checking B – permits.	403	BOE	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
196	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the Bureau of Engineering to determine the amount of fee-based staffing required for B-permits to deliver this level of service and the impact on user fees.	403	Office of the CAO	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$ / Staff
197	The roles and responsibilities of the Bureau of Engineering for the case management of the B – permit process should be clearly identified in a citywide policy and procedure developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.	406	Office of the CAO	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
198	The Bureau of Engineering should assign a Civil Engineering Associate in the Private Development / Plan Check Group at the appropriate District Office of the Bureau of Engineering as a case manager for each B-permit application.	407	BOE	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
199	The Bureau of Engineering Private Development / Plan Check Group at the Van Nuys office should be authorized two additional Office Engineering Technician III positions for “bond control” or the responsibility for the processing of B-permit bond paperwork. Over time, the responsibility for the processing of B-permit bond paperwork should be shifted to each of the four Bureau of Engineering District offices; this will require an adjustment in position allocations among the District offices and in the allocation of responsibilities at the four District offices.	409	BOE	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	\$ / Staff
200	The professional-level engineers in the Bureau of Engineering's Van Nuys office should not process the B-permit bond paperwork.	409	BOE	4th Qtr. CY 2014	(\$)
Chapter 9 - Analysis of Code Enforcement					
201	The Code Enforcement Bureau should adopt a metric of closing an average of 85% of its cases in 45 calendar days, reporting the data separately for zoning, nuisance, dangerous building, and other, for those cases that are closed voluntarily. Cases that require forced compliance should be reported separately.	439	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
202	The Code Enforcement Bureau should adopt a metric of making the first site visit to determine the validity of the complaint in 7 calendar days from the date the complaint was received by the Bureau.	439	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
203	The City of Los Angeles should restore the number of authorized positions to the Code Enforcement Bureau that existed in fiscal year 2009. This would require an increase of 60 code enforcement officers (Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors).	439	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	\$ / Staff
204	The City should continue to monitor the service levels and the productivity of the Bureau and continue to adjust staffing until adequate service levels are provided.	439	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
205	The span of control for supervisors in the Code Enforcement Bureau should be broadened, through attrition. The span of control should be brought within a range of one supervisor for every six to twelve code enforcement officers (Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors).	442	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	(\$)
206	Any reduction in supervisors - Senior Building Inspectors and Senior Building Mechanical Inspectors – should be offset by equivalent increases in the number of Building Inspectors and Building Mechanical Inspectors. Any reduction should occur through attrition.	442	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	\$ / Staff
207	The management layer of two Chief Inspectors should be eliminated, through attrition.	442	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	(\$)
208	The two Chief Inspector positions should be replaced by equivalent increases in the number of Building Inspectors and Building Mechanical Inspectors in the Code Enforcement Bureau.	442	DBS	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	\$ / Staff
209	The Code Enforcement Bureau should develop a two (2) to three (3) page monthly performance measurement report that effectively communicates results generated by the Bureau to management and to the public.	443	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
210	The Code Enforcement Bureau manager and supervisors should develop a number of monthly management information reports to track performance against objectives for first site visits after a case has been opened, for closure of cases, and to monitor the case workload and performance Code Enforcement Officers.	446	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
211	The managers and supervisors of the Code Enforcement Bureau should be held accountable for using the monthly management information reports to manage the workload and performance of the Bureau.	446	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
212	The supervisory and management staff of the Code Enforcement Bureau should be required to possess the <i>California Association of Code Enforcement Officers</i> (CACEO) Advanced Course Certification Program within 24 months of hire / appointment.	450	DBS / Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. CY 2016	\$

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
213	The code enforcement officers within the Code Enforcement Bureau should be encouraged to possess the <i>California Association of Code Enforcement Officers (CACEO)</i> Basic Course Certification Program within 24 months of hire / appointment.	450	DBS / Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. CY 2016	\$
214	The Code Enforcement Bureau should budget funds for the costs of the testing required for its employees to take the California Association of Code Enforcement Officers Course Certification examinations and the costs of ongoing training required to maintain such certification.	450	DBS / Office of the CAO	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
215	The code enforcement officers (the Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors assigned to the Code Enforcement Bureau and their supervisors and managers) should obtain a 24- hour P.O.S.T. module, PC 832 Arrest, Search and Seizure certification.	452	DBS / Office of the CAO	1st Qtr. CY 2016	\$
216	The Code Enforcement Bureau should budget funds for the costs of the training required for its employees to obtain a 24-hour P.O.S.T. module, PC 832 Arrest, Search and Seizure certification and the costs of ongoing training required to maintain such certification.	452	DBS / Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. CY 2016	\$
217	The partnership between the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety in enforcement of the zoning code should be memorialized in a Memorandum of Agreement developed by the two departments in a process facilitated by the Office of the Office of the City Administrative Officer.	455	Office of the CAO	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
218	The division of responsibility for enforcement of the zoning code between the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety should be based upon the certificate of occupancy or approval of the discretionary review permit. Until the certificate of occupancy is issued or the discretionary review application is approved, the Department of City Planning should enforce the conditions of approval in the field. That involvement should involve enforcement by the case planners for compliance with conditions of approval for discretionary review applications, and compliance with mitigation measures for the mitigated negative declaration or environmental impact review. However, once the certificate of occupancy has been issued or the discretionary review application has been approved, the enforcement roles and responsibilities should be assigned to the Code Enforcement Bureau; enforcement becomes a maintenance responsibility.	455	Office of the CAO	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
219	The four positions allocated to the Code Compliance Unit in the Department of City Planning for Nuisance Abatement should be eliminated through attrition, and the incumbents reallocated to other vacant positions.	456	DCP	4th Qtr. CY 2014	(\$)

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
220	The City should address enforcement of Department of City Planning conditions of approval for all of the City's Conditional Use Permits. Compliance should be monitored through site inspections conducted by the staff of the Code Enforcement Bureau for a one-year period after the permit was approved.	457	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	\$ / Staff
221	The City should adopt a fee, paid for at the time of submittal of the application for the conditional use permit, to recover the costs associated with the monitoring of compliance of the Conditional Use permit.	457	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	\$
222	The Code Enforcement Bureau should accept anonymous complaints and, based upon the reliability and specificity of the complaint, investigate the complaint.	458	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
223	The Code Enforcement Bureau should notify the complainant of the name of the code enforcement officer assigned their case no later than five business days after the submittal of their complaint including the name, e-mail address, and phone number of the code enforcement officer.	459	DBS	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
224	The Department of Building and Safety should provide a direct link to the Code Enforcement Bureau on the Department's home page in addition to the links for Customer Feedback, Online Permit, Inspection Request, Codes and Standards, and Zoning.	461	DBS	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
225	The Department of Building and Safety should enhance the web page of the Code Enforcement Bureau.	461	DBS	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
226	The Code Enforcement Bureau should evaluate the geographic distribution of its workload, and reallocate its staff to reflect that geographical distribution.	464	DBS	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
227	The Code Enforcement Bureau should collect data at the Council District-level to identify the neighborhoods in the City with the greatest need for public sector intervention.	464	DBS	4th Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
228	The Code Enforcement Bureau should develop neighborhood revitalization plans for those neighborhoods in the City that are in the greatest need of public sector intervention.	464	DBS	1st Qtr. CY 2016	\$
229	The development of the neighborhood revitalization plans should be based upon a collaborative effort including the Code Enforcement Bureau, Department of Building and Safety; Department of City Planning; Police Department; Fire Department; Office of the City Attorney; Recreation and Parks Department; and the Public Works Department.	464	DBS	1st Qtr. CY 2016	N / A
Chapter 10 - Analysis of Regulations					
230	The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should be involved in the update of the Community Plans, to provide advice and counsel to the planners assigned to updating the Community Plan regarding the urban design guidelines being developed for the Community Plan.	471	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
231	The Department of City Planning should conduct field inspections to verify compliance with the design review conditions of approval for discretionary review applications prior to the final building inspection and / or to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.	472	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$ / Staff
232	The cost of the field inspection by the case planner from the Department of City Planning to verify compliance with the design review conditions of approval for discretionary review applications should be recovered in the discretionary fees.	472	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
233	The case planner should record the specific dates and purposes of the site visits to verify compliance with the design review conditions of approval for discretionary review applications in the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> .	472	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
234	The Policy Planning Bureau, as it updates the Community Plans, should include the development of street standards, comparable to the downtown street standards, the California Complete Streets Act, and the Los Angeles County Model Streets Manual.	473	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
235	The development of these standards should be a cooperative effort with the Department of Transportation, the Department of Public Works, and the Water and Power Department.	474	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
236	The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should be involved in the development of the design standards within re:code.LA, including participating in the development of these standards as part of the team from the Policy Planning Bureau.	474	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
237	The Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should develop a policy and procedure regarding the role of the City Planner assigned to the Urban Studio in the discretionary review process.	476	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
238	The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should provide classroom design review training to the staff of the Development Services Bureau on an ongoing and semi-annual basis. The attendance should be mandatory.	477	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
239	Additional planning staff will be necessary for the Citywide Policy and Planning Division, Department of City Planning to update the Community Plans on a ten-year cycle and to implement the recommendations contained in the Community Plans.	486	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$ / Staff
240	The Department of City Planning should work with the Office of the City Administrative Officer to assess "lessons learned" so far in the updating of the City's Community Plans and assess the allocation and adequacy of staff and consulting resources. The Department of City Planning and the Office of the City Administrative Officer should return with recommendations to the City Council so that the Department can meet the ten-year schedule for updating community plans established in January 2008.	486	DCP	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
241	A summarized twenty-four to thirty-six month bar chart schedule should be prepared for all projects that are or will be assigned to the Citywide and Community Planning Division. The bar chart schedule should be updated quarterly.	488	DCP	2nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
242	The Citywide and Community Planning Division should expand its annual work program. The annual work program should be presented to the City Planning Commission and the Planning Land Use Management Committee of the City Council. The City Planning Commission and the Planning Land Use Management Committee of the City Council should receive semi-annual updates regarding the status of the annual work program.	489	DCP	2nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
243	The Citywide and Community Planning Division should prepare more detailed work programs / plans for the updates of Community Plans.	491	DCP	2nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
244	The Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division should prepare a quarterly project status report regarding each project undertaken by the Division no later than the fifth working day after the conclusion of the quarter.	492	DCP	2nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
245	The Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division should publish these reports monthly, on-line on the Internet.	492	DCP	2nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
246	The Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division should utilize project accounting in the City's payroll system to charge and track the hours worked on updating the Community Plans, implementation of the Community Plans, or other long-range planning tasks.	492	DCP	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
247	The Department of City Planning should update the CEQA guidelines utilized by the Department.	496	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
248	The Department of City Planning should comply with the requirements of the State Public Resources Code that, thirty days after an application is accepted as complete or deemed complete, the City must complete its initial environmental study.	497	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
249	The Department of City Planning should institutionalize the requirement in a formal written policy and procedure that, thirty days after a discretionary review application is accepted as complete or deemed complete, the City must complete its initial environmental study, and hold its staff accountable for meeting this requirement.	497	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
250	The City should require that the applicant for discretionary review select a consultant of the applicant's choice, from a list of City-qualified consultants, to prepare an Environmental Impact Report or Traffic Mitigation Impact Study.	498	DCP	3rd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
251	The Department of City of Planning should utilize tiering of environmental impact reports to streamline environmental review, as occurred with the Hollywood Community Plan.	499	DCP	1st Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
252	The Department should ensure that its planners receive CEQA training on an annual basis. The attendance should be mandatory.	500	DCP	2nd Qtr. CY 2015	N / A
253	The Department of City Planning should implement a monitoring or reporting program for mitigation measures associated with mitigated negative declarations or an environmental impact reports.	501	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
254	The Department of City Planning should assign responsibility to its case planners in its Development Services Bureau for the implementation of this responsibility, including field inspection and monitoring.	501	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
255	The Department of City Planning establish and collect a fee to recover the costs incurred for procedures necessary to comply with CEQA on the project including the costs of mitigation monitoring or reporting programs.	501	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
256	The Planners in the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should be required to utilize PCTS or CDMS for all aspects of the discretionary review process including environmental processing requirements, environmental conditions, outside agency environmental permits and mitigation monitoring.	502	DCP	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
257	The Department of City Planning should develop a formal written policy and procedure requiring the planners of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning to utilize PCTS or CDMS for all aspects of the discretionary review application process.	502	DCP	4th Qtr. CY 2014	N / A
Chapter 11 - Analysis of Co-Location of Development Services					
258	The Metro Development Review Section for the Department of Transportation should be co-located with other development services functions at 201 North Figueroa Street (downtown).	509	DOT	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
259	The West Los Angeles Development Review Section for the Department of Transportation should be co-located with other development services functions at 1828 Sawtelle Boulevard.	509	DOT	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
260	The staff assigned by the Department of Transportation to B-permit plan check should be co-located with other development services functions at 201 North Figueroa Street (downtown).	509	DOT	2 nd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
261	The staff of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning that are responsible for discretionary review in the Metro area, currently located at City Hall, should be re-located to the Metro construction services center at 201 North Figueroa Street. There is sufficient vacant space for these staff.	510	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
262	The Department of City Planning should assign Development Services Bureau staff to the West Los Angeles construction services center at 1828 Sawtelle Boulevard with responsibility for the discretionary review for West Los Angeles.	511	DCP	3 rd Qtr. CY 2015	\$
263	Rather than assign specialists for regular plan check (Electrical Engineering Associates and Mechanical Engineering Associates) for the larger construction projects to the West Los Angeles, South Los Angeles and the San Pedro construction service centers, the Department of Building and Safety should utilize electrical plan check technology, as recommended previously, to provide electrical plan check and mechanical plan check services over the Internet, so that applicants don't have to visit a construction services center at all. The entire plan check experience for regular plan check should occur over the Internet.	513	DBS	4 th Qtr. 2016	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
264	The West Los Angeles, South Los Angeles and the San Pedro construction services centers should continue to provide plan check staff for express and counter plan check using generalists (Structural Engineering Associates) for structural, electrical, and mechanical plan check for smaller construction projects.	513	DBS	3 rd Qtr. 2014	N / A
265	The Department of Building and Safety should provide records research services at the West Los Angeles construction services center. If, as recommended in a previous chapter, the Department of Building and Safety is able to provide access to these records via the Internet, the need to establish a records counter at the West Los Angeles construction services center may be unnecessary.	514	DBS	2nd Qtr. 2015	\$ / Staff
266	The Fire Department's Hydrants and Access Unit should be re-located from 221 North Figueroa Street to 201 North Figueroa Street and co-located with other Fire Department staff, as planned by the Department.	515	Fire	2 nd Qtr. 2015	\$
267	The staff from the Department of Housing that review the <i>Tenant Habitability Plan</i> , <i>Confidential Memorandum</i> , or <i>Landlord Declaration of Intent to Evict</i> forms for building permits should be co-located at the construction service centers. The workload will likely not be full-time so a workstation for the staff should be established, so that these staff can perform other work for the Department of Housing when not reviewing these forms.	516	Housing	2 nd Qtr. 2015	\$
268	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should evaluate whether sufficient workload exists to warrant the assignment of staff by the Department of City Planning and the Fire Department to the San Pedro and the South Los Angeles construction service centers, and the assignment of staff by the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Engineering to the South Los Angeles construction services center.	517	Office of the CAO	1st Qtr. 2015	\$ / Staff
269	The Department of Building and Safety should be assigned responsibility to act on behalf of the Department of City Planning and the Fire Department at the San Pedro and the South Los Angeles construction service centers, the Fire Department to the West Los Angeles construction service center, and the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Engineering at the South Los Angeles construction service centers to accept permit applications for applicants for these departments rather than require the applicants to travel to the construction service centers at Metro, West Los Angeles, or Van Nuys. This could be accomplished via the development of memoranda of agreement that clarify roles and responsibilities, the types of permits that can be issued by the Department of Building and Safety (and can't), etc.	517	DBS, DCP, DOT, Fire	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
270	The Fire Department should assign development services staff to the Van Nuys construction services center on a full-time basis, each and every business day for the entire business day to provide a full-range of plan check services.	518	Fire	1 st Qtr. 2015	\$
271	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the departments assigned to the construction service centers to develop a proposal for the consideration of the Office of the Mayor and the City Council to expand the office hours from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm to 7:30 am to 5:30 pm at the construction service centers. This should initially be "piloted" at just one construction services center to gauge the reaction, and then, if successful, expanded to other construction services centers with high applicant volume (e.g., Metro).	519	Office of the CAO	2nd Qtr. 2015	\$
Chapter 12 - Analysis of the Culture of Development Service Functions					
272	The Personnel Department should conduct a cultural assessment of all of the development service functions.	524	Personnel	4 th Qtr. 2014	\$
273	The City should appropriate \$50,000 for the cultural assessment and allocate the appropriation to the Personnel Department.	524	Office of the CAO	2 nd Qtr. 2014	\$
274	The Personnel Department should provide training at every level of the departments, bureaus and divisions involved in development services as quickly as possible after the approval of this report by the City Council and the Office of the Mayor and after needs are identified as a result of the Cultural Assessment.	526	Personnel	1 st Qtr. 2015	\$
275	The City should appropriate \$100,000 for the training of development services executives, supervisors and managers, and line staff and allocate the appropriation to the Personnel Department.	526	Office of the CAO	2 nd Qtr. 2014	\$
276	The Personnel Department, in concert with the executive and top management of the City's development services, should develop and work with inter-departmental work teams to recommend changes to the development services work processes to address work flow problems and improve customer service.	527	Personnel	2nd Qtr. 2015	N / A
277	The Department of Personnel should facilitate a series of "open" town hall meetings with the employees of the City's development service functions to allow the employees to hear the rationale for the transformation of development services and voice their concerns.	528	Personnel	1st Qtr. 2015	N / A
278	The Department of Personnel should establish an e-suggestion box for the employees of the City's development service functions about how to do things more efficiently and expediently.	528	Personnel	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
279	The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer and the development services leadership team (General Managers and Bureau managers) should spell out the impact of the transformation of development services on the employees in its development services functions including how the transformation would personally impact employees and what it means for them personally (e.g., changes in roles and responsibilities, skills and knowledge, performance expectations, customer centric behavior, etc.).	530	Office of the CAO	3rd Qtr. 2014	N / A
280	The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer and the development services leadership team (General Managers and Bureau managers) should build a case for the transformation of development services for employees and transmit that message. This should include a discussion of why the City is transforming development services, what is changing and what is staying the same, what are the benefits to the City and to the employees themselves.	530	Office of the CAO	3rd Qtr. 2014	N / A
281	The Office of the Mayor should communicate the desired behaviors to the development services leadership team (General Managers and Bureau managers) and hold that leadership team accountable for those behaviors including leading, by example, with their behaviors and actions in the transformation of business processes, the co-location of staff, the enhancement of the regulatory framework, etc.	530	Office of the Mayor	4 th Qtr. 2014	N / A
282	The City should use inter-departmental teams of employees to implement the recommendations contained within this report.	530	Office of the CAO	3 rd Qtr. 2014	N / A
283	The City needs to embed this transformation of development services through metrics. The Office of the City Administrative Officer, and the General Managers and Bureau managers of the development services functions should collaborate to articulate the expected metrics. The General Managers and Bureau managers of the development services functions should be held accountable for meeting these metrics, to measure the expected results of the transformation (e.g., cycle time for permits) using <i>BuildLA</i> , to utilize inter-departmental teams to implement streamlines business practices, etc. This is not a one-time effort. It needs to be an ongoing effort.	530	Office of the CAO	4th Qtr. 2014	N / A
Chapter 13 - Analysis of the Plan of Organization					
284	The permit information services and staff from the five departments (Department Building and Safety, the Department of City Planning, the Department of Transportation, the Public Works Department, and the Fire Department) should be integrated into one department and one information technology unit using a shared services approach.	540	Office of the CAO	4th Qtr. 2015	N / A
285	In developing the shared services concept for BuildLA, the City will need to determine the role of the information technology service provider for <i>BuildLA</i> service delivery.	540	Office of the CAO	3rd Qtr. 2015	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
286	In the implementation of the shared services concept for <i>BuildLA</i> , a memorandum of agreement should be developed between the service provider and the departments that are customers of the service provider.	540	Office of the CAO	3rd Qtr. 2015	N / A
287	A <i>BuildLA</i> issue resolution framework will need to be developed. There needs to be a mechanism for raising and resolving the inevitable issues that will arise between the customers for the shared service delivery of <i>BuildLA</i> and the service provider. Ideally, a governance council will oversee this process.	540	Office of the CAO	3rd Qtr. 2015	N / A
288	The processes used for the service delivery of <i>BuildLA</i> will have to be a “one size fits all.” It is unrealistic to expect that <i>BuildLA</i> business processes can be customized for each department.	540	Office of the Mayor	3rd Qtr. 2014	N / A
289	The Department of Building and Safety should be designated as the service provider for the information technology services associated with <i>BuildLA</i> .	540	Office of the Mayor	3rd Qtr. 2014	(\$)
290	A Bureau-level manager should be authorized to manage the <i>BuildLA</i> shared service given its importance in service delivery for the City of Los Angeles.	540	Office of the CAO	3rd Qtr. 2015	\$ / Staff
291	Once the City of Los Angeles completes the development and deployment of the shared services concept for <i>BuildLA</i> , it should proceed to the development of a shared services concept for fund accounting for the revenues collected by the development service functions in these five departments.	540	Office of the CAO	3rd Qtr. 2016	(\$)
292	The Department of City Planning should assign the staff in the Development Services Bureau geographically at the Metro, Valley, and the proposed West Los Angeles office.	549	DCP	2nd Qtr. 2015	\$
293	The Department of City Planning staff assigned to the Subdivision Section, the Zoning Administrator Section, and the Major Projects Section should be reassigned to the Metro and Valley Neighborhood Project sections, and also used to open a proposed West Los Angeles office.	549	DCP	2nd Qtr. 2015	N / A
294	The Associate Zoning Administrator supervising the construction service centers for the Department of City Planning should be reclassified as a Principal City Planner.	549	DCP	3 rd Qtr. 2014	\$
295	The vacant Principal Planner position that reports to the Deputy Director of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should be utilized to supervise one of the three Neighborhood Projects offices at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.	549	DCP	3 rd Qtr. 2014	N / A
296	The Senior City Planner position in the Office of Zoning Administration should be reallocated to management of professional planners assigned to Neighborhood Projects at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.	549	DCP	3 rd Qtr. 2014	N / A
297	The vacant Senior City Planner in the construction services center should be reallocated to management of professional planners assigned to Neighborhood Projects at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.	549	DCP	3 rd Qtr. 2014	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
298	The vacant Senior City Planner position in Expedited Processing should be reallocated to management of professional planners assigned to Neighborhood Projects at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.	549	DCP	3 rd Qtr. 2014	N / A
299	Two Principal City Planner positions should be authorized for the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning to enable implementation of a geographically based plan of organization.	549	DCP	3 rd Qtr. 2014	\$ / Staff
300	A Senior City Planner position should be authorized for the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning to enable implementation of a geographically based plan of organization.	549	DCP	3 rd Qtr. 2014	\$ / Staff
301	The Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should conduct a staffing and workload analysis to determine the appropriate distribution of professional-level planner positions at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.	549	DCP	3 rd Qtr. 2014	N / A
302	The Office of the Mayor should develop a formal citywide written policy and procedure regarding process ownership for the discretionary review process, the building permit process, and the engineering permit process and the authority of the process owner to act on behalf of the Office of the Mayor with a clear, final decision-maker role.	555	Office of the Mayor	1st Qtr. 2015	N / A
303	The policy and procedure developed by the Office of the Mayor should designate the process owner as an executive, a General Manager, who possesses the necessary organizational clout and authority to act on behalf of the Office of the Mayor, not just negotiate.	556	Office of the Mayor	1st Qtr. 2015	N / A
304	The policy and procedure developed by the Office of the Mayor should assign responsibility to the process owner to work with inter-departmental teams to improve and streamline the process, monitor the service levels delivered by the process (e.g., cycle time), and manage the process in terms of the levels of service provided (e.g., cycle time).	556	Office of the Mayor	1st Qtr. 2015	N / A
305	The Office of the Mayor should closely monitor implementation for the first 12 to 18 months after adoption of the process ownership policy, particularly decisions involving the senior management team across departmental boundaries. In essence, representatives of the Office of the Mayor should be at the table for the first twelve to eighteen months after adoption of process ownership to ensure successful adoption.	556	Office of the Mayor	2nd Qtr. 2015	N / A
306	The Office of the Mayor should solicit ongoing feedback during the first 12 to 18 months of implementation of the process ownership policy and procedure regarding what is and is not working well, and "tweak" the process owner policy and procedure as necessary.	556	Office of the Mayor	1st Qtr. 2016	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
307	Any development services bureau, division or department whose services are funded via a special revenue fund should be authorized to immediately fill any vacant positions that are funded as part of the special revenue fund, and not require the approval of the City's vacant position review committee.	559	Office of the CAO	3rd Qtr. 2014	N / A
308	The City should initiate contracts with consultants for peak development services plan check and permit workload in Planning, Building and Safety, Transportation, Engineering, and Fire. This should be used just to manage temporary peak workload and to temporarily respond to vacancies in positions.	559	Office of the CAO	4th Qtr. 2014	\$
309	The development service functions should explore alternative staffing arrangements in which part-time staff are utilized to meet these peak staffing workload demands.	559	Office of the CAO	4th Qtr. 2014	\$
310	The City should functionally transfer development services from five departments to a new Department including the Department of Building and Safety; the Department of City Planning; Fire Department; the Department of Transportation; and the Bureau of Engineering, Department of Public Works.	569	Office of the CAO	TBD	N / A
311	The functional transfer <u>should only occur</u> after business processes have been substantively streamlined, <i>BuildLA</i> has gone live, development services staff have been co-located, and the culture of the development services functions have been substantially aligned.	569	Office of the CAO	TBD	N / A
312	The functional transfer should not happen all at once. The transition to a new Department should occur over a one to two year period. The functional transfer, however, should begin with the transfer of the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety to a new department. After the successful transition of this transfer, other functions could be transferred to the new department.	569	Office of the CAO	TBD	N / A
313	The City should add a position to manage the new Department: a General Manager.	569	Office of the CAO	TBD	\$ / Staff
314	The City should eliminate, through attrition, thirteen (13) positions upon the functional transfer.	569	Office of the CAO	TBD	(\$)
315	The new Department and the Fire Department, Department of Transportation, and the Fire Department should develop a Memorandum of Agreement to clarify the roles and relationships between the new Department and the staff transferred to the new Department from these other departments.	569	Office of the CAO	TBD	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
316	The new Department should bring together executives, supervisors, and line employees, representing all of the Bureaus in the Department, to develop a mission statement for the new Department, shortly after the formation of the new Department. The Matrix Consulting Group should not develop the mission for the new Department.	571	Office of the CAO	TBD	N / A
317	The title of the new Department should be the Planning, Building and Safety Department.	572	Office of the CAO	TBD	N / A
Chapter 14 - Analysis of Cost Recovery for Development Services					
318	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should expand the revenue policy within the City's financial policies as it pertains to user fees, for the consideration of the City Council.	585	Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A
319	The policy developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer should require that, generally, cost recovery for development services should be 100% with the exception of appeals. However, in charging full cost recovery levels, the City needs to clearly establish and articulate metrics for its performance to ensure that there is "value for cost."	585	Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A
320	Upon adoption of the expanded revenue policy by the City Council, the Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the Department of City Planning to evaluate cost recovery, including direct and indirect costs, and return to the City Council with recommendations regarding appropriate levels of cost recovery for the services provided by the Department.	587	Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A
321	The City should fund the delivery of development services delivered by the Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, and Fire Department through special revenue funds.	588	Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A
322	The use of special revenue funds for the delivery of development services by the Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, and Fire Department should <u>not</u> be based on the presumption that user fees and service charges should fund all of the services.	588	Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A
323	The revenue policy for the City should be expanded to include a goal of maintaining a diversified and stable revenue stream to provide a greater reliance on user fee service charges to reduce reliance on property tax revenues.	589	Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A
324	The revenue policy for the City should be expanded to require that managers for special revenue funds prepare long-term financial plans for the consideration of the Office of the City Administrative Officer.	589	Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A
325	The Bureau of Engineering should migrate towards a flat fee for the processing of B-permits.	589	Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A

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Rec. #	Recommendation	Page #	Mgmt. Accountability	Timing for Implementation	Cost Impact
326	A comprehensive user fee study should be conducted for the development service functions in the Bureau of Engineering, Fire Department and the Department of Transportation.	590	Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A
327	The City of Los Angeles should conduct a nexus study as the basis for establishing a fire facilities fee. A nexus study is an analysis of the need to establish a fire facilities fee based upon an analysis of the population growth of the City of Los Angeles and the associated capital facilities associated with growth.	591	Fire	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A
328	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop for consideration of the City Council a user fee waiver / reduction policy. The purpose of the policy should be to provide a uniform and consistent guideline for receiving, reviewing, considering and processing requests for fee waivers or reductions.	594	Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A
329	These requests for fee waivers or reductions should be received, reviewed, considered and processed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer, with recommendations developed for consideration of the City Council.	594	Office of the CAO	1 st Qtr. 2015	N / A

2. PEER CITY SURVEY

This chapter presents the results of the peer survey conducted by the Matrix Consulting Group of other cities regarding their approach to organizing the delivery of development services. These cities were selected for the peer survey by the City, supplemented by including cities over 100,000 population in Los Angeles County.

1. A PEER SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED OF OTHER CITIES REGARDING THEIR APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT SERVICES ORGANIZATION.

The intent of the peer survey of other cities was to determine the factors that led to the success or failure of the approach used in these cities to functional integration of development services into a single department.

The Matrix Consulting Group documented how planning, development services, and permitting functions were organized; the organizational units that were or were not included in their organizational structure and whether these units were included in one department or multiple departments; the benefits achieved by organizing development services in one department; the problems that were encountered in the organization of development services in one department and how these problems were overcome; and the principles that should be utilized by Los Angeles to enhance the likelihood of a successful transfer of development services into a new department.

2. EIGHT CITIES WERE CONTACTED FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE PEER SURVEY.

The Matrix Consulting Group contacted eight cities as part of the peer survey. The cities and the managers that were contacted are listed in the table below.

City of San Diego, California Development Services Department Ahmadi Afsaneh, Chief Building Official Tom Tomlinson, Acting Development Services Director William Fulton, Planning Director

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City of Long Beach, California – Planning and Building Department Derek Burnham, Planning Director Truong Huynh, Chief Building Official
City San Jose, California - Planning, Building & Code Enforcement Department Chu Chang, Chief Building Official Joe Horwedel, Director (previous Planning Director)
City of Glendale, California - Community Development Department Stuart Tom, Chief Building Official Hassan Haghani, Director (previous Planning Director)
City of Phoenix, Arizona - Planning and Development Department Cindy Stotler, Assistant Director for Development Alan Stephenson, Acting Director
City of Portland, Oregon - Bureau of Development Services Terry Whitehill, Chief Building Official Paul Scarlett, Director
City of Chicago, Illinois Elizabeth Scanlon, Director of Code Development, Department of Buildings Patti Scudiero, Assistant Director, Department of Housing & Economic Development (prior Bureau Chief, Planning & Zoning)
City of Dallas, Texas Therese O'Donnell, Assistant City Manager (prior Director, Department of Sustainable Development & Construction) Larry Holmes, Chief Building Official David Cossum, Acting Director, Department of Sustainable Development & Construction (prior Director of Planning)

Other cities were contacted, but failed to respond or fully respond. This includes the city of New York (no response to e-mails or phone calls).

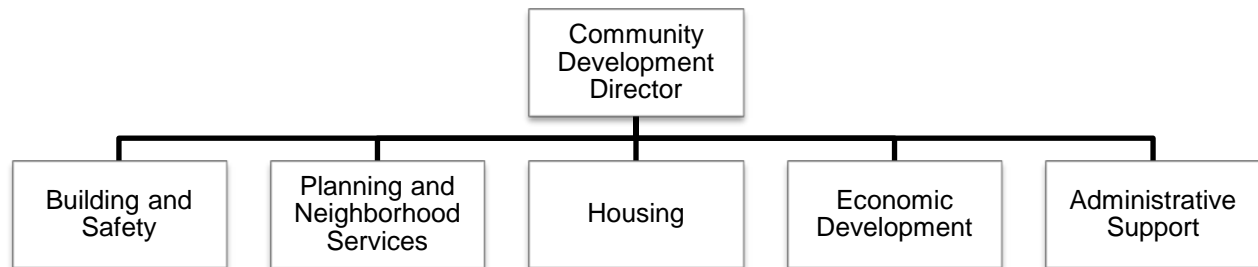
The results of these contacts are presented on a city-by-city basis in the following sections.

(1) City of Glendale, California

The population of Glendale, California is approximately 193,000 and it is the 122nd largest city in the United States in terms of population. This city has recently transferred much of its development services to a single department: the Community Development Department.

What's Included in the Department? In the City of Glendale, all functions and disciplines related to the quality of neighborhoods and development services have been

placed within the Community Development Department. The Department consists of five divisions as shown in the organization chart that follows.



A description of the relevant divisions within the department are provided below.

- The Planning and Neighborhood Services Division prepares and maintains the General Plan, prepares Community Plans which amend the General Plan, prepares and amends the Zoning Code, and processes discretionary or entitlement permits. Its staff also provides code enforcement services.
- The Building and Safety Division delivers construction plan check, permitting, and building inspection services. The Building and Safety Division also manages the Permit Services Center (one-stop counter).

Although Fire and Public Works engineering are represented at the Center, they are not part of the Community Development Department.

What is the mission of the Department? The mission of the department is “through ongoing dialogue with all segments of the community, the department captures the community's vision for its future quality of life and translates it into a well-coordinated, internally consistent, streamlined work program, according to the missions of the City Council, Successor Agency and Housing Authority.”

Why and when was development services functionally transferred to a new department? In 2011, the City transferred its Building and Safety, Code Enforcement, and City Planning Departments to a new department: the Department of Community

Development. In 2012, the Housing and Economic Development departments were added. The organization continues to be in flux, however, as the City Manager has just announced that the Economic Development Division will be moved to the City Manager's Office. The Building and Safety Division was originally in the Public Works Department. Its transfer to the new Department of Community Development was motivated, in part, by the fact that Public Works was a very large department that could not give adequate attention to development issues. In addition, it was believed that its combination with City Planning in the new department would overcome the disconnect between planning / land use permitting and building / construction permitting. The departmental restructuring was not for the purpose of cost reduction.

What was done to get ready for the functional transfer of development services to a new department? Little was done in Glendale, prior to the initial consolidation, to prepare the departments and their staff for the transfer of these functions to a new department. "We just slammed together," reflected the Chief Building Official. "It might have been helpful to do it more gradually, but if you have capable people, you can make it work." Initial resistance was experienced among staff, particularly in the Building and Safety Division. The new Director gave considerable personal attention to this issue, meeting with each individual in the Building and Safety Division. Weekly management meetings that involve all division heads and other proactive outreach measures have helped to develop a "team culture".

What were the advantages and disadvantages of transferring development services to a new department? The Community Development Department managers, generally, feel that the present organizational structure is appropriate for their city. The

grouping of all functions dealing with development in one department makes sense. No significant improvements in customer service or processing time were observed, however, because Glendale already had a one-stop permit services center (managed by the Chief Building Official) prior to the consolidation. Improvements were achieved in coordination and consistency of Building and Safety Division staff and the Planning and Neighborhood Services Division staff in project review and approval. For instance, Glendale requires design review (through the Planning and Neighborhood Services Division) for almost all new development, and in the past Building and Safety Division staff would often find that some modifications required by design review were prohibited by the building code. Today, the staff of both divisions work more closely together to avoid such conflicts.

Was Building and Safety forced to make code compromises? The functional transfer of the Building and Safety Division to a new department did not result in increased pressure on staff to compromise code requirements for projects.

How is the Construction Services Center staffed and operated? In Glendale's construction services center, upon initial intake of the building permit, the permit applicant is advised of the approvals and clearances that must be obtained. The applicant receives the necessary signoff (electronically) from each required division or department from their representative at the Permit Services Center (one-stop counter) including Planning, Building and Safety, Fire, Public Works-Engineering, etc. Most project review begins with staff from the Planning and Neighborhood Services Division, which provides zoning clearance or identifies the planning entitlements required.

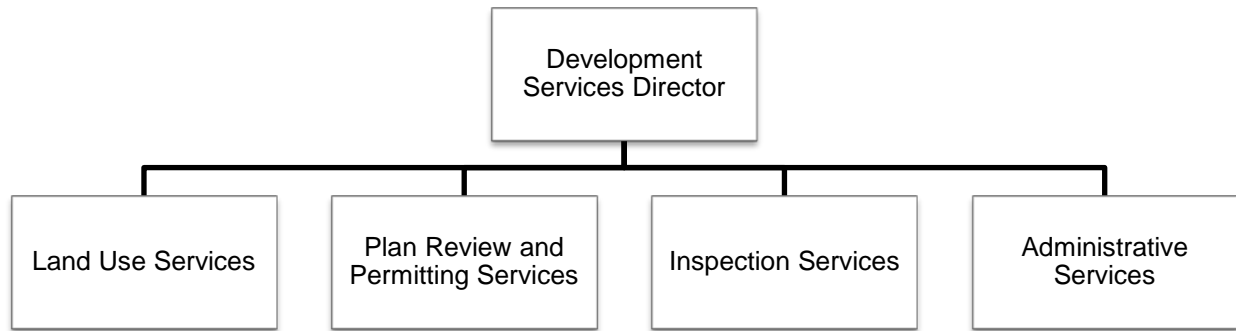
How does the pre-entitlement permit process work? An applicant can request a pre-entitlement permit application meeting, in which a case planner is assigned from the Planning and Neighborhood Services Division. The case planner calls upon the Concierge Service staff, housed in the Director's Office, to arrange an interdepartmental meeting (Fire, Public Works engineering and/or transportation, Water and Power, and Police) to advise the applicant on the project and its processing.

Does the City use project managers for permit applications? Case managers are available to assist the applicant from pre-application to issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.

(2) The City of Portland, Oregon

The population of Portland, Oregon is approximately 593,000, and it is the 28th largest city in the United States in terms of population. This city has transferred much of its development service functions to a single department: the Bureau of Development Services. It has, however, placed its long-range planning services in a separate Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.

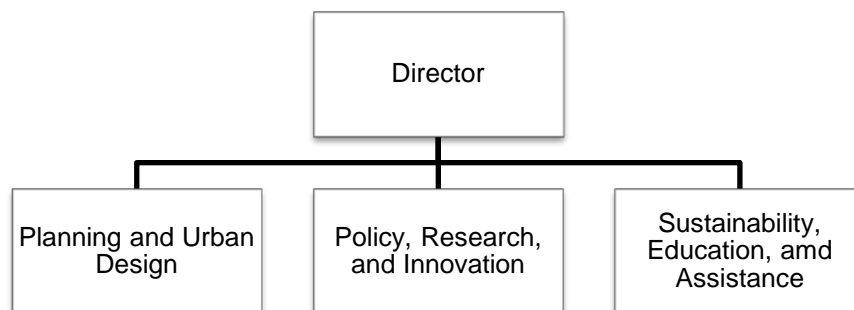
What's Included in the Department? The City of Portland, Oregon, operates a Bureau of Development Services, intended to support development "from concept to construction", which includes planning, building inspection, and building permit plan check services. The Bureau has four divisions as shown in the organization chart that follows.



A description of the relevant divisions within the Bureau is presented below.

- The Land Use Services Division, Bureau of Development Services, reviews all development applications for zoning compliance, and processes all discretionary reviews.
- The Plan Review and Permitting Division of the Bureau of Development Services provides all building and trades plan check and permitting services.
- The Inspection Services Division of the Bureau of Development Services undertakes building and trades field inspections for code compliance / enforcement.

Portland maintains a separate Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, which includes all of the long-range planning functions of the prior Planning Bureau, and which places a new emphasis on planning for sustainability. This Bureau is organized as shown in the organization chart that follows.



The Planning and Urban Design Division undertakes all of the traditional long-range planning functions, including preparation and maintenance of the Comprehensive (General) Plan and the District (community) Plans. It is also responsible for preparation and amendment of the Zoning Code, and for all rezoning studies. The Policy, Research

and Innovation Division deals with policy analysis, green buildings, energy efficiency, climate policy, and solid waste and recycling. The Sustainability, Education and Assistance Division provides a community outreach function regarding sustainability.

What is the mission of the Department? The mission of the Bureau of Development Services is to “promote safety, livability and economic vitality through efficient and collaborative application of building and development codes”.

When and why were development services functionally transferred to a new department? The Bureau of Development Services was created in 1999 by combining the Building Bureau (which included plan check, inspection and code enforcement) with the development review portion of the Planning Bureau (but not long-range planning). The consolidation was driven by a strong demand for more streamlined processes and services.

What was done to get ready for the functional transfer of development services to a new department? Prior to the consolidation, the City held a series of meetings with development industry representatives and with staff of the two Bureaus to develop the plan for the new department. Some of the staff members of the two Bureaus were concerned regarding the consolidation, particularly staff of the Planning Bureau. These staff concerns were, and to some extent continue to be, a major challenge for the Director of the Bureau of Development Services. Under his leadership, all members of the new Bureau's “team” worked on a mission statement for the Bureau. There are regular Bureau-wide meetings. Staff meetings always include representatives from all divisions. The office is laid out such that working groups from different divisions are

located next to each other in order to promote informal contact. These are all designed to build a unified and consistent culture.

What were the advantages and disadvantages of transferring development services to a new department? The management staff of the Bureau of Development Services and the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability expressed pride in their present structure for planning and development services. They believe that long-range planning and visioning gets adequate attention by being in its own Bureau, a bureau that also responds to the community's concern for sustainability. They feel that development permitting processes are now well coordinated within the Bureau of Development Services. One director can now address all problems regarding development project processing, and the process is clear and direct for customers.

On the negative side, the Bureau of Development Services feels that zoning code amendments and rezoning permit applications are often assigned low priority by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, thus slowing the overall processing for development permits that require such actions. They also feel that permit processing could be further improved and expedited if staff from Fire plan check and inspection and Public Works Engineering were included in the Bureau.

Was Building and Safety forced to make code compromises? Although staff occasionally feels pressure from elected officials to move specific projects along more quickly, they have never felt forced to compromise life safety issues.

How is the Construction Services Center staffed and operated? The construction services center managed by the Bureau, offers plan review by planning, building, transportation, environmental services (sewer and storm water), water, parks (park

impact fees), Fire, and Public Works Engineering. The counter receptionist directs applicants first to the set-up station, where Permit Technicians provide an intake function, entering the application into the electronic tracking and permitting system. Applicants then move on to the planning station, where compliance with zoning is determined by planners and any necessary discretionary reviews are identified. The Land Use Services Division processes any such discretionary reviews. Applicants whose projects are cleared for zoning consistency move on to a building permit plan check station. Approximately 80% of all building and trade permits are issued over the counter. It should be noted that Fire and Public Works Engineering are not included in the Bureau, although they are represented at the permit center.

How does the pre-entitlement permit process work? The Land Use Services Division will arrange a pre-application conference at the request of an applicant. The staff from Land Use Services and other departments and bureaus that participate in the entitlement review (Engineering, Transportation, Sewer, Water, etc.) attend the conference. Plan Review and Permitting Services staff does not normally attend the conference. The purpose of the conference is to advise the applicant on procedural and substantive requirements.

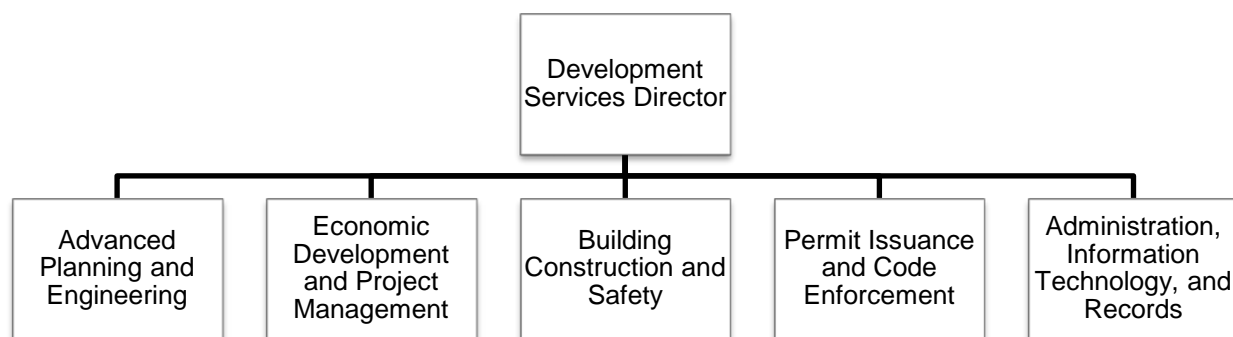
Does the City use project managers for permit applications? devTeam Portland is a group of bureau employees, known as Development Liaisons, who are committed to helping customers navigate the City permitting and construction process. The devTeam Development Liaison is the applicant's "project manager" throughout project development from early design concept through final inspection. The Development Liaison is a single point of contact between the applicant and the City permit review and

inspection staff.

(3) City of San Diego, California

The population of San Diego is approximately 1.3 million, and it is the 8th largest city in the United States in terms of population. This city has transferred much of its development service functions to a single department: the Development Services Department. It is, however, in the process of placing its long-range planning services in a separate department: the Planning and Neighborhood Restoration Department.

What's Included in the Department? The Development Services Department is organized as shown in the organization chart that follows.



A description of the relevant divisions within the department is provided below.

- The Advance Planning and Engineering Division consists of two primary organizational units. One unit is responsible for environmental review, discretionary review processing, long-term permit monitoring, development and permit information, historic surveys, historical resources board, Mills Act agreements and inspections, historic property designations, etc. The other unit is responsible for discretionary engineering and transportation development review, map checking, etc. This Division is also responsible for long-range planning activities including community plan updates. The City's community plans are largely out-of-date.
- The Economic Development and Project Management Division undertakes typical economic development functions (such as business attraction), manages the enterprise zone and tax credits program, manages HUD programs, and

administers the small business and tourism business improvement districts. It also provides project management services, assisting applicants of larger projects process their applications through the entitlement and permitting processes, serving as advocates for the applicants with staff of the processing departments / divisions, etc..

- The Building Construction and Safety Division delivers all of the plan check and inspection functions. This includes checking applications for zoning compliance by city planners assigned to the Division (applications requiring planning entitlements are referred to the Advance Planning and Engineering Division), building and trades plan check, building and trades field inspections, and grading and drainage plan review and inspection. It has internal targets for plan check turn-around times, but there are no published goals. The Division will issue simple no-plan permits on-line for water heaters, electrical outlets, gas lines, and simple plumbing work.
- The Permit Issuance and Code Enforcement Division manages the one-stop permitting counter, including application intake into the electronic permit tracking system, issuance of construction permits, and customer information through a Public Information Officer. In addition to representatives from the Development Services Department, the counter also has stations for Public Works Engineering (right-of-way issues) and Fire plan check. Although not part of the Development Services Department, the representatives from these other departments have been “deputized” by their departments, so that the Public Works staff still have the authority of the City Engineer and the Fire staff still have the authority of the Fire Marshal. The Division also manages the City’s Code Enforcement Program, and serves as the local enforcement agency for landfills and hazardous materials.

What is the mission of the Department? The mission of the Development Services Department is to enhance San Diegans' quality of life by providing effective, safe and quality development. The Department is committed to excellent community and customer service through timely and effective management of development and compliance processes.

When and why were development services functionally transferred to a new department? The Development Services Department was formed 3 years ago when the Mayor merged the City Planning and Community Investment Department with the Development Services Department. The Mayor had a twofold justification for the

merger: (1) cost savings of nearly \$1 million per year, and (2) expediting completion of community plan updates for the City's 40+ communities. Since the new department had the same name as the previous Development Services Department, it appeared that the City had abandoned city planning.

This was not the first time that the two departments were integrated.

In 2012, the Development Services Department assumed responsibilities for fire and life safety plan reviews and inspections that were previously performed by the Fire Prevention Bureau staff. Currently, the newly formed Life Safety Review section of the Department is plan checking fire alarm systems, fire sprinkler systems, special suppression systems, and hazardous materials plans. The electrical inspectors now perform fire alarm system inspections, while fire mechanical inspectors complete sprinkler and special suppression system inspections. Fire staff who are part of the Development Services Department have been "deputized" by the Fire Department so that they retain the authority of the Fire Marshal.

As part of his campaign platform, the recently elected (and subsequently resigned) Mayor promised to bring back a dedicated long-range planning department. He was unable to accomplish that before he resigned from office. He did, however, appoint a new Planning and Neighborhood Restoration Department Director, who is now working with the Acting Director of the Development Services Department to separate long-range planning from Development Services into a new Planning and Neighborhood Restoration Department. Both department directors indicated the intent to create a new Planning and Neighborhood Restoration Department with responsibility

for long-range and community planning; however, they propose retaining in Development Services those planners engaged in discretionary entitlement processing.

What was done to get ready for the functional transfer of development services to a new department? Community outreach and meetings with the potentially affected staff preceded the functional transfer of development services into the Development Services Department. Nevertheless, staff felt that they were not adequately informed and had not been adequately involved in the process. In the end, the functional transfer was prepared and recommended by a small group of managers from the two departments.

What were the advantages and disadvantages of transferring development services to a new department? The City of San Diego has been ambivalent over time regarding the best organizational structure for planning and development services. The last merger, intended to save money and expedite completion of Community Plan revisions, achieved the first goal but not the second. It was generally acknowledged that the merger of departments provided more consistency in the application of development regulations, but there was no noticeable reduction in processing time. The merger was perceived as minimizing citywide planning, and this was, generally, the reason given for recreating an independent long-range planning department.

Was Building and Safety forced to make code compromises? The merged department felt no more or less political pressure to approve projects, and staff was never pressured to compromise the Building Code or the Municipal Code.

How is the Construction Services Center staffed and operated? The Permit Issuance and Code Enforcement Division manages the construction services center. The first step is application intake, where the application is entered into the electronic

permit tracking system. City planning staff assigned to the Building Construction and Safety Division then check zoning compliance; applications requiring planning entitlements are referred to the Advance Planning and Engineering Division. Applicants then move on to building permit plan check, where plans that cannot be approved over-the-counter are accepted for regular plan review. Public Works Engineers and Fire plan checkers are also available at the counter.

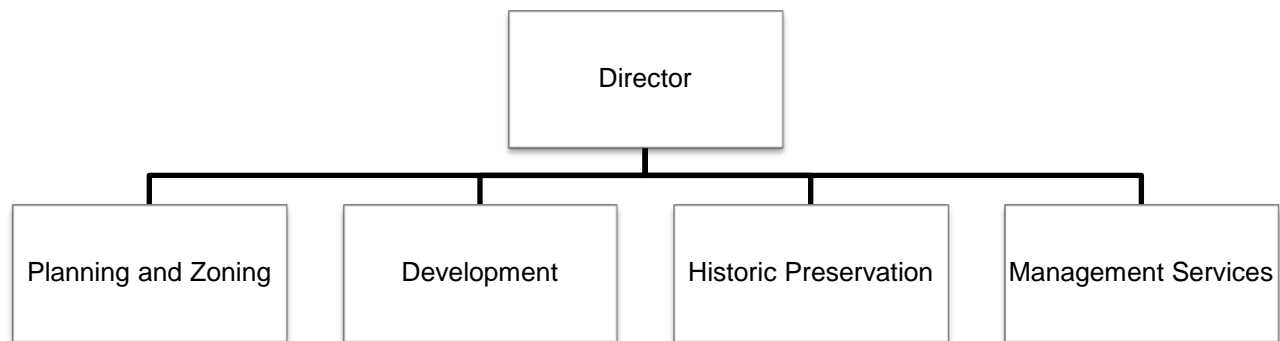
How does the pre-entitlement permit process work? The Development Services Department offers a pre-application review service for larger projects. Applicants can choose to meet with only one discipline from the Department, or have a meeting with representatives of all departments/divisions likely to review their application.

Does the City use project managers for permit applications? San Diego has a specific job classification of Development Project Manager whose responsibility it is to shepherd large projects through the development permitting system. These specialists are located in the Economic Development and Project Management Division.

(4) City of Phoenix, Arizona.

The population of Phoenix is approximately 1.47 million, and it is the 6th largest city in the United States in terms of population. This city has transferred much of its development service functions to a single department: the Planning and Development Department.

What's Included in the Department? The Planning and Development Department consists of four divisions as shown in the following organizational chart:



A description of the relevant divisions within the department is provided below.

- The Planning and Zoning Division is responsible for the preparation and maintenance of the General Plan and all Area and Neighborhood Plans, preparation and amendment of the Zoning Ordinance, and processing of all planning entitlements. It also staffs the Zoning Counter in the Construction Services Center.
- The Development Division undertakes plan review, issues construction permits, and makes field inspections of construction. It operates the Construction Services Center. Included in the Division are engineers responsible for traffic and public right-of-way and Fire personnel responsible for plan check and inspection.
- The Historic Preservation Division protects and enhances historic neighborhoods, buildings and sites.

What is the mission of the Department? The mission for the department, cited in their strategic plan, is simple: planning, development and preservation for a better Phoenix. The strategic plan further describes the mission of the department as guiding the physical development of the City by preserving its historic sites, guiding land use, and ensuring the safe construction of buildings and infrastructure.

When and why were development services functionally transferred to a new department? Phoenix created a Development Services Department in the late 1980's, consisting essentially of the Development Division of the existing Planning and Development Department. Three years ago the Development Services Department was

integrated with the Planning and Zoning Department and with the Historic Preservation unit from the City Manager's Office to form the Planning and Development Department. The merger was recommended by the Innovation and *Efficiency Task Force* in order to achieve cost savings during the economic recession. Subsequent to creation of the new Department, Fire Plan Check and Inspection services were transferred to the Planning and Development Department from the Fire Department.

What was done to get ready for the functional transfer of development services to a new department? The merger was studied for six months prior to implementation. The affected department directors and their executive staff met with the City Manager to develop the plan for the new department. Study groups were formed of middle managers. The integration of the departments was phased-in over a twelve-month period following the official creation of the new department. For instance, the zoning counter was moved immediately, but planners who had processed site plan reviews and subdivisions in the previous Development Services Department were not moved into the Planning and Zoning Division until months later.

What were the advantages and disadvantages of transferring development services to a new department? The merger has resulted in improved customer service, as applicants can now process all of their permits in the Planning and Development Department. Communication has improved among staff. For instance, community planners (long-range planning) now communicate more with case planners (current planning). The merger also achieved the anticipated cost reductions through savings in administration. Prior to the merger, only the Development Services Department had an

automated permit system. With the merger, the system was expanded to other divisions.

Was Building and Safety forced to make code compromises? The merger had no effect on occasional political pressure to “be more flexible.”

How is the Construction Services Center staffed and operated? The Development Division operates the Construction Services Center. Applicants are greeted by a receptionist who directs them to the appropriate counter for their type of application. The zoning counter is usually the first stop for most applicants. The Planning and Zoning Division staff this counter. If the project complies with zoning, the building permit plans are stamped and the applicant is directed to the next counter for building permit plan check. If a discretionary planning permit is required, the Zoning Counter accepts the application and logs the project into the automated permit information system, once the applicant has paid the necessary fee to the cashier.

Applicants for small projects (remodels, many tenant improvements, additions up to 500 sq. ft., and applications not requiring plans) are directed to the express permit counter, where the application will be reviewed, logged in and approved on the spot. Applications for such small projects may also be submitted and approved online.

Applicants requiring building permit plan check (and not express) proceed to the appropriate plan review counter: residential, commercial, or civil (grading and drainage).

The building permit plan review counter checks the building permit plans for completeness and issues an administrative checklist designating the plans as complete or identifying deficiencies. Once an application fee is paid to the cashier, the plan reviewer accepts the complete application with plans, and logs the project into the

automated permit information system. Applicants are notified when plan review is complete, and they pick up their permit and approved plans at the Payments and Submittals Counter (cashier).

Fire prevention plans are submitted to the fire counter.

Phoenix offers a self-certify program, wherein an architect or engineer may certify that the plans meet all code requirements and pick up a permit without undergoing plan review. Construction is undertaken at the applicant's risk, since a subsequent audit by Development Division staff may require redesign and reconstruction if code violations are identified. Another program is the Permit By Inspection Program, wherein an inspector will meet an applicant for small projects (e.g., small tenant improvements) on the site, provide guidance on the construction vis-a-vis the codes, and issue the permit.

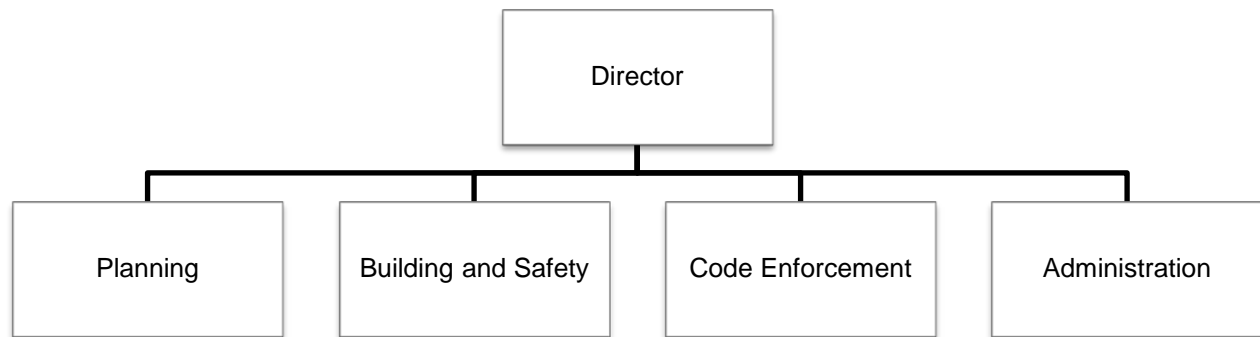
How does the pre-entitlement permit process work? Applicants can request a pre-application conference through the Development Division. The conference includes representatives from all departments / divisions that must review the project, and results in a checklist of all reviews, entitlements and permits required to successfully process the application.

Does the City use project managers for permit applications? The new Department has continued to innovate since its formation. It created the Office of Customer Advocacy, wherein case managers help inexperienced applicants move their applications through the permitting process.

(5) City of San Jose, California

The population of San Jose is approximately 984,000, and it is the 10th largest city in the United States in terms of population. This city has transferred much of its development service functions to a single department: the Planning, Building and Code Enforcement Department.

What's Included in the Department? The Planning, Building and Code Enforcement Department is organized into four divisions as shown in the following organization chart:



A description of the relevant divisions within the department is provided below.

- The Planning Division undertakes both Long-Range Planning and Current Planning. Responsibilities in Long-Range Planning include the General Plan, Urban Village Plans, land use and environmental policy, and monitoring and forecasting development activity. Current Planning prepares, maintains and amends the Zoning Ordinance, conducts rezoning studies, undertakes environmental review, and processes development entitlements (planned development permits, tentative maps, site development permits, and conditional use permits). A section of the Division is assigned to the Permit Center to provide planning information and zoning review. The Division also houses the Department's Data Management / GIS Team.
- The Building and Safety Division provides construction plan check and field inspection services. It also operates the Construction Services Center.
- Code Enforcement utilizes education and enforcement tools to facilitate compliance with Municipal Codes designed to maintain a healthy, safe and clean environment, carry out land use policy, and preserve the quality of life standards

that residents and businesses enjoy in our community. The Code Enforcement Division provides a base-level citywide enforcement service for all reported concerns and violations relating to neighborhood residential properties, as well as commercially and industrially zoned properties. Currently, Code Enforcement provides two types of services – community code enforcement which includes the Multiple Housing Program, General Code Complaints, and the Community Development Block Grant. Other programs include neighborhood cleanups, alcohol and tobacco programs, abandoned cart and vehicle program and solid waste landfill inspections.

The functional integration did not include those functions of Fire and Public Works involved in development review and approval. The Director has been successful, however, in gaining cooperation and support from these departments. The Director holds bi-weekly meetings with the directors of these departments, creating a “virtual department” for all development services.

What is the mission of the Department? The mission of the department is to guide the physical change of San José to create and maintain a safe, healthy, attractive, and vital place to live and work.

When and why were development services functionally transferred to a new department? The Planning, Building and Code Enforcement Departments were merged in 1991 when there was a vacancy in management in the Building and Safety Department. The purpose was to provide better customer service.

What was done to get ready for the functional transfer of development services to a new department? The Office of the City Manager mandated the functional integration with little participation and preparation by the affected staff. The Director reported that, subsequent to the merger, it took time to get the staffs of the previously separate departments to work together. The “different cultures” of Planning and of Building made it difficult for them to understand each other. Initially staff of one division just passed

projects along to the next division, much as they had done when they were separate departments: however, eventually they learned to work together as a team.

What were the advantages and disadvantages of transferring development services to a new department? Both the Chief Building Official and the Departmental Director believe that the functionally integrated department has worked well for San Jose.

As the present Director nears retirement, however, they are considering other organizational structures. Should long-range planning, which suffered severe staff cutbacks after the merger, be separated out as its own department? Should Fire plan check and inspection and Public Works public right-of-way engineers be incorporated into the Department?

Was Building and Safety forced to make code compromises? Neither the Chief Building Official nor the Departmental Director report any increased political pressure since the merger to compromise building code standards.

How is the Construction Services staffed and operated? The Building and Safety Division operates the construction services center and provides construction plan check and field inspection services. Planning staff, Building Inspectors, Permit Specialists, and clerical staff are assigned to the construction services center. Plans are routed for plan check to Fire and to Public Works Engineering, whose staff are not located in the Planning, Building and Code Enforcement Department.

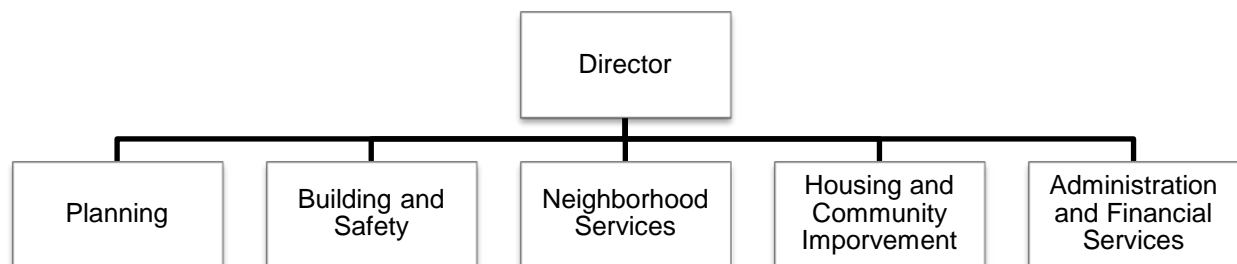
How does the pre-entitlement permit process work? The Planning Division offers a preliminary review program wherein planners review the preliminary proposal and offer suggestions and guidance regarding its entitlement processing.

Does the City use project managers for permit applications? The Department has one Project Manager who assists applicants for major projects through the development permitting process. An applicant cannot obtain such service by request. The Department Director and the Office of Economic Development in the City Manager's Office identify major projects (projects of major significance to the economic development of San Jose). There are currently 30 such projects being assisted by the Project Manager.

(6) City of Long Beach, California

The population of Long Beach is approximately 468,000, and it is the 36th largest city in the United States in terms of population. This city has transferred much of its development service functions to a single department: the Development Services Department.

What's Included in the Department? The Development Services Department consists of five divisions as shown in the following organizational chart:



A description of the relevant divisions is provided below.

- The Building and Safety Bureau reviews building permit applications for compliance with State and local building codes (structural, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, and energy efficiency), provides inspection services for all building related construction, and manages the Construction Services Center. The

Bureau is also responsible for stormwater improvement plan review, and flood plain certificate review.

- The Planning Bureau is responsible for both current, long range planning, and historical preservation.
- The Neighborhood Services Bureau implements various activities to engage the community, arrest deterioration, and improve the quality, environmental condition and character of the neighborhoods of the City. By combining code enforcement and neighborhood improvement activities, the Bureau partners with residents, businesses and non-profit organizations to deliver services that ensure compliance with the Long Beach Municipal Code, eliminate blight in qualified low-income areas, and encourage community participation.
- The Housing and Community Improvement Bureau delivers a broad range of services designed to rehabilitate single and multi-family housing.

What is the mission of the Department? The mission of the department is to contribute to a dynamic, safe and sustainable city that honors its past and embraces the future. This includes improving the physical development and revitalization of the City; improving the quality of life in the City through comprehensive code enforcement, provision and improvement of affordable housing, and neighborhood beautification and improvement; and assisting residents and businesses through the development process, while continuing to evaluate ways to streamline it.

When and why were development services functionally transferred to a new department? The initial integration of the Planning Department and the Building Department occurred in 1977 when a new City Manager was hired. At that time, Planning consisted of Advance Planning, Community and Environmental Planning, and Current Planning. Building consisted of Engineering Plan Review, Inspections, and Code Enforcement. The consolidation was part of a citywide effort by the new City Manager to reduce the number of departments and to tighten up management.

Over time, the structure of the Department experienced numerous changes. In 2005, Code Enforcement was transferred to the Department of Community Development. When redevelopment was abandoned by the State in 2010, the Community Development Department was dissolved and the Development Services Department was restructured to house Code Enforcement in a new Neighborhood Services Bureau and Housing Services and the Redevelopment Successor Agency in the new Housing and Community Improvement Bureau.

What was done to get ready for the functional transfer of development services to a new department? In all of the reorganizations, staff was little involved in the decision-making. The initial consolidation of Planning and Building in 1977 was perhaps the most difficult for staff. The consolidation worked because of the determination of the City Manager and the leadership of the Departmental Director and the Chief Building Official.

What were the advantages and disadvantages of transferring development services to a new department? The creation of the Department of Planning and Building in 1977 resulted in the consolidation of the planning permit counter and the building permit counter, creating the precursor to the modern one-stop permit center. The advantages of the new counter were immediately obvious to the development community and to the staff as planners and building plan checkers began to work side by side to clarify and expedite the development permitting process.

Was Building and Safety forced to make code compromises? The Building staff reports that they did not experience increased political pressure following the merger, and they were never asked to compromise the building codes.

How is the Construction Services Center staffed and operated? The original construction services center was created in 1977 and was staffed by only Planning and Building and Safety staff. The construction services center has since been expanded into a true one-stop permitting center that works well, even for inexperienced applicants. The information desk welcomes visitors, helps them with the application if they do not already have one, and advises them of the reviews which their project requires. Applicants normally start with Planning, which checks their project for zoning. The Building and Safety station provides over-the-counter plan check for approximately 80% of its applications, and accepts plans for regular plan check for the remainder. Public Works / Utilities has a station to give advice and direction on any required right-of-way reconstruction. The Fire plan checkers review the project relative to the Fire Code. Applicants intending to provide food service must travel to the City's Health Department (due to budget constraints, the Health staff recently left the counter and applicants are now required to make a separate trip to the Health Department building). The Public Works, Fire and Health staff are not part of the Development Services Department; the Department has a written agreement with each of these separate departments. There is a single cashier at the permit counter to accept payments and issue permits.

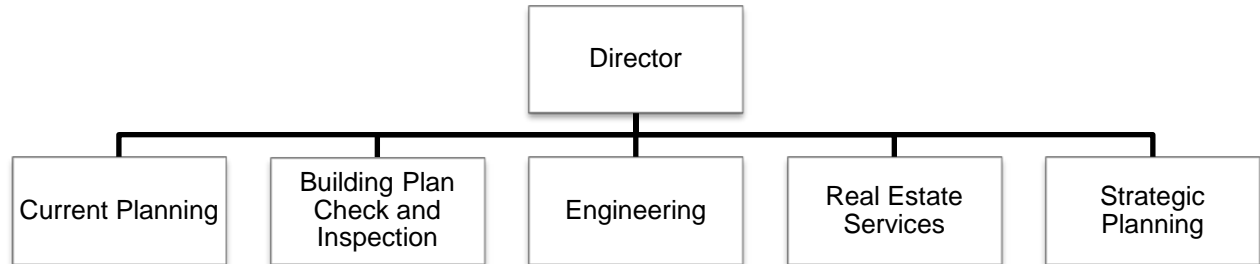
How does the pre-entitlement permit process work? The Building and Safety Bureau offers a project facilitation process, which arranges pre-application interdepartmental meetings with the applicant to explain and coordinate the project review process.

(7) City of Dallas, Texas.

The population of Dallas is approximately 1.2 million, and it is the 9th largest city in the United States in terms of population. This city has transferred much of its development service functions to a single department: the Sustainable Development and Construction Department.

In comparing Dallas to Los Angeles, it is important to note that Dallas requires very few discretionary entitlements. Most uses in Dallas are permitted in their zoning ordinance with their development standards set forth in the zoning ordinance.

What's included in the new department? The Sustainable Development and Construction Department consists of five divisions as shown in the following organization chart:



The Current Planning Division is responsible for zoning and subdivisions. It processes Zoning Ordinance amendments, rezoning proposals, and Planned Development Districts (the only discretionary entitlement in the Ordinance). The Building Plan Check and Inspection Division operates the Construction Services Center, conducts all plan checks (including zoning compliance), issues building permits, and provides field inspection of construction. The Engineering Division reviews subdivision plats and approves the civil engineering package (water, storm, right-of-way

improvements) for all projects. The Real Estate Division administers real estate owned or to be acquired by the City, including revocable licensing for construction and use within the public right-of-way. The Strategic Planning Division is responsible for long-range land use and transportation planning, GIS mapping, and area planning within economic development areas (Dallas has no community plans).

What is the mission of the Department? The mission of the department is focused on (1) a vibrant, sustainable economy offering diverse business opportunities, thriving neighborhoods, premier attractions, reliable city services, and quality infrastructure; (2) a sustainable community with a clean, healthy environment; and (3) an efficient, effective, and economical government to meet the needs of its citizens in the present and future.

When and why were development services functionally transferred to a new department? The Department of Sustainable Development and Construction was created in 2003 by integrating the Planning Department, Building Plan Check and Inspection Department, Engineering Bureau, and Fire plan check staff. The creation of a single department responsible for most development services was motivated by frustration expressed by the development community over the need to deal with multiple departments in dispersed locations. It was mandated by the City Manager based upon the recommendations of an internal efficiency team.

What was done to get ready for the functional transfer of development services to a new department? The City Manager and the affected department heads planned the new department; staff of the departments had little involvement. The first director of the new department stated that it took some time for staff to adjust to the new arrangement.

Initially they operated as if they were merely co-located members of their old departments. Integrating Fire plan checkers was a major challenge, particularly because Fire Inspection remained in the Fire Department. The Departmental Director reported that she overcame the problems by having a standing meeting of all division managers at 5:00 PM every day for nearly a year until they learned to be (or were replaced by) “team managers.”

What are the advantages and disadvantages of transferring development services to a new department? Managers report success in the merger. Development permitting has been streamlined and fully coordinated, much to the satisfaction of the development community. Applicants for minor improvements can now sit down with a single reviewer and receive their permit at the conclusion of the review. All staff members pursue a common goal of helping to make good and safe development happen. There is greater staff accountability and mutual respect throughout the organization.

The one possible disadvantage is that planning has suffered disproportionate staff reductions compared to the rest of the Department. Managers are reluctant to blame this on the merger, however, noting that Building Inspection staff is supported by an enterprise fund, whereas planning is dependent upon the general fund.

Was Building Plan Check and Inspection forced to make code compromises? The Chief Building Official reported that he has never felt pressured to compromise the Building Code, either before or after the creation of the integrated department.

How is the Construction Services Center staffed and operated? Dallas does not have a traditional construction service center, but rather a center composed of a series

of separate offices. An applicant checks in with the receptionist who logs the project into the automated permit information system and determines whether or not the application can be processed on the spot (generally residential additions and remodels, Certificate of Occupancy for the same or similar use, tenant improvements of less than 5,000 square feet, and minor single trade improvements). Such applicants are asked to sit in the waiting room until called by a building permit plan reviewer. The receptionist collects all other plans and forwards them to plan check.

Same day building permit plan review is convenient and expeditious. A single building permit plan reviewer meets with the applicant, checks and approves the plans relative to Zoning and Building Codes, and completes the electronic file on the application. The applicant obtains their building permit upon paying the cashier their application fees.

Building permit plans requiring regular plan check are routed concurrently to zoning, building and safety, and engineering plan checkers. The zoning plan checkers are City planners assigned to the Building Plan Check and Inspection Division. Fire plan check requires a separate submittal by a State licensed fire prevention specialist. Reviewed plans are returned to the applicant for corrections, and the permit is issued upon approval of corrected plans.

Dallas offers a popular Q-Team (Quick Response Team) plan check process. If an applicant chooses this approach, the receptionist directs the applicant to the Q-Team office on a separate floor from the Construction Services Center. At the Q-Team office, their building permit plans are logged in and accepted. The office sets an appointment one to two weeks in the future when the applicant, architect and engineer will meet with

building permit plan reviewers from all necessary disciplines who review and approve the plans at the meeting. If the applicant and his professional staff can make corrections on the spot, the permit is issued at the end of the meeting. The applicant pays a fee based upon the length of the meeting.

How does the pre-entitlement permit process work? As noted previously, Dallas requires very few discretionary entitlements. Most uses are permitted in the zoning ordinance, with their development standards set forth in the zoning ordinance. The one exception is Planned Development Districts, a tool used to essentially write a special zoning district for a specific large proposed development. The Zoning Ordinance requires a pre-application meeting for such projects, wherein planning staff plots the necessary process to approve the application, including recommendation by the City Planning Commission and adoption by City Council.

Does the City use project managers for permit applications? Dallas does not use project managers as the City believes that its permitting process is sufficiently clear and streamlined so as not to require them.

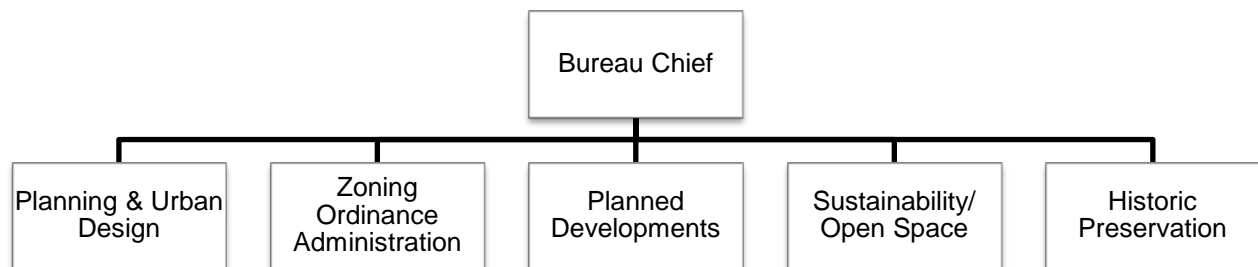
(8) City of Chicago

The population of Chicago is approximately 2.7 million, and is the 3rd largest city in the United States in terms of population. Chicago has not combined all of its primary development services functions into a single department.

How are the departments that provide development services structured? The Department of Buildings enforces the Chicago Building Code through plan review and construction inspection. It consists of more than 10 bureaus under the Commissioner of

Buildings. Chicago has maintained its own independent building and electrical codes continuously since the Chicago fire in 1871.

The planning function in Chicago is provided through the Zoning and Planning Bureau in the Department of Housing and Economic Development. The Bureau is structured as shown in the organization chart below.



The Planning and Urban Design Division is responsible for long-range planning and community planning. The Zoning Ordinance Administration Division reviews permits for zoning compliance, prepares Zoning Ordinance amendments, and undertakes rezoning studies. The Planned Development Division processes Planned Developments, Chicago's form of discretionary entitlement. Most major projects are reviewed and approved through this process, wherein essentially a special zone is created for each project.

What is the mission of the Department? The mission of the Department of Buildings is to support the safety and quality of life for the residents and visitors of the City through enforcement of the Building Code, and to use the permitting and inspection process to promote high quality design standards and the conservation, rehabilitation and reuse of the City's existing buildings.

The mission of the Department of Housing and Economic Development is to promote economic development in Chicago by helping existing businesses grow and by attracting new industry to the city, and to lead Chicago's affordable housing, housing preservation and community-based homebuyer assistance programs, and the City's zoning, land use planning, sustainability and historic preservation initiatives.

Why have development services not been combined into a single department?

Chicago still maintains separate departments for Building and Safety and for Planning.

How is the Construction Services Center staffed and operated? There are four different construction service centers in Chicago.

However, the City largely relies on electronic submittals for permits. Applications and plans are filed and accepted online through the e-Plan system. The permits move initially from zoning to building permit plan check. All applications start in the zoning queue. Planners from the Zoning Ordinance Administration Division of the Department of Housing and Economic Development download them in the order in which they were received, and review the permit applications for zoning compliance or for initiation of the Planned Development process. Once the application is cleared electronically for zoning, it is routed to the building permit plan check queue in the Department of Buildings. Again, plans are downloaded and plan checked in the order in which the permits were received. Communication with the applicant is electronic. Once the building permit plans are reviewed and approved by the Department of Buildings, the permits are signed off electronically and a building permit is issued and the inspection process may begin.

Presently e-Plan does not apply to the inspection process, although that is now being considered as a logical next step.

Applicants can access a fee estimator online and pay all application fees by charge card online. They can then track their application online as it moves through the permitting process. City staff can also track an application online and see the comments and approvals of other divisions and departments. Applicants who are unable to use the system may apply in person.

Although a single department has not been established for development services, the Fire Prevention staff has been transferred to the Department of Buildings. The Department of Transportation is separate, but staff is located in the same building as the Department of Buildings.

How does the pre-entitlement permit process work? Upon request of a developer for a major project that would require a Planned Development, the Zoning Ordinance Administration staff in the Bureau of Zoning and Planning schedules a pre-application meeting. Normal participants are Zoning, Fire, Transportation, Disability, and the Transit Authority. Representatives from the Department of Buildings are usually not present. The City lays out for the applicant the steps necessary to process the Planned Development and establishes a tentative processing calendar.

Does the City provide a project management service? The Department of Buildings offers large projects a Development Services Program in which a case manager is assigned to manage the plan review and inspection processes through issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.

Is the plan check staff forced to make code compromises? The plan check staff has not been forced to compromise the Building Code.

3. THE MATRIX CONSULTING GROUP DEVELOPED A NUMBER OF FINDINGS REGARDING THE FUNCTIONAL TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT BASED UPON THE PEER GROUP SURVEY.

The data collected as part of the peer survey leads to a number of findings and conclusions regarding the functional transfer of development services to a new department and regarding service delivery, as well.

First, all but one of the eight cities included in the peer survey has transferred much of their development service functions into a single department. This is a prevailing practice among cities in the United States.

Chicago has retained separate Planning and Building and Safety departments. This was the typical structure for most American cities before development service functions began to be transferred to a single department in the latter half of the 20th century. Chicago is the only city of the eight included in the peer survey that still retains this approach to service delivery.

San Diego, Portland, San Jose, Dallas, Glendale, Long Beach, and Phoenix have a single department that, at a minimum, combined planning with building and safety. However, some of these other seven cities have transferred other development service functions into a single department. Cities like Phoenix not only combine planning and building and safety functions, but also added other development service functions such as fire plan check and inspection services, engineers responsible for traffic mitigation studies and public right-of-way, etc.

Two cities have split current and long-range planning into separate departments, combining current planning with other development services functions such as building plan check and inspection. Portland, Oregon has two departments: Development Services, which is responsible for processing any type of development-related permit, and Planning and Sustainability, which is responsible for long-range planning, community planning and sustainability policy. The City of San Diego appears to be headed toward a similar plan of organization.

Second, all of the cities that have functionally transferred development services to a single department reported that the transfer was successful. All of the cities that functionally transferred development services to a new department reported improved coordination of permit processing, improved customer service, and improved customer satisfaction.

Third, although most of the cities undertook some amount of outreach to staff and to the community prior to consolidation of departments, the decision-making regarding the functional transfer was, in all cases, confined to executive and top management. All of the cities experienced some degree of staff discomfort during the transitional phase of functional transfer. Many cited the “different cultures” of planning and building and safety. The solution to these difficulties, in all cases, was leadership by the new department head and cooperation by senior managers. A conscious team-building effort was required, including department-wide meetings and events, interdisciplinary staff meetings, training, and extensive communication after the transfer.

Fourth, none of the seven cities that have functionally transferred development services to a new department reported being pressured to make building code compromises as a result of the consolidation.

Fifth, all of the seven cities that have functionally transferred development services to a new department operate a construction services center supported by staff from Planning, Building and Safety, and often staff of other departments. In each instance, city planners are administering the zoning code in these construction services centers as it pertains to clearance of building permits (e.g., setbacks, types of uses, height, parking requirements, etc.). In most instances these planners are part of a planning or zoning division; in two instances (San Diego and Dallas) the planners determining zoning compliance are located in the Building and Safety Division.

The extent to which fire plan check and public works engineering are represented at the construction services center varies among the cities surveyed. At one extreme is San Jose, where these other departments are not represented at the construction services center. At the other extreme is Phoenix, where fire plan check and public works engineering staff have been functionally transferred to a single department, and are represented in a construction services center. In between these extremes are cities which either co-locate fire plan check and public works engineering staff at the construction services center (e.g., Glendale, Portland, etc.), or cities that co-locate these staff as part of the 1-stop permit through a memorandum of understanding with the Fire and Public Works departments or by having the departments formally authorize (and deputize) staff in the development services department to act on behalf of the Fire Marshall and the City Engineer (Long Beach and San Diego). The latter approaches

allow the staff of these departments to be administratively managed by the department that manages the 1-stop permit, while respecting the authority of the Fire Marshall and the City Engineer and protecting career ladders for staff assigned to the 1-stop permit by the Fire and Public Works departments.

Sixth, in each of these seven cities, the Planning Division administers the pre-entitlement permit process. This is logical; the Planning Division is responsible for managing the entitlement permit process.

4. OTHER CITIES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY HAVE FUNCTIONALLY TRANSFERRED DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT.

Two other cities in Los Angeles County have been previously cited as having functionally transferred their development services to a new department: Long Beach and Glendale.

However, ten of the fourteen cities with a population in excess of 100,000 in Los Angeles County have also functionally transferred some of their development service functions to a new department including Burbank, Downey, Glendale, Inglewood, Lancaster, Long Beach, Norwalk, Pasadena, Pomona, Torrance (the exceptions include El Monte, Palmdale, Santa Clarita and West Covina).

4. FIVE OF THE TEN LARGEST CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES HAVE NOT FUNCTIONALLY TRANSFERRED DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT, WHILE THE OTHER FIVE HAVE FUNCTIONALLY TRANSFERRED THESE SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT.

Of the ten largest cities in the United States, five have not transferred their development services to a new department. These include New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, and Philadelphia.

However, five of the ten largest cities in the United States have transferred their development services to a new department. These include Phoenix, San Antonio, San Diego, Dallas, and San Jose.

3. STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

This chapter presents the results of meetings and phone calls with internal and external stakeholders.

The City identified the internal and external stakeholders to be interviewed. The internal and external stakeholders included staff of the Mayor's Office, staff of the City Council offices, neighborhood councils, developers, consulting architects and engineers, land use attorneys, and representatives of trade and business organizations.

The purpose of the stakeholder meetings and phone calls was to obtain perceptions of the City's development services, permitting processes and obtain feedback on the transfer of the development services functions of the City into a new department. The feedback was also focused on to the goals, objectives, metrics, and a mission for the new department, the desired outcomes of the functional transfer, and opportunities to improve development services.

The Matrix Consulting Group facilitated the stakeholder meetings and phone calls. All meetings and phone calls were conducted on a confidential basis so as to obtain as much candid feedback as possible. No City staff members were in attendance or participated in the phone calls.

In conducting these stakeholder meetings and phone calls, the Matrix Consulting Group recognized that there was multiple, and at times conflicting publics, each with their own perspectives about what was right and not right about the development services process and the functional transfer of the development services functions to a new department. In considering the results, the reader must bear in mind that, unlike technical research and statistics, the views expressed by individuals are subjective and

may reflect personal perspectives. Nonetheless, they are as important as objective material because it is these people, with their feelings and perspectives, who establish the users' perceptions of the City's development services, the functional transfer of the development services functions to a new department, and opportunities to improve development services.

It is not important to determine whether or not a particular response is "correct"; rather, each response is accepted as a perception, recognizing that perception is reality to the person holding the perception. The reader should also be aware that although the participants were questioned on both positive and negative aspects of the process and the functional transfer, the tendency of respondents was to dwell upon those negative aspects upon which they felt improvement was needed. The reader should also be aware that statements in quotes were statements made by stakeholders and are repeated in this chapter to provide a sense of the responses by the stakeholders.

1. THE DEVELOPMENT REFORM STRATEGIC PLAN CONDUCTED A NUMBER OF STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS THAT IDENTIFIED A NUMBER OF CONCERNS AND PROBLEMS.

KH Consulting, which prepared the *Development Reform Strategic Plan*, met with more than 200 external stakeholders in 8 different forums around the City of Los Angeles. Participants offered extensive input. Overall, the stakeholders wanted a transparent, consistent, and seamless development process with greater interdepartmental collaboration. The key issues identified by KH Consulting are summarized in the exhibit following this page.

Many of these same issues and comments, not all, were cited by stakeholders in meetings with the Matrix Consulting Group.

Exhibit 1 (1)

**Concerns and Problems with the
Development Review Process Identified
in the Development Reform Strategic Plan**

Issue	Comments Regarding the Issue
Entitlements	Industry desires simplified and consistent code, interpretation and enforcement. The community's greatest frustrations come from what they see as the misapplication and abuse of entitlements, conditional use permits, and variances. Several groups identified a lack of communication between CRA and City Planning coupled with redundancy of function and responsibility
Plan checks / Permitting	Industry stakeholders desire improved communication and collaboration between Plan Check and Inspection.
Hearings / Approvals	Community stakeholders are concerned with making hearings more accessible, suggesting earlier and broader public notice, more convenient times and relevant locations, and online access and commenting. Industry is concerned that approval hearing minutes often have many discrepancies from what was actually decided, and suggest the client transcribe the minutes for Commission approval.
Project Reviews	Industry stakeholders emphasized the importance and need for expansion of predevelopment review.
Community Plans	Both industry and community stakeholders agree that completing Community Plans is a priority, providing a framework for an effective and efficient development process and negating the need for most entitlements, variances, and the resulting feuds. Other suggestions include simplifying plans with narrower focus, identifying and outsourcing the planning process, focusing plans and taking measures to identify areas most in need of updates, and including traffic plans and EIR's in community plans.
Inspections / Finals	Industry stakeholders desire greater consistency and follow-up regarding inspections.
Environmental Issues	CEQA reform was of great concern for industry participants and several groups, both industry and community, desire improvements to the EIR and traffic analysis processes
Enforcement	Across the board, external stakeholders agree that the application and implementation of zoning codes, entitlements, CCR's, and CUP's is only as good as the enforcement. The departmental separation of code development (City Planning) from code enforcement (DBS) is seen as a primary cause of poor enforcement.

Exhibit 1 (2)

Issue	Comments Regarding the Issue
Accounting/Fees	The subject of fees was rarely chosen for discussion at the stakeholder meetings. When it was mentioned, there seemed to be widespread agreement that fees, at current or increased levels, are not an issue of concern for most stakeholders. Industry agrees that an improvement to fee and refund processes should be addressed.
Technology	There is widespread agreement across all external stakeholder groups that much of the development process can and should be put online, including online plan submittal.
Customer Service	Industry and community stakeholders indicate a need to improve customer service at the frontline. Counter staff need customer service and practical training, as well as empowerment to make decisions appropriate to their station, rather than transferring the responsibility to another department or up the chain unnecessarily
Organizational Structure	Several focus groups mentioned the possibility of combining DBS and City Planning into one department. There was also mention of a process “guru” or ombudsman, geo-teams, and all planners consolidated in City Planning.
System Evaluation and Stakeholder Agreement	There are varying opinions on how neighborhood councils should be involved in the development process, but there is agreement by both industry and community stakeholders that their role needs to be clearly and consistently defined.

2. THE CITY'S DEVELOPMENT REVIEW AND PERMITTING PROCESSES WERE CONSIDERED TO BE EXTREMELY COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT TO NAVIGATE.

In the stakeholder meetings and phone calls facilitated by the Matrix Consulting Group, the participants were unanimous in rating the development review and permitting process of the City of Los Angeles as complex and, at times, incomprehensible in comparison to other cities in Southern California. They described it as *“an undefined path,” “ridiculously complex,” “unpredictable”* and *“full of inconsistency.”* Some felt that such complexity was to be expected of a city the size of Los Angeles, and that it was unfair to compare it to smaller cities. Others felt that the complexity was *“by design,”* suspecting that the huge amount of discretion built into the process (in comparison to projects that can approved “by right”) gave Los Angeles greater flexibility to influence the process. The Zoning Code was cited as being particularly complex, difficult to understand, and occasionally inconsistent. The Zoning Code and other regulatory codes were promulgated over a period of time with differing objectives, and *“layer has been added upon layer with no attempt to remove outdated or inconsistent provisions.”*

Stakeholders expressed concerns about the amount of time required for the process, and particularly about its lack of predictability. Required interdepartmental clearances were highlighted as a problem, because they added time to the process (*“even over-the-counter building permits require additional signoffs by numerous other departments”*), and because they were often not identified at the beginning of the process, creating *“surprise delays at the end.”*

The complexity of the process and lack of a clear step-by-step procedure had led customers to seek “*workarounds*”. Stakeholders reported that they tried to form special relationships with key City staff, sought intervention from the Offices of the Mayor and the City Council, and hired permit expeditors who knew how to “*work the system*.” The stakeholders felt that permit expeditors were absolutely necessary for those developing for the first time in Los Angeles, and expressed sympathy for small businesses and homeowners that could not afford to hire such expeditors.

3. THERE WERE UNDERLYING PROBLEMS IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS THAT WOULD NOT BE RESOLVED MERELY BY THE FUNCTIONAL TRANSFER OF THESE SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT.

In the stakeholder meetings and phone calls facilitated by the Matrix Consulting Group, the participants stressed that the functional transfer of development services to a new department could not be successful unless the basic problems underlying Los Angeles’s development permitting process were first resolved. Listed among these underlying problems were the arcane Zoning Code, the lack of a single modern automated permit information system linking departments, and the perception regarding widespread understaffing.

The present Zoning Code was cited as the single biggest problem. Stakeholders felt that over the years, rather than update the Code, staff has added overlay districts to correct deficiencies, adding complexity and considerable discretion. The resulting Zoning Code “*lacks clarity and precision*”, and “*requires constant interpretation*.” The site plan review thresholds in the Zoning Code were set so low that most projects were perceived by the stakeholders as subject to this discretionary review.

That both the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning exercised discretion in the interpretation and administration of the Zoning Code added to the problem. *“The two departments often disagree in the interpretation of the Zoning Code.”*

The stakeholders also described the permit information systems that support the permitting process as *“antiquated.”* Each department had their own permit information system to track permit applications and issue permits. Departments could not interact and *“talk to each other”* through just one permit information system; one department could not see electronically what other departments were doing on a permit application, even when such interaction was critical to the timely processing of the application and the coordination by multiple departments in the processing of these permits.

In addition, stakeholders felt that, unlike other cities, Los Angeles had not made sufficient progress on electronic submittals and electronic plan checking.

Stakeholders believed that all departments were understaffed, and that *“staffing problems will increase as the economy recovers unless hiring resumes.”* The City’s retrenchment policy during the recession encouraged the most senior and experienced staff to retire early, *“leaving the departments with too few technical staff with too little expertise.”* This was perceived as especially true in the Department of City Planning and in the Bureau of Engineering, and less true in the Department of Building and Safety.

In addition, there was a perception that the City was unwilling to hire contract employees for peak workload or to cover for vacancies. *“Departments seem unwilling to hire contract employees.”*

4. EACH OF THE DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS EXHIBITED A DIFFERENT CULTURE AND ATTENTION TO CUSTOMER SERVICE.

Many stakeholders saw an inherent difference in the culture of the staff of the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning that derives from their professional training and from the different types of permits that the two departments were responsible for processing. The staff of the Department of Building and Safety reviewed ministerial permits, making a decision only to determine conformity with building codes before approving the project, while the staff of the Department of City Planning exercised judgment, and, depending on the specifics of a given permit application and its accompanying circumstances vis-à-vis the Zoning Code, approved, conditionally approved, or denied discretionary reviews.

Department of Building and Safety staff members approached their job methodically, while Department of City Planning exhibited a more “*artistic*” approach. As such, Department of Building and Safety staff “*can make a quick and reliably consistent decision,*” while the Department of City Planning “*can’t ever seem to make a decision.*” Overall, the stakeholders rated the Department of Building and Safety to be the most efficient (“*good plan check turnaround time*”), professional (“*one of the top building departments in the country*”), and delivering the most consistent and responsive customer service compared to other the departments in the development services process.

Stakeholders were more critical of the Department of City Planning, noting again, however, that the discretionary nature of the Zoning Code leads to subjective and often conflicting opinions and interpretations. The entitlement process was seen as too

lengthy, and some stated that Department of City Planning “*routinely ignores statutory requirements for turnaround times.*” Stakeholders reported that it often takes three to four months following a decision to get a decision letter from the Department of City Planning. Even at the construction services centers, the longest waits (“*often three to four hours*”) were perceived to be at the counter served by the staff of the Department of City Planning. Appointments (“*often four weeks to schedule*”) were required to submit permit applications, and get questions answered. Good customer service by the staff of the Department of City Planning was judged to be “*sporadic*”, and “*there is no sense of urgency in returning telephone calls and e-mails.*” Customer service was seen as particularly poor among younger staff members, who are “*poorly trained*” and “*risk-adverse.*” “*They tell you what you can’t do, but they won’t help you figure out how you can do it.*”

Stakeholders who regularly interface with the Department of Transportation reported that their staff was “*responsive and solution-oriented.*” Others felt that Department of Transportation’s turnaround time for traffic mitigation studies was too long, perhaps because of staffing problems.

Stakeholders commented that in the Fire Department, “*everything is on a case-by-case basis,*” due to a lack of standards or to rigid standards that are impossible to meet on most sites. They felt that the Fire Department required “*endless review*” and insisted on “*arbitrary inspection corrections.*” One stakeholder reported that there was only one supervisor in the Fire Department who can approve modifications, and he was often unavailable and made no appointments (“*It took 14 trips to his office before I could see him.*”).

There was general agreement among stakeholders that the Bureau of Engineering had more significant opportunities for improvement, as it pertained to B-permits, vis-à-vis other bureaus and departments. The B-permit process was perceived as difficult and time consuming. Stakeholders believed that the Bureau lost its best employees during the recession-triggered retrenchment, and that those remaining were *“less professional, more rigid, and less customer friendly.”*

5. COORDINATION WAS LACKING AMONG DEPARTMENTS, AND EVEN BETWEEN DIVISIONS WITHIN DEPARTMENTS, LEADING TO DUPLICATION OF EFFORT AND CONFLICTING REQUIREMENTS AND CONDITIONS.

Stakeholders reported that each department exercised its authority and reviewed permit applications independent of other departments, and, when conflicts arise, *“the applicant is left on their own to resolve the conflicts.”* Experienced applicants often appealed to the Offices of the Mayor or City Council to get department representatives together in a meeting to negotiate a solution to these conflicts.

Conflicts between the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety regarding administration and interpretation of the Zoning Code were a frequently cited example. The Department of City Planning writes and amends the Zoning Code, but the Municipal Code authorizes the Department of Building and Safety to enforce it. *“A project may receive entitlement from the Department of City Planning, only to have the Department of Building and Safety issue corrections on the building plans for Zoning Code violations.”*

Stakeholder participants stated that curb cuts for driveways were plan checked by the Department of City Planning, Bureau of Engineering and the Department of Transportation, each of which might have separate and perhaps conflicting

requirements. The Bureau of Engineering may require a street widening, whereas the Department of City Planning may require a sidewalk widening and / or bike lane in accordance with the “complete streets” policy. The Department of City Planning and Department of Building and Safety defined “*grade*” differently because of differences between the Zoning and the building codes.

Stakeholders reported that there were often duplicate and / or conflicting requirements between the conditions of approval imposed by the Department of City Planning upon entitlement approval and the clearance summary worksheet issued by the Department of Building and Safety prior to issuing a building permit. *“Even though a department has given clearance on the computer, the Department of Building and Safety may still require the applicant to obtain a letter from the department.”* Both the Department of Building and Safety and the Fire Department plan checked building permit plans for egress and for fire sprinklers.

6. CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL WERE TOO EXTENSIVE AND THE PROCESS TO CLEAR THEM WAS UNNECESSARILY ARDUOUS AND TIME-CONSUMING

Stakeholders repeatedly stated that the conditions of approval, which the Department of City Planning attached to all discretionary entitlement approvals, were too numerous and often unreasonable. Some conditions repeated what was already required in the Code and / or included in the approved plans. Many others were “boilerplate” and unnecessary, “*cut and pasted*” from one application to another. Vague conditions created uncertainty for the applicant, such as conditions which state “to the satisfaction of”

Stakeholders indicated that similar projects in like locations obtained different conditions of approval, depending upon the concerns raised by the community at the hearings. Some of the operating conditions, such as required closing times, placed a new business in unfair competition with existing businesses without such requirements, and the community was angered when these conditions were not rigidly enforced. Community representatives complained that *“conditions of approval that were negotiated between the permit applicant and the City prior to project approval, are rejected by the City Attorney due to the lack of a nexus, even though the permit applicant did not object.”*

Those among the stakeholders who represented permit applicants stated that the clearance of the conditions of approval takes an inordinate period of time to complete because it requires approvals from many different staff in different departments. This was particularly frustrating for the *“boilerplate”* conditions. Stakeholders suggested that a case manager within the Department of City Planning should be authorized to sign off on many of the conditions. Stakeholders also questioned why, unlike most other cities, the conditions of approval in Los Angeles must be recorded with the deed.

7. THERE HAD BEEN A CONSCIOUS EFFORT BY SOME DEPARTMENTS TO IMPROVE AND EXPEDITE THEIR PERMIT REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESSES.

Despite their many critical comments, stakeholders lauded some departments for recent efforts to streamline their processes to the benefit of permit applicants.

The Case Management Program introduced by the Department of Building and Safety was a frequently cited example. Under this program, an applicant could, for a fee, request a pre-application meeting with representatives of all departments / divisions that

must review their application to learn the necessary steps to process their application and obtain an early warning of potential major issues. But it was reported that, unfortunately, all departments / divisions do not always attend these meetings, and *“the advice received had no ‘teeth’ because departments may later impose contradicting requirements.”*

Participants were also complimentary of the Parallel Plan Check process recently begun by the Department of Building and Safety, wherein applicants could now obtain a phased plan check as each phase of their project design is completed. They also commended the willingness of staff to undertake plan check (at the applicant’s risk) while the proposed project is being processed for planning entitlements, a practice not common in other cities.

The Zoning Administrator in Planning has recently separated non-controversial cases from controversial cases and acted on them in a few months rather than in a year.

The Restaurant and Hospitality Express Program in the Department of Building and Safety was cited as allowing hotels and restaurants to move through the plan review process more quickly than other large projects.

8. THE CITY NEEDED A STRONG AND CREATIVE LONG-RANGE PLANNING FUNCTION AS WELL AS A STREAMLINED, USER-FRIENDLY PERMITTING FUNCTION

Although most of the stakeholders focused on the City’s development processes, there were a number of participants, largely design professionals, who expressed concern over the long-range planning function. They stated that the City already had *“inadequate long-range planning and visioning,”* and they feared that it would be further degraded if the proposed functional transfer took place. *“Planning would suffer,”* they

warned. *“Too much energy was going into processing, and not enough on improving the City.”* They cited the delay in completing the revisions of the Community Plans, a concern that was shared by participants focused on the permitting functions. These stakeholders pointed to other cities that have combined their Planning and Building operations and experienced a serious diminution of long-range planning and visioning.

9. THE DEVELOPMENT PERMITTING PROCESS WAS NOT RESPONSIVE TO THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF SMALL BUSINESSES AND HOMEOWNERS

The stakeholders representing neighborhood associations and small businesses stated that the development services process was *“too complex, too unpredictable and too costly”* for small businesses and homeowners. Many homeowners, facing an uncertain and expensive permitting process, *“just do it without a permit.”* Even small businesses were opening without necessary permits. It was alleged that the California Alcohol Beverage Control had put a freeze on new alcohol licenses in the city because of flagrant disregard for local and State liquor sales regulations. The City approval process for alcohol sales was reported to take 12 to 18 months, even if there was no opposition. Small business representatives complained that a small, proposed new restaurant must endure the same process, time and cost as a huge chain restaurant.

Many of the stakeholders felt that the City should consider processing small and large projects differently. Applicants for large projects said that they feel sorry for the small business or homeowner applicant, and they complained that such applicants for small development projects often take so much time at the counter that *“they get in the way of big developers.”*

10. THERE WERE MIXED FEELINGS AMONG STAKEHOLDERS REGARDING THE TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT FUNCTIONS INTO A NEW DEPARTMENT.

Many stakeholders had some misgivings about the functional transfer of development services to a new department.

Many expressed outright opposition, calling the idea “crazy,” “cataclysmic,” “unmitigated disaster,” “like rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic!”

Others generally favored the proposal, noting that if it was done right, with the right preparation, staff leadership and support from elected officials, it could finally break down departmental barriers and siloes and establish a coordinated development processes and permit system.

Some questioned the accelerated timing, aimed at total consolidation by January 1, 2014, suggesting “*it should evolve, rather than be pushed through in such a drastic step.*” Several stated that safety would be compromised unless the Department of Building and Safety were the lead agency, noting that the Chief Building Official must be “*independent*” and shielded from political pressure. Many thought the department “*would be too big and too diverse to be managed effectively,*” and some suggested that decentralization into regional offices might overcome the problem of size. Some proposed that fire plan check and inspection be moved into Building and Safety even if the single large department were not created. It was suggested that “*B-Permit must be incorporated into the new department,*” and “*a city attorney should be embedded in the department.*” Others proposed the creation of a Development Services Department, leaving long-range and community planning and historic preservation in the Department of City Planning.

The participants offered several suggestions of factors necessary for success. This included strong leadership by the new department head and senior management, co-location to the extent physically possible, hiring more staff to make up for recent staff losses, use of metrics to measure success of the permitting process and to hold staff accountable, and extensive staff training.

All of the stakeholders agreed that the City's permit processing system needs improvement. Several optimists looked forward to the day when the process would be viewed as efficient and predictable, with greater coordination, communication and consistency, and manifesting a true team approach to development services in Los Angeles.

11. THE STAKEHOLDERS SUGGESTED, IN GENERAL, A MISSION, GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND METRICS FOR THE NEW DEPARTMENT.

The first concern of the stakeholders was that the functional transfer of the development services to a new department should do no harm. They feared that *"it may result in a major slowdown during the first year."* They stated that it should not result in a degradation of existing service levels (e.g., turnaround times for permits). It should not result in a lessening of the recent emphasis in updating the Community Plans and the Zoning Code.

Beyond doing no harm, the stakeholders believed, overall, that the new department should promote the safety and the quality of life of the citizens of Los Angeles through the efficient and collaborative regulation of land and building development that supports the City's economic development.

The discussion with stakeholders suggested, overall, that the new department should achieve a number of goals:

- Technology – Use BuildLA and a comprehensive and unified web site to meet customer and workplace needs;
- Customer service – Define, implement and measure a consistent and valued customer experience;
- Employee development – Build a competent, aligned workforce;
- Successful partnerships – Develop effective working relationships with the community and the industry;
- Effective programs and services – Implement programs that increase the efficiency and timeliness of services; and
- Long-range planning – Generate an extraordinary vision for Los Angeles through its long-range land use and transportation planning, promoting a better, healthier quality of life in its neighborhoods, and preserving neighborhood character.

The stakeholders suggested a number of metrics. These measures of success included the following:

- Provide adequate staff and service levels to meet increased permit workload;
- With the functional transfer of these functions to a new department, the department's executive, middle-management, supervisory and employee teams should seek new ideas and ways to streamline the development processes and make these processes more timely;
- The new department should reduce the cycle times required for processing discretionary and ministerial permits;
- Continue to update the City's Community Plans, as originally proposed in 2008;
- Continue the progress made in the acquisition and deployment of BuildLA to enhance the level of technology in the development services process while improving public access to information;
- Focus an effort in all units of the new department regarding workforce planning and talent development, building on the programs already present in the Department of Building and Safety; and
- Achieve full cost recovery for the new department's programs wherever possible to reduce the dependency on the general fund.

Overall, what the stakeholders desired was that the City's development services should promote the safety and the quality of life of its citizens through the efficient and collaborative regulation of land and building development that supports the City's economic development.

12. THE MATRIX CONSULTING GROUP ADMINISTERED AN ON-LINE SURVEY REGARDING THE FUNCTIONAL TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT.

This on-line survey was posted for a response for more than a month. It contained five questions. There were over 300 responses.

Three of these questions focused on the functional transfer of development services to a new department. These questions, and the response to these questions, are presented in the table below.

Question	Yes	% of Total	No	% of Total	Not Sure	% of Total	Total
1. Do you think that a single department to provide development and planning services will be better than the current system where multiple departments provide these services?	182	43.9%	178	42.9%	55	13.3%	415
3. Is it important to structure the new department so that the planning functions and building / safety functions remain equally high priorities within the new department?	340	83.3%	39	9.6%	29	7.1%	408
4. Should the City establish a new development services department rather than continuing to deliver these services through separate departments (Building and Safety, City Planning, Transportation, Dire, and Public Works / Bureau of Engineering)?	183	44.3%	176	42.6%	54	13.1%	413

There was not a clear perspective regarding the functional transfer of development services to a new department. The perspective was mixed. There was a clear

perspective regarding keeping building and safety functions and planning functions of an equal priority; respondents believed that both should be maintained as an equal priority in the new department.

Respondents were also asked to prioritize nine different development / planning services delivered by the City. One was the highest priority, while nine was the lowest priority. The responses are presented in the table below.

Question	Priority Rating (Lower Is Better)
Reducing the number of conflicting conditions of approval and / or clearances between City departments and / or divisions within departments for permit applications.	3.5
Streamlining the permitting and inspection process so that it is more predictable, efficient, and responsive to customers	4.24
Providing customers an online portal to track the progress of their project throughout the development services process.	4.24
Providing on-line guides about the development services system so that customers know what they need to do to get their particular projects approved by the City.	4.46
Providing customers a single point of contact with the City to answer questions about their project rather than the customer having to call multiple people to get an answer.	4.47
Providing clear timeframes to customers for permit and inspection processes.	4.72
Adding capacity to respond to customer requests in constituent service centers outside the Figueroa Plaza location downtown.	5.05
Enforcing code compliance by responding to complaints and / or proactively identifying violations -- the current timeframe for responding to non-health / safety code violation complaints, such as a fence being too high, is 20 business days.	6.01
Increasing the frequency of Community Plan updates from the current timeframe of once every ten years.	6.79

The three highest priorities were reducing the number of conflicting conditions of approval and / or clearances, providing customers an online portal to track the progress of their project throughout the development services process, and streamlining the permitting and inspection process so that it was more predictable, efficient, and responsive to customers.

There was one other question regarding the extent of incomplete submittals. The answer to that question is presented in the table below.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
Analysis of the Opportunities to Improve Development Services

Question	Yes	% of Total	No	% of Total	Not Sure	% of Total	Total
The City is accepting a high proportion of incomplete permit plans. Should the City revise its process so that plans are not accepted until they are complete so complete plans are processed more quickly.	221	54.0%	133	32.5%	55	13.4%	409

A higher proportion of the respondents believed that the City should revise its process so that plans were not accepted until they are complete so complete plans were processed more quickly.

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In considering the results, it is important to recognize that the views expressed by these respondents and stakeholders are subjective. Nonetheless, these views are important because it is these customers, residents, businessmen and women that work with or are affected by City development services activities. It is important not to judge a particular response in terms of whether it is "correct"; it is important to accept a response and try to determine why customers perceive development services as they do. Perception is reality to the person holding the perception.

4. ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT REFORM STRATEGIC PLAN

The Mayor's *Development Reform Strategic Plan*, dated July 20, 2011, did not contemplate that the City would blend its planning, development services and permitting functions into a new single department. In light of the legislative mandate approved by the Council to integrate development services (C.F. 13-0046), it is appropriate to assess whether any action plans or other provisions in the *Development Reform Strategic Plan* need to be reworked or amended in light of this major organizational change.

However, it is also appropriate to consider the recommendations contained within the Mayor's *Development Reform Strategic Plan* as it pertains to improving the development review process, not merely how the City organizes for delivery of those services. The Mayor's *Development Reform Strategic Plan* made a number of recommendations to improve the development review process; few appear to have been implemented or be in the process of implementation.

The recommendations regarding the Mayor's *Development Reform Strategic Plan* contained within this chapter are summarized in the table below.

Rec. #	Recommendation
4	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should be assigned responsibility for the reporting of the status of implementation of the recommendations within the <i>Development Reform Strategic Plan</i> to the Office of the Mayor and to the City Council every six months.
5	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should prepare and submit the first status report on June 2, 2014.

1. THE DEVELOPMENT REFORM STRATEGIC PLAN WAS ISSUED IN JULY 2011.

The City of Los Angeles retained KH Consulting Group to assist with developing the City's *Development Reform Strategic Plan*. The consulting team solicited input from more than 200 external stakeholders, analyzed 100 City development reports and

audits, researched best practices, and worked with more than 200 City employees spanning various departments and management levels to develop an implementation-ready plan.

The *Development Reform Strategic Plan* had nine (9) strategic priorities as noted below.

- **Action Plan 1.0 – World Class City – LA Quality of Life.** This Action Plan focuses on community planning, including the Department of City Planning's release of seven Community Plans and strategies to update the General Plan Elements and Community Plans.
- **Action Plan 2.0 – Policies and Procedures.** The City has developed policy and procedural solutions for quicker inter-Departmental resolution of conflicting conditions via a Land Development Committee and application requirements. These changes will identify necessary entitlement actions early in the application process.
- **Action Plan 3.0 – Zoning Codes.** Improvements to the City's Zoning Code involve simplification, a shared manual, communications, and comprehensive Zoning Code Reform – a long over-due effort that the City last accomplished in 1946.
- **Action Plan 4.0 – CEQA.** This Action Plan updates the City's CEQA Guidelines for categorical exemptions and maintains staff CEQA training; in the long term, the City will explore other administrative aspects of CEQA that are within its control, such as environmental thresholds; environmental review processes and procedures; and the feasibility of developing a framework for comprehensive programmatic EIR analysis for specific areas within Community Plans.
- **Action Plan 5.0 – Communications and Public Outreach.** City departments will work together to increase coordination of public information, develop input opportunities, and provide Commissioner training.
- **Action Plan 6.0 – Process Improvements.** Development Services processes are complex and improvements are outlined for new consultation services for small and medium-sized projects, process roadmaps / documentation, common application forms and case files, report production for quicker turnaround for such items as Letters of Decision, and B-Permit tracking and monitoring. The aim is to eliminate paper intensive processes and the customer having to make so many trips to various City Departments. Performance measurements for monitoring progress are built into the Action Plans. The continued use of Implementation

Improvement Teams will help to implement the improvements and instill a continuous process improvement orientation in Development Services.

- **Action Plan 7.0 – Customer Service Culture.** Creating a customer service-oriented culture is vital for implementing many of these changes. Applicants will see improved customer service through the new Development Services Case Management office. Other changes provide different staffing and organizational configurations, coupled with training and performance standards.
- **Action Plan 8.0 – Technology / BuildLA.** BuildLA is the vehicle for moving the Development Services technology to a new level of needed sophistication and to enable greater transparency and access to information.
- **Action Plan 9.0 – Financial Resources.** Financial resources are critical for making many of these initiatives a reality. For the customer, the City will implement a simpler mechanism for making payments, involving credit cards, draw-down accounts, and a single cashier. In addition, the City will document its costs more closely to achieve full cost recovery for services rendered. These fees can help cover staffing, technology, and other investments needed.

A summary of the recommendations for each of these action plans is presented in the exhibit at the end of this document. An analysis of the impact of consolidation of development services on each of these action plans within the *Development Reform Strategic Plan* is presented below.

1. THE FUNCTIONAL TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT WOULD NOT AFFECT THE ACTION PLAN FOR UPDATING THE GENERAL PLAN AND COMMUNITY PLANS.

Action Plan 1 in the *Development Reform Strategic Plan* stated that the Department of City Planning (DCP) “has been working for some years to increase the updating of the Community Plans that exist in Los Angeles. The resource constraints of the last few years and expected this year have led DCP to propose completing seven of these Community Plans. DCP has released the Hollywood Community Plan draft, which is now in the process of public review. The other Community Plans nearing completion are San Pedro, West Adams, Granada Hills, Sylmar, South Los Angeles, and Southeast

Los Angeles.”

Much of the City’s Community Plans are obsolete, exceeding ten years of age. The median age of the City’s Community Plans is almost fifteen years. The Matrix Consulting Group recommends a “shelf life” of no more than ten years for Community Plans. Overall, of the thirty-six Community Plans, the average age is 14.5 years after considering the Community Plans that have already been adopted by the City Planning Commission (e.g., Granada Hills).

Of the thirty-six community plans, twenty-nine Community Plans are older than ten years and fifteen are older than fifteen years. The functional transfer of the development service functions to a new department will not enhance or reduce the ability of the City to update these Community Plans.

There are not any overlapping staff that could be reallocated to the updating of these Community Plans in the Department of City Planning from other departments or divisions that would be functionally transferred to this new department. While the Development Services Division, Department of Transportation does have transportation engineers allocated in part to long-range planning, these staff are already working with the Department of City Planning on the South Los Angeles Community Plan update, the Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan update, the Mobility Element update, for example.

The *Development Reform Strategic Plan* also stated “at the same time, resources to complete these plans are likely to be sharply limited for the foreseeable future. There are simply not enough resources to do all of the things that the City would like to do, or that would be helpful. This situation requires that rigorous and

sophisticated assessment is in order to make sure the resources that are available are devoted to the most important planning areas.”

This condition has not changed. There are simply insufficient resources, at the present time, to update Community Plans.

However, the functional transfer of development service functions to a new department will not impact the City’s ability or inability to update these Community Plans.

2. THE FUNCTIONAL TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT WILL ENHANCE THE ABILITY OF THE CITY TO ACCOMPLISH THE ACTION PLAN FOR RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTING CONDITIONS.

Action Plan 2 recommended the City develop policy and procedural solutions for quicker inter-departmental resolution of conflicting conditions via a Land Development Committee and application requirements. These changes would identify necessary entitlement actions early in the application process.

The Action Plan included recommendations for the City to:

- Create a Land Development Committee to resolve conflicting condition requirements on projects;
- Utilize its existing Development Services Case Management system to address complex issues on the spot;
- Utilize a Construction Liaison Network to establish a “go to” person as a contact point for resolving inter-departmental differences;
- Institute “deeper counters” at the Construction Service Centers to provide greater City Planning Department expertise;
- Provide zoning screening pre-check upon entitlement application submittal to ensure the applicant is requesting all the entitlements necessary to build a project;
- Complete a planning case referral form at the pre-application stage for all Master Land Use Applications where the projects have public works requirements to

provide a cursory check for all public improvements at the front end of the entitlement process.

The functional transfer of development service functions to a new department will not impede the ability of the City to accomplish this action plan. In fact, even though the development service functions are still fragmented, the City has proceeded with implementation of some of these action plans.

However, the functional transfer of these development service functions to a new department would enable one department head to manage these changes within the City's diverse organizational structure rather than require the intervention of the Mayor's Office, the City Council, or the coordination of the Development Services Cabinet.

The City's development services are "siloed" into different permitting departments that the permit applicant has to navigate. There are multiple examples in the City of this organizational approach being a stumbling block to responsive customer service ranging from the City's discretionary reviews issued by the Department of City Planning to the clearances necessary for the building permits issued by the Department of Building and Safety to the B-permits issued by the Bureau of Engineering, etc. No one departmental director is responsible for managing these processes end-to-end.

As a result, these potential conflicts between different departments regarding permits require the intervention of the Office of the Mayor or a City Council District Office to resolve disagreements among departments involved in the development review process. This necessitates the Office of the Mayor and the City Council to pay too much attention to details, get caught up in the actual operations of the organization, and not focus on their governance role.

The functional transfer of development services to a new department will push that responsibility down to a departmental director, which is where this responsibility belongs.

However, there are other organizational alternatives to addressing this problem, short of the functional transfer of development services to a new department. These alternatives are presented in the chapter 13, Analysis of the Plan of Organization. These alternatives, involving process owners for the discretionary permit process, building permit process, and the engineering permit process, would place responsibility for resolution of conflicting conditions with the process owners.

These alternatives, however, are less than the optimum solution: the functional transfer of development services to a new department.

3. THE FUNCTIONAL TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT WILL ENHANCE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ZONING REFORM.

Action Plan 3 of the Development Reform Strategic Plan recommended improvements to the City's Zoning Code in terms of simplification, a shared manual, communications, and comprehensive Zoning Code Reform – a long overdue effort that the City last accomplished in 1946.

This includes (1) simplifying the permit processes in the Zoning Code in terms of the multiple approvals required for some of the permits issued by the Department of City Planning, to enable minor deviations that are approved at staff level, etc.; (2) developing an on-line Zoning Code; and (3) to ease the administration and interpretation of the Zoning Code e.g., clear and distinct regulations, fewer overlays and special conditions, better alignment with other Municipal Code Chapters, etc.

The functional transfer development service functions to a new department will not impede the ability of the City to accomplish this action plan. This effort is already being led by the Department of City Planning.

However, the functional transfer of development service functions to a new department will facilitate the development of a better Zoning Code simply by developing a code that reflects the perspectives of multiple disciplines. These multiple disciplines would assist the writers of the Zoning Code in working out problems, ensuring internal consistency, and generally vetting the product. This includes working with staff of the Department of City Planning and citizens to identify the main issues and problems associated with the current Zoning Code.⁷

As a second step, typically concurrently with the issue identification process, the City would draw on the findings of that process to develop a complete technical evaluation of the current code and related regulations such as the land subdivision regulations, historical preservation ordinance, urban design ordinance etc. The analysis process would result in a report and presentations to staff, staff of the Department of City Planning and other City departments and bureaus (e.g., Building and Safety, Bureau of Engineering, Department of Transportation, etc.), and the City's Planning Commission.

As a third step, after the issues are identified, the City would begin drafting the code, which is typically the longest period in the project schedule. It is an iterative process, working from the outline to more detailed code language and illustrations.

Typically, the representatives of the Department of City Planning and other City departments and bureaus (e.g., Building and Safety, Bureau of Engineering,

⁷ American Planning Association, Zoning Practice, Overhauling Your Zoning Code, December 2008.

Department of Transportation, etc.) would be asked to review and comment on drafts for specific sections, such as residential or commercial districts or administrative requirements. Drafts would be annotated to highlight the differences between existing and revised standards, explain the reasoning behind specific changes, and identify issues or questions that still need to be addressed.

As part of this task, draft sections of the Code would be “test-mapped” by applying new district regulations or standards to selected locations within the City, such as the downtown, infill locations, established neighborhoods of several densities and housing types, major retail / commercial districts outside the downtown, etc. Drafts will be adjusted as necessary based on the results of the test mapping process.

All of this process suggests that the transfer of these functions to a new department would better inform the development of the Zoning Code to better fit the unique circumstances of Los Angeles based upon a multi-disciplinary process.

However, even without the functional transfer, it is impossible for the Department of City Planning to effectively develop a comprehensive Zoning Code without consultation with other departments. It cannot, for example, develop sections within the Zoning Code regarding affordable housing and incentives without consulting the Housing and Community Investment Department. It cannot, for example, develop sections within the Zoning Code regarding streetscape standards without consultation with the Department of Transportation and the Department of Public Works. It cannot, for example, develop sections within the Zoning Code regarding subdivision regulations without consultation with the Bureau of Engineering. It cannot, for example, develop sections within the Zoning Code regarding signs without consultation with the Code

Enforcement Bureau. With or without the functional transfer, the Department of City Planning must consult with other City departments to effectively develop a comprehensive Zoning Code.

4. THE FUNCTIONAL TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT WILL ENHANCE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF UPDATING OF CEQA.

Action Plan 4 recommended the updating of the City's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines for categorical exemptions, maintenance of staff CEQA training, and, in the long term, the exploration of other aspects of CEQA within its control such as the environmental thresholds; environmental review processes and procedures; development of a framework for a comprehensive programmatic EIR analysis for specific areas within Community Plans, etc.

The CEQA process is integral to the development review process. For example, the initial study of Department of City Planning permit applications requires the departments of Los Angeles (e.g., the Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, the Bureau of Engineering, etc.) to conduct an environmental review that identifies the potentially significant impacts of a development project on the environment. The purpose of the initial study of discretionary review applications received by the Department of City Planning is to:

- Inform governmental decision makers and the public of the potential environmental effects of proposed activities;
- Identify the ways that environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced;
- Prevent environmental degradation resulting from proposed land developments by requiring changes in projects through the use of alternatives or mitigation measures when the City finds that the changes are feasible; and

- Disclose to the public the reasons why the City approved the project in the manner the City chose if significant environmental effects are involved.

The initial assessment by the Department of City Planning of discretionary permit applications requires the participation of departments other than the Department of City Planning (e.g., the Department of Transportation, the Bureau of Engineering, etc.), typically as part of the 30-day completeness assessment, to determine the potential environmental effects of a proposed project and to solicit information that might affect the decision to prepare a Negative Declaration or an Environmental Impact Review.

Improving the City's CEQA systems and processes is an important step in managing the timeliness of the City's development review process. The improvement of these systems and processes cannot be completed in a vacuum. It requires the participation of other departments besides the Department of City Planning.

This suggests that the transfer of these development services functions to a new Department would improve the management of the CEQA process: many of the City departments or bureaus involved in CEQA would be an integral part of the new Department.

However, even with the functional transfer, an Initial Study would still require the involvement of other departments. The Initial Study, for example, requires an assessment of Utilities and Service Systems (wastewater, water, stormwater, solid waste, etc.); this should involve the input of a multiple number of departments and bureaus including the Bureau of Engineering, the Department of Water and Power, the Bureau of Sanitation, etc. The Initial Study, for example, requires an assessment of the impact on City parks or other recreational facilities; this should involve the input of the Department of Recreation and Parks. Obviously, it is impractical to functionally transfer

all of these departments and bureaus to a new department.

Even with the functional transfer, it is likely the Initial Study would still require the input of departments and bureaus outside of this new department.

5. THE FUNCTIONAL TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT WILL ENHANCE COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH.

Action Plan 5 recommended City Departments work together to increase coordination of public information.

Communication with the Los Angeles public is an integral part of each and every permit application received by the City. Citizens can more effectively express their perspectives regarding permit applications when they know the facts about these applications.

This suggests that the transfer of these functions to a new Department would enable more effective communication with the Los Angeles public: almost all of the City departments that are an essential part of communication regarding development services by the City would be integral part of the new Department. This more effective communication by the new Department would include (1) better consistency and quality of content and appearance of communications regarding development services with the public since it will speak with a single voice, (2) improved quality of communications by concentrating the task in trained, qualified staff members in a single department, and (3) the enhancement of the City's ability to coordinate communication efforts across the multiple disciplines in this single integrated department.

However, there are other organizational alternatives to addressing this problem, short of the functional transfer of development services to a new department. These

alternatives are presented in the chapter 13, Analysis of the Plan of Organization. These alternatives, involving process owners for the discretionary permit process, building permit process, and the engineering permit process, would place responsibility for clarity in communication with the process owners.

These alternatives, however, are less than the optimum solution: the functional transfer of development services to a new department.

6. THE FUNCTIONAL TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT WOULD ENHANCE THE ABILITY OF THE CITY TO IMPLEMENT PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS

Action Plan 6 recommended the City make improvements in the development process. The Development Reform Strategic Plan noted that “development services processes are complex and improvements are outlined for new consultation services for small and medium-sized projects, process roadmaps / documentation, common application forms and case files, report production for quicker turnaround for such items as Letters of Decision, and B-permit tracking and monitoring. The aim is to eliminate paper intensive processes and the customer having to make so many trips to various City departments.”

The improvement of these processes can only occur with the involvement of multiple disciplines (e.g., engineering, transportation planning, land use planning, building and safety, fire life safety, etc.). Examples include short-term process improvements that require the cooperation of these multiple disciplines to implement (e.g., reducing the number of clearances for building permits, incorporating the Department of City Planning into the Department of Building and Safety’s Parallel Design-Permitting Process, etc.).

The improvement of the development review process requires the participation of all of the disciplines involved in that process. This suggests that the transfer of these functions to a new department would enable more effective and timely implementation of these improvements since one departmental director would be responsible for implementation.

However, there are other organizational alternatives to addressing this problem, short of the functional transfer of development services to a new department. These alternatives are presented in the chapter 13, Analysis of the Plan of Organization. These alternatives, involving process owners for the discretionary permit process, building permit process, and the engineering permit process, would place responsibility for implementing process improvements with the process owner.

These alternatives, however, are less than the optimum solution: the functional transfer of development services to a new department.

7. THE FUNCTIONAL TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT WOULD ENHANCE THE DELIVERY OF A RESPONSIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE CULTURE.

Action Plan 7 in the *Development Reform Strategic Plan* recommended the creation of a “customer service-oriented culture.”

The action plan within the *Development Reform Strategic Plan* included a number of steps for improving customer service as noted below.

- **Establishing centralized Case Management**, comprised of Case Managers from DBS, DCP, BOE, DOT, and DWP to start. Other departments or bureaus, such as Bureau of Street Lighting, have expressed interest to be involved in these pre-development consulting sessions.
- **Building a customer service work culture** by improving the morale of the customer service staff, increasing cross-departmental collaboration through meetings and surveys, improving facilities to enhance staff pride and professional

respect, and providing applicants with safe, clean work areas with informational videos and other amenities, and establishing a team-oriented recognition program.

- **Establishing an inter-departmental customer services team** to develop guidelines for:
 - Counter staffing (e.g., the appropriate balance between experienced and new counter staff);
 - Counter practices (e.g., guidelines for appointments);
 - Standards for such items as responding to emails and phone inquiries;
 - Codes of conduct;
 - Measuring customer service success using a citywide approach;
 - Customer satisfaction surveys focused on development services (versus multiple separate Department surveys); and
 - Hours of operation and staffing
- **Defining with greater clarity which departments are the "Lead Department" when multiple departments are involved on an issue or a major undertaking**, such as Development Services Case Management, BuildLA, the Construction Services Centers, CRA projects, or integrated cashiering.

The language used in the *Development Review Strategic Plan* speaks loudly of the complications in developing an effective development services customer service culture resulting from the City's "silo" approach to organizing development services. The *Development Review Strategic Plan* recommends that the City define with greater clarity which department is the lead department when multiple departments are involved on an issue or a major undertaking; it recommends establishing inter-departmental customer services team; increasing cross-departmental collaboration; establishing a multi-departmental case management system comprised of case managers from the a multitude of Departments; etc.

None of this would be necessary if these functions were transferred to a new department. Within a single department, the departmental director would develop clarity in customer service goals, objectives, and metrics. Within a single department, the

departmental director would develop enhanced customer service systems that cross disciplines. Within a single department, the departmental director would ensure that all of the staff in all of the disciplines have the right tools, training, and consistent support. Within a single department, the departmental director would ensure the sustainability of customer satisfaction through on-going monitoring and assessment of customer satisfaction across all of the disciplines (effective customer service is only possible if all of the development service disciplines are meeting the City's metrics). Within a single department, the departmental director would enable the delivery of a consistent message at the executive level regarding the importance of customer service and how that service is delivered (a challenge in a regulatory culture).

However, there are other organizational alternatives to addressing this problem, short of the functional transfer of development services to a new department. These alternatives are presented in the chapter 13, Analysis of the Plan of Organization. These alternatives, involving process owners for the discretionary permit process, building permit process, and the engineering permit process, that would place responsibility for implementing a responsive customer culture.

These alternatives, however, are less than the optimum solution: the functional transfer of development services to a new department.

8. THE FUNCTIONAL TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT WOULD ENHANCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF BUILDLA.

Action Plan 8 in the *Development Reform Strategic Plan* calls for – Technology / BuildLA. BuildLA is the vehicle for moving the development services technology to a new level of needed sophistication and to enable greater transparency and access to information.

This is a central problem resulting from the “silo” approach to delivery of development services. The City has different permit information system in the Departments of Building and Safety, City Planning, Fire, and the Bureau of Engineering and the Department of Transportation.

The Request for Proposal (RFP #2013BLA001R) for BuildLA noted several problems that it is designed to address. The source of these problems stem is the “siloed” plan of organization sued for delivery of development services. These problems, derived from the Request for Proposal, are noted below.

- **Siloed, department-centric processes.** Departments operate and manage review processes only within their own walls (or “silos”), with no view to processes in other departments. Because a development project frequently requires review by multiple departments, the applicant is left to determine which processes are necessary and manage these processes across departments. There is no cohesive, customer-centric, interdepartmental process with a clear pathway for the applicant.
- **Lack of interdepartmental business process coordination.** Because departments operate within siloes, business processes are not coordinated across departments.
- **Opaque process.** Paper-based and siloed business processes create a development review environment with little to no transparency. After submitting their applications, it is difficult for customers to determine who in the City is reviewing their project, the status of the review process, and how long the process will take. This lack of transparency contributes to the unpredictability of the review process.
- **Lack of accountability.** Because it is difficult to determine whom in the City is responsible for a project, and because performance metrics vary widely by department (and are often absent entirely), there is very little accountability to the customer in the development review process.
- **Absence of centralized governance of development services.** As discussed, development services currently operate within departmental silos. As such, there is no centralized governance or management of these services. Each department maintains their own information technology systems group and their own systems, creating redundant functionality and infrastructure across departments.

- **Absence of citywide performance measurement and monitoring.** Paper-based processes, ageing information technology systems, and the absence of citywide governance of development services makes it impossible to establish, measure, and monitor performance metrics for case processing. Absent metrics, it is difficult to identify process bottlenecks, assess the effectiveness of process changes, estimate case processing time, and allocate resources appropriately.

BuildLA is designed to address these problems.

Section 1.2 of the Request for Proposal for BuildLA (RFP #2013BLA001R) noted that the “proposed future environment will include a consolidated Department of City Planning and Development, which will include a merger of the departments of Building and Safety and City Planning as well as some (but not all) of the land use management functions currently housed in other departments. The City does not anticipate that this will have a material impact on the Use Cases as presented in this document, as the realigned organization will still be required to perform all of the functions currently performed by the separate departments.”

There is one central problem with that perspective: not all of the departments fully use their existing permitting information systems (e.g., tracking actions and dates in the processing of permits by each of the departments). The City’s investment in BuildLA will likely exceed \$15 million. The system is predicated on all of the departments involved in development services using BuildLA for application processing; plan review, entitlements, and enforcement. This investment will not generate an effective Return on the City’s Investment unless all of the departments involved in development services fully use the system.

If these functions were transferred to a new department, the Departmental Director could ensure that all of the bureaus and divisions within the new department

effectively utilize BuildLA to manage and monitor permits (e.g., tracking actions and dates in the processing of permits by the departments).

9. THE FUNCTIONAL TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT WOULD ENABLE THE CITY TO MORE EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS A NUMBER OF FINANCIAL ISSUES.

Action Plan 9 within the *Development Reform Strategic Plan* recommended the City implement a simpler mechanism for making payments, involving credit cards, draw-down accounts, and a single cashier. In addition, the City will document its costs more closely to achieve full cost recovery for services rendered. These fees can help cover staffing, technology, and other investments needed.

Other departments and bureaus, at the present time, accept cash using staff other than cashiers with cash registers. Multiple staff from multiple departments accept cash, even though these staff are in the same building as cashiers with cash registers that are integrated with the City's financial system (e.g., 201 North Figueroa Plaza). The *Development Reform Strategic Plan* recommended the Department of Building and Safety act as cashier for all involved departments co-located with the Department of Building and Safety to reduce the number of payment transactions by applicants. This has not occurred.

If these functions were transferred to a new department, that Departmental Director could ensure that all of the bureaus and divisions within the new Department used Building and Safety as their cashier for those bureaus and divisions co-located with Building and Safety.

The *Development Reform Strategic Plan* also called for (1) applying a City-wide, consistent method to determine what should be included in calculating the recovery

amounts, and (2) ensuring that Departments involved in development services and plan reviews establish a special revenue fund.

If these functions were transferred to a new Department, that Departmental Director could ensure the development of this citywide methodology for development of full cost recovery in compliance with State law. In addition, that Departmental Director could ensure that the Departments involved in development services are consolidated in a special revenue fund.

These recommendations are too important to await the functional transfer. Even without the functional transfer, these recommendations need to be implemented with specific actions and accountability for these actions noted in later chapters of this report.

10. THE OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER SHOULD REPORT THE STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE *DEVELOPMENT REFORM STRATEGIC PLAN* EVERY SIX MONTHS TO THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR AND TO THE CITY COUNCIL.

While there has been some reporting on the status of the implementation of the *Development Reform Strategic Plan*, it has been at the initiative of individual departments, and not coordinated and systematic.

The Office of the City Administrative Officer should be assigned responsibility for the reporting of the status of implementation of the recommendations within the *Development Reform Strategic Plan* to the Office of the Mayor and to the City Council every six months. The reporting should include the anticipated period of implementation (*Development Reform Strategic Plan* versus revised schedule), the actions necessary to implement each recommendation and associated milestones including any funding necessary, the departments and managers responsible for implementation, and the

coordination required with other departments for implementation. The first status report should be prepared and submitted on June 2, 2014.

Recommendation #4: The Office of the City Administrative Officer should be assigned responsibility for the reporting of the status of implementation of the recommendations within the *Development Reform Strategic Plan* to the Office of the Mayor and to the City Council every six months.

Recommendation #5: The Office of the City Administrative Officer should prepare and submit the first status report on June 2, 2014.

Exhibit 2 (1)

Recommendations of the Development Reform Strategic Plan

Action Plan 1.0	Vision for our Communities	Lead	Timing
Action Plan 1.1 – Community Plans	<p>1. "Crossing the Finish Line": New Community Plans (NCPs). Feedback from community leaders and the development industry indicate that strong, current Community Plans are a key to efficient and predictable development. Developers need the guidance of Community Plans to help them assess where to invest and what form of development to pursue. Communities need current plans to draw clear limits to development and govern the kinds of projects that will be allowed. Strong Community Plans, accompanied by ordinances that align with the Zoning Code [discussed later in Action Plan 3.0] with the Plan, hold strong promise to reduce the number and complexity of entitlements required to start a project.</p> <p>Recognizing these benefits, DCP has been working for some years to increase the updating of the 35 Community Plans that exist in Los Angeles. The resource constraints of the last few years and expected this year have led DCP to propose completing seven of these Community Plans.</p> <p>"Crossing the Finish Line" outlines the steps needed to reach that goal. DCP has released the Hollywood Community Plan draft, which is now in the process of public review. The other Community Plans nearing completion are San Pedro, West Adams, Granada Hills, Sylmar, South Los Angeles, and Southeast Los Angeles.</p>	DCP	Near-Term

Exhibit 2 (2)

Action Plan 1.0	Vision for our Communities	Lead	Timing
Action Plan 1.2 – Shaping the City – Planning to Plan	<p>2. “Shaping the City”. Completing the update of 7 of the 35 Community Plans is a positive first step – but it is only a first step. There are 28 other Community Plans, as well as specific plans for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and around the Metro stations that are planned and in some cases under construction. And there are multiple Elements of the General Plan, some of which have not been reviewed for decades. Some issues – transportation, for example – are best addressed on a City-wide basis, while updating others might be of material help in completing the Community Plans that remain to be reviewed.</p> <p>At the same time, resources to complete these plans are likely to be sharply limited for the foreseeable future. There are simply not enough resources to do all of the things that the City would like to do, or that would be helpful. This situation requires that rigorous and sophisticated assessment is in order to make sure the resources that are available are devoted to the most important planning areas.</p> <p>“Shaping the City” proposes to build a framework for the prioritization of planning efforts beyond FY 2011-2012. Among the factors to be considered will be the effect of a particular effort on the development process – will this work protect vulnerable communities, or make the development process more predictable? Will it clarify issues that currently impede development? How long will it take? What resources will it command? These and other aspects will be considered in preparing a program of work that will best apply planning resources to the key issues at hand. Once the framework is in place and an annual work plan has been determined, progress against the plan will be assessed quarterly.</p>	DCP	Long-Term

Exhibit 2 (3)

Action Plan 2.0	Accountability: Transparency and Predictability	Lead	Timing
Action Plan 2.1 – Policies and Procedures	Timely resolution of Inter-Departmental differences regarding conditions for applications can be expedited via:		
	3. Creation of a Land Development Committee. The City will establish a Land Development Committee that will meet routinely to resolve conflicting condition requirements on projects – not addressed via any of the mechanisms outlined below.	DS Cabinet	Short-Term
	4. Development Services (DS) Case Management (discussed later). The City is launching centralized DS Case Management, which has a team of co-located experts from DBS, DCP, BOE, DOT, and DWP. The team can address complex issues on the spot because it has capable staff assigned with the authority and experience to provide timely decision-making regarding entitlement, public improvements, and utility processes. Therefore, many of the developers' issues regarding conditions can be identified and resolved by the DS Case Management team.	DS Cabinet	Short-Term (July 2011)
	5. Construction Liaison Network. DS Case Management has defined the “go-to” person as contacts points for resolving inter-Departmental differences through the Construction Liaison Network.	DS Case Management	Short-Term (Done; March 2011)
	6. Deeper Counters. DCP has instituted “deep counters” at the One-Stop Construction Services Centers to provide greater expertise.	DCP	Short-Term (Done; March 2011)
	7. Zoning Screening Pre-Check. The purpose of zoning screening pre-check, which will occur upon entitlement application submittal, is to ensure the applicant is requesting all entitlements necessary to build a project. By going through a Zoning Screening Pre-Check, developers should not have any surprises when permits are later pulled.	DBS, DCP	Short-Term
	8. Completion of the Planning Case Referral Form (PCRF) at the pre-application stage – Developers will complete the PCRF at the time of submittal for all Master Land Use Applications (MLUAs), where the projects have public works requirements. BOE and DCP's implementation of the proposed PCRF will provide a cursory check for public improvement requirements at the front end of the entitlement process for a modest fee (\$125 plus 7% service fees). BOE has the PCRF as an action item for completion by August 1, 2011, and is in the final planning and preparation phase with DCP. The intent is for the PCRF to be mandatory if public dedication or improvements are in order.	BOE	Short-Term (August 2011)

Exhibit 2 (4)

Action Plan 3.0	Zoning Codes	Lead	Timing
Action Plan 3.1: Zone Code Simplification	<p>9a. “Less is more”. DCP’s Code Studies Unit has identified seven Zoning Code areas to simplify. Three of these Zoning Code simplifications are in various stages of adoption this next year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Findings. Provide a better framework for analyzing the merits of proposed development projects and eliminate redundancy in case processing • Multiple Approvals (Entitlements). Create consistent procedures for review of projects requiring multiple approvals • Planned Unit Developments (PUDs). Revise the Residential Planned Development supplemental use district establishment provisions and establish PUD districts. 	DCP	Short-Term
	<p>9b. DCP is currently researching four other ordinances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Exceptions (define "minor deviations") • Plan Approvals/Site Plan Review (consolidate and establish uniform/consistent Plan Approvals procedures for Conditional Use Permits (CUPs), variances, and other quasi-judicial approvals) • Specific Plan/Supplemental Use Districts (an administrative clearance procedure for projects which fully comply with all Specific Plan and Overlay standards and no design or discretion is involved in the decision) • Site Plan Review to align provisions so that they are consistent with CEQA statutes and existing discretionary action thresholds (i.e., CUPs, Variances, etc.) 	DCP	Near-Term
Action Plan 3.2: Zoning Code Manual and Communications	<p>10. Zoning Code Manual Online. DBS’s Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), referred to as the "Zoning Manual", is currently posted on its website as a reference guide and should be routinely updated and posted on the future City-wide Development Services website with a shared portal. [Note: Refer to Action Plan 8.0 on “Technology/BuildLA” for a more in-depth understanding of the portal.]</p>	DBS	Short-Term
Action Plan 3.3: Comprehensive Zone Code Reform	<p>11. Comprehensive Zone Code Reform – “More Planning, Less Reacting”. This comprehensive Zoning Code reform endeavor is costly – \$6 million to \$8 million – and can easily take 3 or more years to accomplish, but once completed, the benefits are enormous: clear and distinct regulations, faster development time lines, fewer overlays and special conditions, less need for discretionary actions, and better alignment with other Municipal Code Chapters.</p>	DCP	Long-Term (June 2014 or Thereafter)

Exhibit 2 (5)

Action Plan 4.0	CEQA	Lead	Timing
Action Plan 4.1: CEQA Training	12. Maintain an On-going CEQA Training Program. DCP will maintain a comprehensive and on-going CEQA training program for its staff members to provide consistent and objective environmental review and mitigate exposure to CEQA-related litigation.	DCP	Short-Term; On-going
Action Plan 4.2: E-Forms Technology	13. Update the E-Forms Technology. DCP will determine the necessity and viability to develop a new e-Forms computer program to improve the EIR analysis process and documents.	DCP	Near-Term
Action Plan 4.3: CEQA Environmental Review Processes and Procedures	14. Review, Revise, and Streamline the City's CEQA Environmental Review Processes and Procedures. With the restructuring of the Environmental Affairs Department (EAD), the City lacks assigned responsibility for modifying CEQA-related City policies procedures. Therefore, the City needs to identify which agency should be given such authority. If and once granted, that Lead Department should embark on several CEQA reform initiatives – some of which can be addressed in the near term but overall represent a large-scale reform initiative:	Office of the Mayor	Long-Term
	15. CEQA Guidelines for Categorical Exemptions – The City will update and revise the CEQA Guidelines to allow for proper application of Categorical Exemptions. As part of this process, the City will bring the City's CEQA-related processes into conformance with State Guidelines, with modifications to address local experience	DBS	Near-Term
	16. CEQA Thresholds – The City will update environmental thresholds to reflect the 2011 State CEQA Guidelines language, satisfy the intent of the legislation, and promote the City's goals to <i>make LA the best place to live, work, and visit</i> .	Office of the Mayor	Long-Term
	17. Single-issue EIR Process for Small-Scale Projects – The City will assess the feasibility of implementing a Single-Issue EIR process for small-scale projects to improve equitability.	Office of the Mayor	Long-Term
	18. Framework for Comprehensive Programmatic Environmental Impact Review (EIR) Analysis for Specific Community Plans – The City will explore the possibility of developing and implementing a standard practice for conducting comprehensive programmatic EIRs for Specific Community Plans. The purpose of this effort is to streamline CEQA reviews for proposed projects that are consistent with the adopted Community Plan.	Office of the Mayor	Long-Term

Exhibit 2 (6)

Action Plan 5.0	Communications and Public Outreach	Lead	Timing
Action Plan 5.1: Los Angeles's Image and Development Reform Outreach	19. Promoting the City of Los Angeles. The City of Los Angeles needs to change its image to one that conveys that Los Angeles is a desirable place to invest - as well as live, work, and visit. This new image must reach local, State, national, and international levels. The message might be as catchy as "We've Cut the Red Tape and Rolled Out the Red Carpet", or as blunt as "We know what you think of us and, boy, are we going to change your mind." Los Angeles is well-known as a futuristic City of innovation. Its architecture should reflect the best principles of environmental design. Its more densely populated areas should embrace the best concepts of smart cities. Its residential areas should preserve their character while creating vibrant, livable communities. Los Angeles should be the trendsetter of the best practices that other cities want to emulate.	Mayor's Office of Economic & Business Policy	Short-Term; On-going
Action Plan 5.2: DS Public Information and External Relations	20. Inter-Departmental Public Information and External Relations for Development Services. The City Departments will collaborate to share information about Development Reform efforts with the public. The City will also improve inter-Departmental communication.	Mayor's Office of Economic & Business Policy	Near-Term; On-going
Action Plan 5.3: Commission Hearings	21. DCP Commissioner Training Program. The City should provide training and guidance to improve the facilitation of Commissioner meetings so that they are more expeditious, predictable, and equitable. In addition, the Office of the City Attorney should send legal staff to the Area Planning Commission (APC) hearings to provide counsel, thus, reducing the potential for litigation later in the process.	DCP	Short Term
Action Plan 5.4: Stakeholder Education and Input	22. Stakeholders' Input Opportunities. The City will establish lines of communication between stakeholders and public agencies with more meaningful opportunities for public input in the development process and a system to incorporate feedback and suggestions. During the course of Development Reform, DCP established the Neighborhood Liaison position to help bridge such communications.	DCP	Short-Term; On-going
Action Plan 5.5: Development Services Website	23. Development Services Website Portal Content. The City will improve the quality, access, and delivery of the information provided about the development process through an improved City web portal. [Note: Refer to Action Plan 8.0 on "Technology/BuildLA" for a more in-depth understanding of the portal. This Action Plan focuses on the content of the Website versus the technology for installing a common portal.]	BuildLA / DBS	Near-Term

Exhibit 2 (7)

Action Plan 6.1	Process Improvements: New Consultation and Education Services	Lead	Timing
Action Plan 6.1: City-wide Processes: Providing New Consultation Services	19. Two of the pre-development DS Case Management services – the Feasibility Study and Preliminary Review – are available to ALL projects, including small- and medium-sized projects [Refer to Action Plan 7.1. This Action Plan will establish scaled-down, flexible pre-development consulting services for small- and medium-sized projects and produce educational materials for prospective applicants, stakeholders, and the general public to increase their understanding of the City's development review process.	DS Cabinet	Near-Term
Action Plan 6.1 (a): Consulting on small and medium-sized projects	20. Specific consulting services for small- and medium-sized projects. Not all projects warrant the level of services available in DS Case Management. City Departments can also offer project-specific consulting services, modeled after DS Case Management. These consulting services will make the process more predictable for the customer and will result in higher quality submittals and reduced processing time. By collecting smaller, but affordable fees for these services, the City can recover costs and guarantee adequate staffing for these and other Development Services. The fees will be set to ensure they result in full cost recovery for the City and they will be arranged by appointment only. These offerings will have specific levels of service (number of hours, number of participants, etc.) clearly defined. Consulting services will reduce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The confusion and uncertainty associated with processing small- or medium-sized projects through the process • The extensive amount of free training and consulting that goes on at the front counters today. 	DS Cabinet; services provided by any City Departments with projects needing such fee-based consultation	Short-Term / Near-Term
Action Plan 6.1 (b): Education and Training	21. Education and training. The City will develop educational materials and training programs for staff members to present to groups of applicants prior to submitting an application for an entitlement or permit. The training will not be project specific but will focus on the overall development processes or specific steps within the process (Building Permits, Conditional Use Permits (CUPs), B-Permits, Urban Forestry programs, Street Lighting, etc.). Once the training and course materials have been field-tested with live audiences, they could be committed to videos and on-line tutorials for presentation from the City-wide Development Portal or in the waiting areas of the One-Stop Construction Services Centers.	DBS; DCP; BOE; others in DPW	Long-Term

Exhibit 2 (8)

Action Plan 6.2	Process Improvements: Continuation of Implementation Improvement Teams	Lead	Timing
City-wide Processes: Implementation Improvement Teams (IITs)	<p>22. Implementation Improvement Teams (IITs). During the implementation effort, the DS Cabinet should use IITs to work on specific initiatives, in particular, process improvements and performance measurements. A Project Manager should be assigned to help coordinate the IIT efforts under the DS Cabinet, as discussed in Chapter IV. The DS Cabinet can also form IITs to address specific problems as they arise, similar to a “swat team” approach.</p> <p>The IITs can provide a career enhancing opportunity for motivated staff to participate in solving the most difficult and most promising process improvement opportunities. Training can be provided to build skills in business process management, organizational workload balancing, documentation, and performance measurements and reporting. The IITs will coordinate their efforts with staff members in the impacted Departments.</p> <p>A key objective of the IITs is to instill an environment of continuous process improvement and provide a capacity to deliver on that promise.</p>	DS Cabinet	Short-Term / Ongoing

Exhibit 2 (9)

Action Plan 6.3	Process Improvements: Process Roadmap / Documentation	Lead	Timing						
City-wide Processes: Building a Process Roadmap	The scope of this Action Plan is to develop a citywide standard for process documentation and then to implement it across all of the Departments involved in the Development Services processes. The aim is to have a common look with needed information for applicants and the public regarding Development Services processes.								
Action Plan 6.3.1: Roadmap Design	<p>23. Some Departments have already documented their respective steps required in documents and manuals. Other Departments that lack such information will develop and document their respective portions of the Roadmap. Special work groups may need to be convened to develop the documentation for the interfaces between Departments. Three perspectives should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Applicants' information needs – Presents clear, simplified descriptions of basic development processes from the applicants' point of view, prominently displaying contacts for DS Case Management and other consultative services.Staff members' information needs – Describes the process from staff members' perspectives, including specific policies and procedures and forms. The staff members' documentation will complement the applicants' and may be the same (or can be a manual or other form of documentation).Fees information – Defines what fees are due at what stages of the process and provides information on the magnitude of the fees or their method of calculation. This information should be included for both applicants and staff members. <p>The order in which Process Roadmaps are developed should follow a priority based on the complexity of the process combined with the volume of activity through that process. The process mapping exercise during the Development Reform Project provided a good starting point for determining the priority of implementation:</p> <p>City Department Priority Processes for Building Roadmaps</p> <table><tr><td>DCP</td><td>Pre-Entitlement Post-Entitlement Generic Entitlement EIR Zoning Administration cases</td></tr><tr><td>DBS</td><td>Plan Check/Permits Inspection</td></tr><tr><td>DPW (BOE, BSL, and BSS) and DOT DOT</td><td>B-Permit Transportation Permitting and Planning Process</td></tr></table>	DCP	Pre-Entitlement Post-Entitlement Generic Entitlement EIR Zoning Administration cases	DBS	Plan Check/Permits Inspection	DPW (BOE, BSL, and BSS) and DOT DOT	B-Permit Transportation Permitting and Planning Process	IIT, BuildLA / DBS	Near Term
DCP	Pre-Entitlement Post-Entitlement Generic Entitlement EIR Zoning Administration cases								
DBS	Plan Check/Permits Inspection								
DPW (BOE, BSL, and BSS) and DOT DOT	B-Permit Transportation Permitting and Planning Process								

Exhibit 2 (10)

Action Plan 6.3	Process Improvements: Forms and Case Files	Lead	Timing
Action Plan 6.3.2: Inter-active Wizard of Process Roadmap	24. Inter-active wizard of Process Roadmap. A longer term solution will be to deliver the Process Roadmap as an inter-active wizard using the Portal. This solution will require an investment in technology but will present the applicant with an interactive simulation of going through the process, based on specific project parameters provided by the applicant. This approach is commonly referred to as the "Turbo Tax" model. It will not only provide the applicant with the steps required for their project, but will also begin the preparation of the necessary forms.	BuildLA / DBS	Near to Long Term
Action Plan 6.4	Process Improvements: Forms and Case Files	Lead	Timing
City-wide Processes: Improving Application Forms and Case Files	Four action steps will help improve paper-flow of forms and files in the near term and assist in preparing Development Services for eventually electronic submission:		
	25. City-wide Forms Standards. The scope of this Action Plan includes the development of a citywide forms standard, describing format, common data content, and instructions. Under the coordination of an IIT, each Department will be responsible for creating its forms in compliance with this standard, including a procedure for making any future modifications to these forms. These forms can then be set up using Adobe PDF format with the form filling feature. This will allow applicants to prepare typed versions of the forms prior to coming to the One-Stop Construction Services Centers. The City can provide workstations/kiosks in the One-Stop Construction Services Centers for applicants without access to home or business computers.	DS Cabinet, IIT	Near Term
	26. Simple Scanning Application of Form Data. A second phase of this Action Plan entails a simple scanning application to be used by the staff for optically reading the data, using OCR from the standard form and loading the application information into the existing applications for permits and entitlement cases. This action will eliminate data entry steps by City staff.	IIT	Near Term
	27. New Business Software for Forms. The next phase of this Action Plan will be to incorporate these new forms into the new business applications for permits and entitlements. This incorporation will allow for complete preparation and on-line submission of applications [Refer to Technology / BuildLA Action Plan 8.0.]	IIT, working with BuildLA/DBS	Long Term

Exhibit 2 (11)

Action Plan 6.4	Process Improvements: Forms and Case Files	Lead	Timing
City-wide Processes: Improving Application Forms and Case Files (Cont'd)	28. Project Tracking Across City Departments. The final phase of this Action Plan is to design and implement a citywide case processing approach that allows projects to be tracked across Departments and by customers' projects. A common or "universal" project number will allow Departments to retain their current case and permit numbering schemes while providing a single unique identifier to track all activity related to a single project. This numbering schematic will provide much better tracking capabilities, improved client inquiries, and more meaningful performance measurements. In addition, applicants can track their own projects so they can see where their projects are in the review process at any given time. Such a tracking system will increase transparency within and across the City for Departments as well as for applicants. (This Action Plan is patterned after the Travelocity model.)	BuildLA / DBS	Near Term, Long Term
Action Plan 6.5	Process Improvements: Improved Report Preparation and Production	Lead	Timing
City-wide Processes: Improved Report Preparation and Production	Streamlining and Simplifying Report-Writing. This Action Plan focuses on streamlining and simplifying the report-writing process by identifying documents and sections of documents that can use standard text for blocks and paragraphs. These standard text blocks and paragraphs can then be placed in a common, shared library for all staff members to use.	BuildLA / DBS	Short Term
	29. Separation of Text and Data. Another approach will be to separate the text from the data wherever possible. This is a common best practice and makes it easier to manage standard text and find information. Using a "data sheet" approach will make report writing more consistent, more accurate, and faster to produce.	BuildLA / DBS	Near Term
	30. Application to New Case Processing Software. This approach must be incorporated into the new case processing applications for permits, entitlements, inspections, and enforcement.	BuildLA / DBS	Long Term

Exhibit 2 (12)

Action Plan 6.6	Process Improvements: Letters of Decisions	Lead	Timing
Letters of Decision (LOD)	31. This Action Plan directs DCP to establish a standard, streamlined protocol for producing and issuing LODs. DCP will evaluate strategies for reducing the existing LOD backlog, and develop performance metrics and reporting tools to ensure staff accountability. This Action Plan also relates to the prior one, Action Plan 6.5 on "Improved Report Production".	DCP	Short Term
Action Plan 6.7	Process Improvements: Transporting and Transmitting Documents	Lead	Timing
City-wide Processes: Reducing the Customer as the Courier	This Action Plan focuses on removing unnecessary trips on the part of the customer wherever possible. It also focuses on reducing counter activity to receive these plans and assists the Departments to move to scheduled appointments for reviews of the plans. A scheduled approach typically leads to better staff utilization.		
	31. Document Transfers. First, the City will establish a plan to transfer documents to be reviewed and completed without relying on the customers to transport documents from City Department to City Department. This plan needs to be created by staff and reviewed for comment by the Development Industry Advisory Committee (DIAC, formerly DRAC) [described in Chapter IV, "Implementation Plan"].	IIT	Near Term
	32. Courier Services. Second, the City should explore the benefits of using a courier service to move the plans quickly between Departments, using a once or twice a day pick-up and delivery schedule depending on volume. This service should incorporate a bar code process, provided by contract couriers, to track information for all documents (referred to as the UPS model).	IIT	Near Term
	33. Electronic Movement of Documents. Finally, when new systems for permitting, Entitlement, Inspections, and Enforcement are implemented, they should fully automate all document movement in electronic format within the City. Electronic movement will provide far better control over documents and will greatly improve processing speeds.	BuildLA / DBS	Long Term

Exhibit 2 (13)

Action Plan 6.8	Process Improvements: Paperwork Reduction	Lead	Timing
Eliminating the Paperwork	This Action Plan envisions an electronic process for submitting, storing, reviewing, marking up, routing, approving, signing, and stamping documents. It includes full document management and workflow capabilities. It will eliminate the need for scanning documents for archive and records functions.		
	34. Establishment of Electronic Document Standards. The first phase involves establishing electronic document standards, including customer submission requirements, document indexing, document routing, electronic signature/stamp standards, backup and security, new desktop hardware, training, and document retention requirements.	BuildLA / DBS	Near Term
	35. Major Investment in Technology and Training. The second phase of the Action Plan requires a major investment in technology and training. [Refer to the Technology / BuildLA Action Plan 8.0.] Proper training for both customers and staff is essential to the success of this electronic document approach	BuildLA / DBS	Long Term

Exhibit 2 (14)

Action Plan 6.9	Process Improvements: Performance Measurement and Monitoring	Lead	Timing
6.9.1: Backlog	<p>36. Backlogs. Backlogs are the most serious impediment to an efficient development process in the City. Backlogs exist in every single process. In some cases, they are small and manageable but, in key situations, they are substantial and introduce months of delay into the process. In some cases, work sits for 2 to 3 months before work is begun, only to be completed in a few hours or days. Reducing the backlog is a major challenge in the City with its recent staff reductions, furloughs, retirements, hiring freezes, and lack of overtime. Without resources, many City Departments are unable to reduce the backlog.</p> <p>Delays are especially troublesome in situations where work must be resubmitted multiple times before it is approved. In these cases, the impact of the backlog is sometimes doubled or tripled. Backlogs are particularly problematic in DBS, BOE, DOT, and DCP because these Departments are key players in the development process. Most of the backlogs are the result of recent furloughs, early retirements, and staffing gaps.</p> <p>In some cases, such as DBS, backlogs are closely monitored; in others, they are more anecdotal in reporting and tracking. Often the only way to avoid the backlog problem is to play the “squeaky wheel” card; then projects are moved ahead of others in the queue, leaving the powerless player to wait even longer.</p> <p>No single action would have a more significant impact on speeding up the development process than reducing the backlog. Eradicating or substantially reducing backlogs can be accomplished by applying additional resources to the backlog. There is a train of thought that justifies applying additional resources because most of the backlog situations exist in “full cost recovery” environments and more resources would simply be accelerating the application of funds to complete the backlog work and eliminate the backlog delay. But as already mentioned, adding the staff resources needed to reduce the backlog in the current development economy and City fiscal situation is difficult, particularly in Departments, such as DCP or BOE, which are funded through the City’s General Fund.</p>	DS Cabinet	Short-Term, Near-Term, Ongoing

Exhibit 2 (15)

Action Plan 6.9	Process Improvements: Performance Measurement and Monitoring	Lead	Timing
6.9.2: Handoffs	37. Inter-Departmental Handoffs. Another source of delays in the process is the inter-Departmental handoffs that occur throughout the process. There is no single Department taking responsibility for tracking a project's movements through the system and making sure the project does not get lost, misplaced, or moved to the bottom of the stack over and over again. A major source of this problem is the lack of a single, unified tracking number for each project. This barrier prevents visibility of the project status across Departmental boundaries. There is no alert system to signal that a project has fallen into one of these traps unless the customer complains. Then it is an arduous task to find out the location and status of a project.	DS Cabinet	Short-Term, Near-Term, Long Term
Action Plan 6.9	Process Improvements: Performance Measurement and Monitoring	Lead	Timing
6.9.3: Monitoring Systems	38. Measurement Monitoring Systems. Finally, the general lack of measuring and monitoring the overall time a project is in the system leads to problems. Each Department measures its own performance to some degree, but several Departments do it on a limited basis. No one is measuring the customer's view of time in the process. This needs to be one of the key premises on which any new systems are built.	IIT	Long Term
Action Plan 6.10	Process Improvements: B-Permits	Lead	Timing
6.10: Citywide Processes	39. In the short term and until better technological solutions can be developed, the Departments and Bureaus that are involved with B-Permitting will use BOE's Status Card for tracking B-Permits. In this way, City Departments will know where any given B-Permit application is in the system. Turnaround times can also be monitored better. If necessary, the City can execute remedial action when a B-Permit stalls in one of these Departments. Because the Status Card is available to B-Permit applicants through the BOE website, applicants will have information on the status of their B-Permit even when it is in DOT, BSL, or BSS for review and approval. Finally, this status information will be made available to management in all involved Departments and can be the basis for finding problem projects and taking corrective actions to remove the bottlenecks to get the B-Permits completed.	BOE	Short Term

Exhibit 2 (16)

Action Plan 6.11	Process Improvements: Specific Inter-Departmental Process Improvements	Lead	Timing
6.11: Specific Process Improvements	Listings of the remaining suggested improvements are contained in Volume 2, Section 6.12, on "Process Improvements" (see the improvements listed below). Individual Departments or IITs can coordinate the implementation of these individual process improvements based on priorities set by the DS Cabinet.		
	40. Short-Term Initiatives. Sixteen of the suggested improvement can be done with little resources and accomplished in less than one year. Each needs a brief roll-out plan. Some require a policy decision to be made at the Departmental level. Approximately one-half need participation by more than one Department in the decision-making process. The balance can be done within a single Department. City management, with input from stakeholders, needs to prioritize this list of suggested improvements to determine the best use of the limited resources available to accomplish the most improvement.		
	(a) Eliminate the requirement to pull an excavation permit and bond prior to pulling a building permit for 'minor' underground work.	BOE / DBS	Short Term
	(b) Develop and implement a system to improve coordination between DWP and BOE, especially with regards to power pole installation.	BOE / DWP	Short Term
	(c) Require the project's Plan Check Engineer's managing supervisor to review the Plan Check Engineer's clearance sheet. Frequently, projects have clearances that later are deemed unnecessary.	DBS	Completed
	(d) Improve the coordination between plan checkers and inspectors. Provide clear definition of what items can be decided/challenged by inspector, e.g., new materials.	DBS	Short Term
	(e) Streamline the "Regular Plan Check" process	DBS	Short Term
	(f) Evaluate the feasibility of delegating responsibility to DBS to establish driveway width requirements, eliminating a clearance from DOT.	DBS / DOT	Short Term
	(g) Allow electrical meter release prior to completion of full project. This would allow DWP to begin installing meter sooner.	DBS / DWP	Short Term
	(h) Develop a process to approve a scaled down project when the project has been approved. This will help jump start scaled back projects that can boost the economy. Create an emergency order to put this in place.	DCP	Short Term
	(i) Schedule Tract Map hearings prior to receipt of all reviewers reports.	DCP	Short Term

Exhibit 2 (17)

Action Plan 6.11	Process Improvements: Specific Inter-Departmental Process Improvements		Lead	Timing
6.11: Specific Process Improvements (Cont'd)	(j)	Standardize information, procedures, and processes (e.g. fees, study guidelines, credits, study requirements, worksheets) across all LADOT offices. Adopt updated universal traffic study guidelines.	DOT	Short Term
	(k)	Develop and implement an outreach strategy for DOT traffic engineers.	DOT	Short Term
	(l)	Implement an internal preliminary review process in DOT that includes planning, design, and implementation teams to avoid last-minute changes to approved plans before the start of construction.	DOT	Short Term
	(m)	Develop basic standards for review of traffic lane requests and detour plans and implement a plan to reduce review time.	DOT	Short Term
	(n)	Evaluate the feasibility of implementing a formal appeal process for DOT determinations. Include time constraints.	DOT	Short Term
	(o)	Establish time goals for review of Memoranda of Understanding when traffic studies are required.	DOT	Short Term
	(p)	Do not trigger trash collection to start until after a home is sold. Currently it starts after the water meter is set.	DPW / DWP	Short Term

Exhibit 2 (18)

Action Plan 6.11	Process Improvements: Specific Inter-Departmental Process Improvements	Lead	Timing
	41. Longer-Term Suggested Improvements. Nine of the remaining suggested improvements require more than one year to do and present special difficulties (e.g., ordinance changes, substantial resources, or improved technology), which may make them untenable.		
	(a) Define and implement improvements to the BOE U-Permit process. Work with all utilities to develop policies and procedures that streamline the BOE review and approval process.	BOE / Utilities	Long Term
	(b) Delegate authority to sign off on issues while the project is under construction. Senior inspectors could be given authority to sign off standard modifications based on template justifications which will avoid unnecessary trips to LADBS to meet with a principal or chief inspector or plan checker.	DBS	Long Term
	(c) Streamline and improve the "change of use" process, taking best practices from Restaurant & Hospitality Express.	DBS	Long Term
	(d) Provide notification from DBS to DCP of changes related to conditions of approval made in the field	DBS / DCP	Long Term
	(e) Incorporate DCP into the Parallel Design-Permitting Process and create a system to allow for parallel, concurrent plan checking between Departments.	DCP	Long Term
	(f) Consider eliminating redundant sign offs for subdivisions. Sign offs should be a one-time event for all lots in one tract.	DCP / DBS	Long Term
	(g) Create a program to perform parallel and current plan checking for entitlements and permits	DCP / DBS / All	Long Term
	(h) Uphold the approved project site configurations. Once a project is approved, the permit staff needs to work with the agreed-to configurations to reach a sensible compromise between standardized requirements and site constraints.	DOT	Long Term
	(i) Develop a formal appeal process with time constraints	DOT	Long Term

Exhibit 2 (19)

Action Plan 7	Improved Customer Service	Lead	Timing
7.1: Development Services (DS) Case Management	<p>42. Development Services (DS) Case Management. This Action Plan outlines the steps necessary to establish centralized DS Case Management, comprised of Case Managers from DBS, DCP, BOE, DOT, and DWP to start. Other Departments, such as Bureau of Street Lighting, have expressed interest to be involved in these pre-development consulting sessions. The Case Managers are experts prepared to identify and handle some of the most complex issues facing any type of development. In most cases, they can provide immediate feedback. Their timely and collaborative approach is what makes them different and important.</p> <p>DS Case Management will expand pre-development consulting services to include formal technical consulting for the entitlement, public improvement, and utility processes. Projects will be handled by a team of Case Managers from each process who will work together on the project from conception to completion. The goal of this Action Plan is to increase predictability, transparency, and efficiency by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furnishing consistent information to the applicant throughout the process • Providing a single entry portal to the review process • Eliminating "late hits" or surprises • Improving navigation and problem-solving services across Departments • Improving inter-Departmental collaboration 	Development Services Case Management, DBS (Lead)	Short-Term (July 2011)

Exhibit 2 (20)

Action Plan 7	Improved Customer Service	Lead	Timing
7.2: Customer Service	<p>43. “Cut the red tape and roll out the red carpet”: Building a customer service work culture. Research has uniformly identified employee satisfaction as a key element in successful customer service, yet City employees central to facilitating the process struggle with the barriers of City-wide collaboration: overcoming organizational silos, navigating complicated processes, and circumventing procedural black holes. It can be a frustrating and difficult challenge to be professional and supportive consistently in the face of these impediments. Because fiscal challenges create stressful conditions, specific attention must be paid to improving the morale of the customer service staff and creating a culture of customer service.</p> <p>The Action Plan calls for improving communications both within Departments and City-wide to increase cross-Departmental collaboration through meetings and surveys.</p> <p>In addition, improving facilities will both enhance staff pride and professional respect, and provide applicants with safe, clean work areas with informational videos and other amenities.</p> <p>Finally, establishing a team-oriented recognition program that emphasizes inter-Departmental cooperation is a low-key and low-cost way to re-enforce Development Services values. Such a program should also include frequent acknowledgment for customer service successes that reflect the values and most needed customer service behaviors.</p>	DS Cabinet	Short-Term; Ongoing

Exhibit 2 (21)

Action Plan 7	Process Improvements: B-Permits	Lead	Timing
7.3: Citywide Processes	<p>44. Morale and a Customer Service Plan. Ensuring that sufficient, trained, and experienced staff members are available to respond to customers is the main focus of customer service. The Customer Service Plan reflects the need for a City-wide approach to customer service while recognizing that the differences among the various Departments eliminate the possibility of a “cookie cutter” approach.</p> <p>As a result, the Action Plan calls for establishing an inter-Departmental customer services team to develop guidelines for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counter staffing (e.g., the appropriate balance between experienced and new counter staff) • Practices (e.g., guidelines for appointments) • Standards for such items as responding to emails and phone inquiries • Codes of conduct • Measuring customer service success using a City-wide approach • Customer satisfaction surveys focused on Development Services (versus multiple separate Department surveys) • Hours of operation and staffing <p>In addition, training will be important for enhancing customer service. Including both classroom and on-line options, the training should be custom-designed with examples from development processing cases. Everyone with public contact, starting with counter staff, should be trained, including an annual briefing (e.g., two-hour) refresher training and classes to inform staff about process changes as the other Action Plans are implemented.</p>	One-Stop Construction Services Centers	Short Term; On-going

Exhibit 2 (22)

Action Plan 7	Process Improvements: B-Permits	Lead	Timing
7.4: Organization, Staffing, and Facilities	<p>45. Departmental Accountabilities and Working Relationships. This Action Plan focuses on defining with greater clarity which Departments are the "Lead Department" when multiple Departments are involved on an issue or a major undertaking, such as DS Case Management, BuildLA, the One-Stop Construction Services Centers, CRA projects, or integrated cashiering. Different staffing allocation models are presented to improve coverage of functions, particularly on furlough or vacation days.</p> <p>Future efforts regarding facility plans should take into consideration the increased co-location of staff members who deliver Development Services from the various City Departments.</p> <p>The Action Plan also outlines steps for the City to take to explore the feasibility of further consolidation of specific Development Services functions within the City.</p>	DS Cabinet	Near Term

Exhibit 2 (23)

Action Plan 8	Technology Via BuildLA	Lead	Timing
8.1: BuildLA	46. Technology is a critical enabling tool for making the kinds of process and customer service improvements that the earlier Action Plans want to address. The overall BuildLA project is a long-term proposition with specific accomplishments that will be completed in Year 1, Year 2, and thereafter.	BuildLA / DBS	Long Term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise Service Bus. The foundation of the technology plan is the selected architecture, which employs an Enterprise Service Bus to implement a Service-Oriented Architecture. • City-wide Portal. A key component of the technology plan is the early implementation of a City-wide Portal to support the immediate and future delivery of services to applicants and the community alike. The City currently has at least 12 different websites supporting Development Services in the involved Departments. Applicants are expected to navigate those websites to find the needed information. The City-wide Portal will support the current web pages with a single access point and begin defining the structure of a common Portal for access to data within those web pages. As current applications are made available as “services”, they can be accessed through the Portal. In addition, GIS services can be made available. The Portal will serve as a common customer access point for the Communications/Outreach Services Action Plan 5.5 and the source for the Process Roadmap Action Plan 6.3]. 	BuildLA / DBS	Near-term
	<p>Permit, Inspection, Code Enforcement, and Entitlement Services. The primary objective of BuildLA is to implement business solutions in Permit and Entitlement services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permit services. The first business application area to be addressed is Permitting. The current permit systems supporting DBS and Fire are old and in danger of failing. They need to be replaced. The permit system in BOE is newer and can be incorporated into the new systems through the Service-Oriented Architecture approach and the Enterprise Service Bus. • Inspection services. DBS currently provides Inspection services for construction-related permits; the Bureau of Contract Administration (BCA) inspects BOE’s right-of-way improvement projects. DBS currently uses an inspection system to record and track all inspections, print deficiency notices, and record the results of inspections. • Enforcement services. The review of Enforcement Services was not included in the scope of the Development Reform Project. • Entitlement services. The second business application area to be addressed is Entitlement processing. This will be approached on a City-wide basis so cases can be tracked and monitored across all 12 Departments. 	BuildLA/DBS and other City Departments using the new system	Near Term, Long Term

Exhibit 2 (24)

Action Plan 8	Technology Via BuildLA	Lead	Timing
8.1: BuildLA (Cont'd)	<p>Electronic submission is a longer term initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electronic Submission. In addition, capabilities will be provided to support electronic submission of documents and plans and to perform plan check and mark up work functions. It will also include document management and workflow support to move applications, plans, drawings, and reports throughout the City. These systems will also streamline the staff report preparation process, making maximum use of the information stored in the database. These new systems will be designed to make maximum use of the extensive GIS systems already deployed at the City. Finally, these new systems will support the e-Commerce initiatives identified in the Finance Action Plan 9.0.	BuildLA/DBS	Long Term

Exhibit 2 (25)

Action Plan 9	Finance	Lead	Timing
9.1: Payment Simplification/Cashiering	<p>Payment Simplification/Single Cashier. The City of Los Angeles is implementing a new Financial Management System (FMS) that will “go live” in July 2011. This new FMS, once fully operational, will facilitate an easier transition to a “common cashier”.</p> <p>DBS will be the Lead Department, acting as cashier for all involved Departments co-located with DBS to reduce the number of payment transactions by applicants. This payment service may require the development of a single cashiering system for City-wide Development Services. The Action Plan also calls for allowing applicants the option of depositing funds into a draw-down account, against which they can use a “cash card” to cover expenses as incurred.</p>	DS Cabinet (with DBS to implement)	Near Term
9.2: Full Cost Recovery	<p>Full Cost Recovery. Full Cost Recovery calls for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applying a City-wide, consistent method to determine what should be included in calculating the recovery amounts Ensuring that City Departments involved in Development Services and plan reviews establish a special revenue fund <p>The components to be included in full cost recovery calculations must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Factored salaries (including direct and benefits) of all staff involved in intake, processing, and clearance of development proposals, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case management Plan reviews Counter/cashiering operations Other operations unique to each Department “CAP rates,” established by the Office of the Controller, which include materials, capital assets, support of other Departments, and Worker’s Compensation Departmental and division overheads, including a percentage of Departmental and divisional supervision Ancillary support services, technology costs, and one-time expenses associated with development review <p>By establishing a special revenue fund in each Department, the City will ensure that the dollars are expended in a timely manner and are doing the work for which the money is designated for.</p>	DS Cabinet with involvement of CAO and CLA	Near Term

5. ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TECHNOLOGY

The City has begun a major effort, through *BuildLA*, to develop a 21st century technology platform for the processing of permits by the City of Los Angeles. The City issued a Request for Proposals for *BuildLA*, and rejected the proposals. A second Request for Proposals has been issued, and those proposals have already been received.

The completion of the *BuildLA* permit, inspection, and enforcement system, will require three to four years. The creation of a more efficient, transparent, and predictable development system depends heavily on the application of this technology. “*BuildLA* is a web-enabled technology platform that will be used by multiple City departments to receive, assign, review, process, manage, and track all customer requests for services relating to the use and development of land. As envisioned, the *BuildLA* system will include an interactive customer web portal, a workflow management platform, electronic plan review capabilities, a supporting database, and integration or data sharing with several existing City systems.”⁸

This chapter analyzes the possible impacts of the functional transfer of development services to a new department would have on *BuildLA*, and the use of technology for permitting purposes by the City.

A summary of the recommendations contained within this chapter is presented in the exhibit following this page.

⁸ City of Los Angeles, Request for Proposals for a Comprehensive Technology Solution for Development Services (*BuildLA*), June 2013

Exhibit 3 (1)

Summary of Recommendations within Chapter 5

Rec. #	Recommendations
6	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Department of Building and Safety, and Fire Department to review the Use Cases as proposed in the Request for Proposals for BuildLA and ensure that the functional requirements are adequately defined before software development for BuildLA commences.
7	The Office of the Mayor should continue to act as executive sponsor for BuildLA.
8	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop a formal, written governance agreement for BuildLA for the review and approval of the Office of the Mayor and each of the participating bureaus and departments.
9	The Office of the Mayor, Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Department of Building and Safety, and Fire Department should adopt the formal, written governance agreement for BuildLA as developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer, after review and modification of the agreement as necessary.
10	The City of Los Angeles should select and dedicate a full-time project manager to BuildLA for the life of the project.
11	The BuildLA project manager should be an employee of the Department of Building and Safety.
12	The Executive Sponsor and the Governance Committee should take steps, in the near-term, to address the shortcomings in the project concept and solution definition phase of BuildLA as noted within this report.
13	The Executive Sponsor and the Governance Committee should utilize the best practices developed by the Office of the City Auditor of Portland, Oregon as a guide to assure the success of BuildLA.
14	The City of Los Angeles should establish a customer advisory committee for BuildLA.
15	The BuildLA customer advisory committee should consist of individuals representing architects, developers, engineers, permit / land use consultants, contractors, neighborhood representatives / councils, and trades.
16	The role of the BuildLA customer advisory committee should be to provide the customers' perspective in the development and implementation of BuildLA.
17	The City should integrate the existing automated permit information systems in advance of the BuildLA "Go Live" through the development of the BuildLA portal.
18	The Department of Building and Safety should be assigned lead responsibility for integrating the existing automated permit information systems using the BuildLA portal.
19	The City should acquire software to enable electronic submittal and plan check of building permit plans, Bureau of Engineering public improvement plans (e.g., B-permits), and discretionary review submittals.
20	The City should work with and train its customers in how to submit building permit plans, Bureau of Engineering public improvement plans (e.g., B-permits), and discretionary review submittals plans electronically.
21	The City will need to train its staff in how to plan check plans electronically. This should include training for the City's system administrator from the Department of Building and Safety, training for plan check staff in how to utilize the software for plan checking, workflow training for the staff, etc.
22	The City should develop written guides for electronic plan submission, published on-line on the City's web site, regarding the requirements for electronic plan check building permit submittals.

Exhibit 3 (2)

Rec. #	Recommendations
23	The City should provide a single web site portal for all development-related permits regardless of whether these are planning, building, engineering, fire, transportation, or water and power permits.
24	There should be a link to the development services web site portal on the City's home page.
25	Once the City deploys BuildLA to replace its legacy systems, applicants should be able to navigate to this one (1) web site portal for development services and pay application fees on-line, check the status of their permits on-line, view plan check comments made by staff, schedule or cancel inspections, check the results of inspections, apply for simple permits on-line, electronic plan submission, review, and tracking, automated e-mail notification so that applicants can receive automatic e-mail notifications of plan review or inspection activity etc.
26	The one (1) web site portal for development services should include a dedicated web page for business that includes resources for starting a business, obtaining / renewing a business license, streamlined permit assistance (e.g., over-the-counter plan check), a link to the City's Economic Development Division with up-to-date information on available commercial and industrial land and buildings in the City, utility business incentive programs (e.g., solar energy program, energy audits, etc.), etc.
27	The one (1) web site portal for development services should also include streamed information regarding wait times for the construction service centers.
28	The Department of City Planning should expand the extent of scanning of its case files, and immediately begin scanning all of the case files that it receives going forward.
29	The Department of City Planning should charge a surcharge on discretionary review fees to support the scanning of case files.
30	The Department of Building and Safety should provide public access to all building records over the Internet with the exception of blueprints.

1. BUILDLA IS DESIGNED AROUND WORKFLOW AND PROCESSES, AND NOT DEPARTMENTS.

Attachment 2 of the Request for Proposals for *BuildLA* presented the proposed future environment for meeting the needs of constituents seeking permits. The attachment stated that the City “aims to adopt a service delivery model that is oriented towards the business outcomes that the construction community aims to achieve. To that end, the City is establishing a series of end-to-end services that allow customers, homeowners, and developers to interact with the City through a single portal and request bundled services tailored to the nature of their project. While *the services concept is focused on customer needs as opposed to city processes* [emphasis added], the services will be provided by several key City functions performed by the City of Los Angeles. Functions such as, but not limited to, entitlement intake and processing, case management, application intake and processing, plan review, permit issuance, and inspections will be performed using the new BuildLA solution.”⁹

2. THE COMPREHENSIVE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTION FOR DEVELOPMENT SERVICES IS DESIGNED AROUND SERVICE CATEGORIES.

Attachment 2 of the Request for Proposals for *BuildLA* presented the service categories that BuildLA would be structured around. These service categories are presented in the exhibit following this page.

⁹ City of Los Angeles, Request for Proposals for a Comprehensive Technology Solution for Development Services (BuildLA), June 2013

Exhibit 4

Service Categories for BuildLA

Service Category	Service Component
Manage My Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request an inspection • Check project status • View case file • Appeal a decision • Schedule an appointment • Communicate with project contact(s) within the City • Manage user preferences • Review project history
Start a New Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rezone a property or amend the General Plan • Change the existing use or occupancy of a property • Host a special event or temporary use • Perform work in the public right-of-way / Perform utility work • Perform non-structural site improvements • Build a new structure • Demolish or relocate a structure • Modify a structure • Divide land/modify parcel boundaries • Request an inspection • Request a Street Vacation • Request a Highway Dedication Waiver • Install or Change Signage • Request Preconstruction Services
Pay My Bill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Payment • Review Payment History • Request Refund • Dispute Invoice • Request Receipt
Apply for or Renew a Trade License	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not Applicable
Materials Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request Approval • Request Renewal • Modify Approval
Report a Violation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not Applicable
Obtain General Building Services Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review GIS • Review Basic Project Status • Research Property History • Estimate Project Costs
Manage By BuildLA Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not Applicable

The intent of *BuildLA* will be to offer to the City's customers, through a single portal, a one-stop-shop for all development-related needs.

Attachment 2 of the Request for Proposals for *BuildLA* identified, in more detail, the process steps that a permit applicant would navigate through. Those process steps are summarized below.

- **General Information and Project / Application Intake.** Customers will be able to locate information about various City services, perform research on service requirements, and easily review departmental permit application and submittal guidelines rather than visiting each department's websites or each department's offices to gather information. With GIS integration, the customer can, by entering an address and selecting the project site from a map, have the ability to determine permitted use, existing entitlements, enforcements on the project, and enable City departments to view potential issues associated with the possible project earlier in the project lifecycle.

Once the customer has identified the appropriate service, the *BuildLA* portal will guide the customer through a series of structured questions to identify which permits and conditions are necessary. The portal would then create a tailored project application to ensure that all known information and documentation required for each permit can be collected upfront.

During the intake phase, the customer will have the ability to research requirements, obtain information, submit their project application, upload plans and additional documents, and submit their payment online. Once a project application has been submitted to the City, an employee will review the application for completeness, highlight any objections that may arise and request additional information from the applicant.

Once the City employee has accepted the application, *BuildLA* will activate the appropriate workflows that will notify and trigger the actions from the responsible department(s) allowing for review across multiple departments.

- **Plan Review.** The *BuildLA* solution will include an electronic plan review component that will allow City employees to simultaneously review, comment on, and mark-up plans. City employees will have the ability to review plans for completeness, review conditions and clearances, input required bond amounts, and request corrections from the applicant. City employees will be able to communicate corrections to the customer chat, e-mail, and videoconference capabilities. In addition, *BuildLA* will allow supervisors within City departments to view employee workloads, backlogs, and performance metrics.

- **Inspections.** *BuildLA* will allow inspections to be automatically assigned and allow for the requesting and scheduling of inspections. Inspections will be accomplished with mobile technology allowing for adjustments to inspector schedules via wireless, reducing time spent in the office typing or copying site notes. Based on pre-defined territories, *BuildLA* will have the ability to generate and optimize travel routes for inspectors to maximize inspection opportunities, reduce backlog, and assure inspections are performed in a timely manner. *BuildLA* will enable City departments to dynamically adjust and manage the pre-defined territories based on available inspection resources and inspection workload.

During the inspection process, customers will have the ability to request an inspection, multiple inspections, or schedule timing of inspections. City employees will have the ability to monitor inspector workloads, clear entitlement conditions, and enter inspection results into the system. The system will enable inspectors to issue documents in the field (Certificates of Occupancy, Order to Comply, etc.).

- **Code Enforcement.** The *BuildLA* solution will also enable enforcement. Citizens will have the ability to research ongoing projects and submit complaints. Complaints will be routed to the appropriate department for review and enforcement action. City employees will have the ability issue an order to comply, manage appeals, manage hearings, compile documentation for the City Attorney, and notify the public of upcoming hearings. The customer will have the ability to confirm the receipt of the notice to comply and appeal it. The system will also assist in managing the adjudication process from the appeals process to the notification of upcoming public hearings.

The City has determined that an implementation by services across all impacted departments will be the most beneficial from a change management and value perspective to both the City and its customers.

This is an extraordinarily ambitious scope.

It is also a scope that is entirely independent of any organizational structure including any functional transfer of development services to a new department.

This scope will also result in the full replacement of the BOE "A" permits tracking system, the BOE "B" Permits tracking system, the BOE Excavation "U" permits tracking system, the automated cashiering system, the Bond Tracking System, the DOT Case

Logging and Tracking System (CLATS), the Case Management Assignment Tracking System used by DBS, the DBS Code Enforcement Information System (CEIS), the DCP Condition Development and Management System (CDMS), the DBS Plan Check Inspection System (PCIS), the Planning Case Referral Form (PCRF) used by BOE, the DCP Planning Case Tracking System (PCTS), the DOT Traffic Mitigation Information System (TMIS), etc. It will include interfaces with the City's Financial Management System (FMS), the DBS Internet Document Imaging System (IDIS), etc.

BuildLA represents an opportunity to develop a comprehensive permitting solution for the City of Los Angeles.

3. THE CITY HAS EXPENDED SIGNIFICANT EFFORTS IN DEFINING ITS FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS THROUGH USE GROUPS, BUT HAS NOT FULLY DEFINED REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL OF THE PARTICIPANTS.

The City has expended a significant effort in defining the functional requirements for BuildLA through "Use Cases". It has resulted in a 246-page document that defines various "use cases" for development services.

Use cases enable the City to capture and communicate functional requirements for BuildLA. Use cases are written from the perspective of the user (e.g., DCP, DBS, BOE, DOT, Fire, etc.) as a flow of events (e.g., entitlement process). Use cases are literally the specific "cases" for which the City and the pertinent departments or bureaus wants to "use" BuildLA. The specific use cases that are contained within the Request for Proposal are presented in the exhibit following this page.

Exhibit 5 (1)

Use Cases Developed for BuildLA

3.1 General Information and Intake
3.1.1 Research Requirements and Select Service
3.1.2 Obtain General Development Services Information
3.1.3 Complete and Submit Application Online
3.1.4 Submit Plans and Other Required Documents Online
3.1.5 Review Application for Completeness
3.1.6 Request Additional Information from Applicant
3.1.7 Review Application Status
3.1.8 Modify or Withdraw Application
3.1.9 Submit Online Payment
3.1.10 Record Payment
3.2 Entitlement Process
3.2.1 Submit Entitlement Inquiry
3.2.2 Review Inquiry Results and Submit Entitlement Application
3.2.3 Submit Conditions for Entitlement Case
3.2.4 Conduct Review of Entitlement Inquiry
3.2.5 Conduct Entitlement Review and Request Conditions
3.2.6 Schedule Hearing and Record Hearing Date
3.2.7 Record Final Decision and Issue Letter of
3.2.8 Manage Appeals
3.3 Application Processing
3.3.1 Submit Additional Information Online
3.3.2 Review Application for Compliance
3.3.3 Record Application Note
3.3.4 Send Message to Other Employee
3.3.5 Monitor Progress and Status
3.3.6 Request a Refund
3.3.7 Issue a Refund
3.3.8 Manage BuildLA Workload
3.4 Plan Review
3.4.1 Review Plans for Completeness
3.4.2 Monitor Plan Checker Workload
3.4.3 Review Plan for Compliance and Record Clearance
3.4.4 Request Plan Correction from Applicant
3.4.5 Record Quality Assurance Review
3.4.6 Assign Quality Assurance Correction
3.4.7 Input Bond Amount
3.5 Inspections
3.5.1 Request Inspection
3.5.2 Monitor Inspector Workload
3.5.3 Conduct Inspection and Record Outcome
3.5.4 Manage Final Project Clearance and Completion
3.5.5 Assign Quality Assurance Review
3.5.6 Conduct Inspection and Record Outcome by Deputy Inspector

Exhibit 5 (2)

3.6 Adjudication
3.6.1 Issue an Order to Comply
3.6.2 Confirm Receipt of an Order to Comply
3.6.3 Appeal a Decision
3.6.4 Process Appeal
3.6.5 Manage Appeals
3.6.6 Create Public Information and Documentation
3.6.7 Submit Comments
3.6.8 Manage Hearings
3.6.9 Compile Documents
3.7 Workflow Management
3.7.1 Manage User Skill Profile
3.7.2 Manage Collections
3.7.3 Manage Receivables Workload
3.7.4 Manage Bond and Deposit Release
3.7.5 System Generated Workflow
3.8 System Administration
3.8.1 Request BuildLA User Account
3.8.2 Setup BuildLA User Account
3.8.3 Activate User Account
3.8.4 Manage Business Rules
3.8.5 Manage Fees and Distribution
3.9 Report a Potential Violation
3.9.1 Report a Complaint
3.9.2 Manage Complaints
3.10 Trade Licenses and Materials Control
3.10.1 Complete and Submit a Trade License or Test Facility Application Online
3.10.2 Provide Notification of Fabrication Online
3.10.3 Schedule an Exam Online
3.10.4 Schedule a Performance Test Online
3.10.5 Request Facility Inspection Online
3.10.6 Review Trade License or Test Facility Application for Completeness
3.10.7 Review Trade License or Test Facility Application for Compliance
3.10.8 Manage Examination Schedule
3.10.9 Manage Testing Facility Schedule Online
3.10.10 Conduct Examination and Record Outcome
3.10.11 Conduct a Performance Test and Record Outcome
3.10.12 Conduct Facility Inspection and Record Outcome
3.10.13 Manage Trade License or Test Facility Renewals
3.10.14 Renew a License or Approval Online
3.11 Testing Laboratory
3.11.1 Complete and Submit Materials for Approval Application Online
3.11.2 Schedule a Materials Field Test Online
3.11.3 Review Materials for Approval Application for Completeness
3.11.4 Review Materials for Approval Application for Compliance
3.11.5 Conduct a Materials Test and Record Outcome
3.11.6 Manage Approved Materials Renewal Notifications

Exhibit 5 (3)

3.12 Manage Technical Reports and Import
3.12.1 Complete and Submit Application for Review of Technical Reports and Import
3.12.2 Assess Technical Report Review Application for
3.12.3 Assess Technical Report Review Application for Compliance

Three other cities have recently issued Request for Proposals for automated permit information systems: Portland, Seattle, and San Francisco. In reviewing the functional requirements developed by these three local governments versus the City of Los Angeles, it is clear that the City of Los Angeles has put far more effort in defining the City's functional requirements through these Use Cases than these other local governments.

However, a comparison of the functional requirements developed by these three other local governments versus the City of Los Angeles also indicates that, in some instances, these local governments have done a better job of defining their requirements. Three examples are presented below.

- **Functional requirements for pre-entitlement do not appear to have been included in the Request for Proposals.** For example, the Use Case could indicate that pre-application functional requirements include the ability to capture and access information about an application during pre-application discussions and research including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Project description;
 - Parcel dimensions and configurations;
 - Parcel type;
 - Parcel splits and combinations;
 - Previous parcel number(s);
 - Recorded history of parcel, including prior lot designation and tract numbers;
 - Districts, including school, and special districts;
 - Parcel status;
 - Applicable zoning regulations;
 - General Plan and use description;
 - Historic status;
 - Variances;
 - Existing applications and permits associated with the parcel, address or person;
 - Previous building applications, permits, and code compliance cases;
 - Previous zoning applications and their status, including conditions of compliance and whether conditions were one-time, ongoing, and were met; and
 - Contact log, including phone calls and emails.

- **The Use Case for Reviewing Application for Completeness (Use Case 3.1.5) does not fully define the functional requirements for completeness review.** The Use Case describes the process of a City employee reviewing an application that had been submitted through the *BuildLA* portal to assure that the application is complete. It includes functional requirements for an employee logging into the system, selecting an application from the queue and reviewing it for completeness, finding discrepancies or requesting additional information, and updating the application status once the application has been deemed complete. The Use Case does not include other important functional requirements including the ability to:
 - Assign a completeness review due date, and include this date on inquiries and reports (e.g., standard completeness review deadline is 30 days from application date);
 - Allow the standard number of days for completeness reviews to be modified on a case-by-case basis;
 - Capture completeness review project management and workflow information including, but not limited to (1) departmental units conducting completeness reviews and estimated completion dates (e.g., DOT, BOE, etc.), (2) status of departmental unit completeness reviews (e.g., outstanding, completed), and (3) date of departmental unit completion of completeness review, along with any comments and issues;
 - Establish minimum completeness standards for each case type, and generate warnings to staff when applications do not meet minimum standards;
 - Allow insertion of pre-defined completeness review comments as well as ad hoc comments; and
 - Distinguish between completeness review comments officially provided to the public and in-house notes.
- **Use Case 3.2.6 for Scheduling a Hearing and Recording a Hearing Date (Use Case 3.2.6) does not fully define the functional requirements for public noticing and scheduling hearings.** The Use Case states the system should have the capacity to issue public notices and schedule hearings. It does not include functional requirements that include the ability to:
 - Track a variety of hearing types (e.g., Planning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, City Council);
 - Flag any cases where required fees have not been paid prior to scheduling a hearing;
 - Facilitate the scheduling of hearings by providing a list of available hearings for a specific date range, including but not limited to (1) dates available, (2) time, (3) type of hearing, (4) number of items allowed on agenda, and (5) items already on agenda;
 - Track hearings requested and those scheduled;

- Maintain records of hearing dates, type, brief subject of the hearing, description and participants;
- Post scheduled hearing to a calendar maintained by the City;
- Create a hearing agenda;
- Create an electronic routing and circulation of agenda for review;
- Prepare hearing and public notice(s);
- Record a hearing notice preparation date;
- Generate notices using postcards, letters, or e-mail;
- Interface with GIS to generate mailing lists for notices to owners and occupants of parcels within a given distance (e.g. 300') of the subject parcel;
- Avoid duplication of notices / labels sent to an address;
- Print mailing labels;
- Support an agenda subscription service;
- Maintain a distribution list, including subscriber, e-mail address, start date and expiration date;
- Publish a hearing agenda and support materials to the City's web site;
- Record hearing dispositions and decisions such as continuance, referral, remanded, approval, and denied;
- Record revised type, description and complexity of project;
- Allow fees to be revised based on change in scope;
- Generate notices to appellants that explain hearing dispositions and decisions, and itemize any fee adjustments; and
- Issue notices through e-mail or fax, if previously requested.

The development of well-defined functional requirements is an essential step to ensuring that the money spent on the development and implementation of *BuildLA* is money well spent. What happens if these functional requirements are not defined or are poorly defined? The City could end with a half-baked product or the departments that have not defined their functional requirements will start defining new requirements upon delivery of *BuildLA* that can increase cost and push back schedule.

The City should review its functional requirements. This need not delay the award of the contract for *BuildLA* in light of the functional requirements developed. However, the poor planning of functional requirements was the 2nd leading cause for not

delivering expected results in an information technology project in a 2012 survey by *Information Week*.¹⁰

The City should review the functional requirements within its Use Cases, and expand them to the extent necessary to ensure that, at the conclusion of the software development of BuildLA, the Departments of the City of Los Angeles end up with a product that can be effectively utilized to provide seamless and transparent services. BuildLA must provide the tools to provide for accurate and real-time information and project tracking, and assist staff, policy-makers, and the public in informed decision making.

Recommendation #6: The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Department of Building and Safety, and Fire Department to review the Use Cases as proposed in the Request for Proposals for BuildLA and ensure that the functional requirements are adequately defined before software development for *BuildLA* commences.

4. THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR SHOULD CONTINUE TO ACT AS THE EXECUTIVE SPONSOR FOR *BUILDLA*.

For *BuildLA* to be a successful project, it must have a top management that is fully engaged in, supportive of, and knowledgeable about *BuildLA*. This requires an executive sponsor to ensure that commitment by top management of Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Department of Building and Safety, and Fire Department.

That executive sponsor has been and should be the Office of the Mayor. This Office of the Mayor should have ultimate authority over *BuildLA*. The Office of the Mayor should assure that the necessary funding for *BuildLA* is available, it should resolve

¹⁰ Information Week, Enterprise Project Management Survey of 508 business technology professionals, September 2011

issues and approve scope changes in *BuildLA*, it should approve major deliverables, and the Office of the Mayor should provide high-level direction. The Office of the Mayor should “champion” the project within the City organization (and without), acting as vocal and visible champions to ensure that priorities for *BuildLA* are set properly to move *BuildLA* forward.

Overall, the responsibilities of the Office of the Mayor, as executive sponsor, should be as follows:

- Define and continuously clarify the scope of *BuildLA* and legitimize the goals and objectives of *BuildLA*;
- Participate and lead the multi-department *BuildLA* project planning;
- Ensure there is sufficient funding and resources for *BuildLA* development and administration upon completion of installation, and secure that funding from appropriate sources;
- Monitor the progress of *BuildLA*;
- Provide support to the project manager for *BuildLA* and serve as a point of mediation (major issues, problems and policy conflicts) if needed;
- Remove obstacles to successful *BuildLA* development;
- Approve and accept *BuildLA* deliverables;
- Approves proceeding from one phase to each successive phase of *BuildLA* including project close; and
- Ensure the alignment of *BuildLA* with the City’s vision and goals (e.g., performance measurement, transparency to the customer, etc.).

The Office of Mayor has and should continue to play a critical role in the successful development of *BuildLA*.

Recommendation #7: The Office of the Mayor should continue to act as executive sponsor for *BuildLA*.

5. THE CITY SHOULD FORMALIZE THE GOVERNANCE OF *BUILD*LA.

The City of Los Angeles should formalize, in writing, the governance of *Build*LA by the participating departments including the Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Department of Building and Safety, and Fire Department. It should also include the City's Information Technology Agency.

The City should establish a formal governance committee that would include representatives of each of these departments. The representatives should be responsible for providing guidance on overall strategic direction, allocating resources (money and staff) and setting priorities. The roles and responsibilities of the governance committee should include the following:

- Maintain an understanding of the project management approach for *Build*LA and project execution for *Build*LA;
- Actively support and promote *Build*LA within their department or Bureau;
- Ensure that resources in their department or bureau are committed to the project outcomes and are ~~the project's~~ necessary (e.g., sub-projects);
- Conduct the overall quality assessment for *Build*LA and make recommendations for improvement;
- Make policy decisions and help resolve *Build*LA issues that have escalated (e.g., scope creep, increases in costs, change orders requested by the information technology vendor, etc.);
- Provide direction and/or assistance in resolving issues that the *Build*LA project team cannot resolve;
- Provide direction and/or assistance in mitigating high-probability risks associated with the development of *Build*LA;
- Review and approve project deliverables and project phase / stage completion;
- Review and approve or reject all significant *Build*LA changes (time, scope, budget) and spending of ~~for the~~ *Build*LA; and

- Ensure that there is sufficient funding and resources assigned to *BuildLA* support after the project has gone “live”.

It is essential that each department and bureau be able to participate meaningfully in the development of *BuildLA*, including City’s Information Technology Agency over the life of the *BuildLA* project, not just its initiation. This can only occur through a formal, written definition of the roles and responsibilities of each of the departments and bureaus. The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop a formal, written governance agreement for *BuildLA* for the review and approval of the Office of the Mayor and each of the participating bureaus and departments.

The Department of Building Inspection and the Department of City Planning City and County of San Francisco developed a memorandum of understanding in 2008 to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the two departments in acquiring and installing a new automated permit information system. That can provide a starting point for the City of Los Angeles. That memorandum of understanding follows this page.

Recommendation #8: The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop a formal, written governance agreement for *BuildLA* for the review and approval of the Office of the Mayor and each of the participating bureaus and departments.

Recommendation #9: The Office of the Mayor, Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Department of Building and Safety, and Fire Department should adopt the formal, written governance agreement for *BuildLA* as developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer, after review and modification of the agreement as necessary.

6. THE CITY SHOULD SELECT AND DEDICATE A FULL-TIME PROJECT MANAGER TO *BUILDLA* FOR THE LIFE OF THE PROJECT.

The *BuildLA* is an expensive and lengthy information technology project. The cost for *BuildLA* will exceed \$15 million. The length of time to complete the project will likely exceed three years from award of contract.

Exhibit 6 (1)

**Memorandum of Understanding
Coordination of Permit Tracking System
Replacement Project between the San Francisco
Department of Building Inspection and
Department of Planning**

This Memorandum of Understanding is entered into as of October 20, 2008, in the City and County of San Francisco, State of California, by and between the San Francisco Department of Building Inspection (DBI), and the San Francisco Planning Department (DCP).

RECITAL

DBI and DCP acknowledge the need for a coordinated permit tracking process that effectively shares project permitting information and allows the City and County of San Francisco to better regulate, review, and approve development and construction projects occurring within the City boundaries.

The Departments agree as follows:

1. Identified integration points - DBI and DCP agree that while each department operates independently to carry out their respective missions, the following crucial integration points that are most important to a fully coordinated permit tracking system have been identified:
 - (a) Project Tracking - DBI and DCP acknowledge that project activities need to be effectively identified by the location, specifically block/lot/ address, and by a unique project number that follows the development project between DBI and DCP.
 - (b) Conditions of Approval - Conditions of approval and adherence to applicable codes must be tracked and confirmed at the appropriate stages of each project's development.
 - (c) Plan Review and Approval - Project plan review, from pre-application to the appeals stage, shall be fully coordinated and tracked between DBI and DCP. The entire plan review process would be subject to standard plan review and approval processes and agreed upon performance standards.
 - (d) Code Enforcement - Tracking of complaints and code enforcement activities will be tracked by block/lot/address and with the use of common identification numbers to eliminate duplicative complaint tracking systems.

Exhibit 6 (2)

- (e) Permit fees - the collection of all permit, entitlement and impact fees should be coordinated with the objective of developing common accounting practices and collection points. Subject to agreed upon compensation, DBI shall collect all impact fees, which are normally collected during the building permit process, and track conditions of approval legislatively mandated at the point of fee collection.
2. Joint Request for Proposals - DBI and DCP acknowledge the need for an integrated Permit Tracking System that effectively coordinates the entitlement activities of DCP, including post-entitlement requirements such as monitoring conditions of approval, with the building permit activities of DBI. DBI and DCP agree to pursue a joint Request for Proposals (RFP) on an integrated Permit Tracking System, with the objective of an integrated planning and permit process.
- (a) DBI and DCP shall participate in a shared RFP to investigate and solicit for an integrated planning and permit processing system that incorporates the following:
 - (i) A system for identifying, tracking, and approving planning entitlements, and conditions of approval, associated with planning and zoning of development projects.
 - (ii) A system for identifying, tracking, approving, and issuing construction plans, documents, and permits associated with the building permit process, and for tracking inspections associated with the same.
 - (iii) A system for identifying, tracking, and documenting the resolution of code enforcement violations in the building code and permit process, as well as Planning, Housing, and Municipal Code violations.
 - (b) A committee, as described in IV - Governance, below, shall be appointed to develop and issue an RFP, review proposals, and recommend the preferred proposal to the Directors of Planning and Building Inspection.
3. Scope of MOU – This MOU shall govern the development and implementation of the RFP and the inclusion of all integration points as specified above in Sections 1 and 2 of the Memorandum of Understanding. In addition, this MOU shall govern the development and implementation of the Permit Tracking System Replacement Project, up to full deployment of a new Permit Tracking System for both departments.

Exhibit 6 (3)

4. Governance - An interdepartmental Coordinating Committee shall be convened with the purpose of overseeing the development of the RFP, implementing the identified integration points, and coordinating Permit Tracking System implementation. The Coordinating Committee shall consist of the Director of Building Inspection and the Director of Planning, Senior Staff from DBI and DCP, as well as one representative from the Department of Technology and one representative from the Mayor's Office. The interdepartmental Coordinating Committee shall oversee the activities of the following subcommittees:

- (a) A technology subcommittee, consisting of the IT managers of DBI and DCP, and any department staff as appropriate, shall develop all technical specifications necessary to achieve a fully integrated permit tracking system. The technical specifications shall be based on the respective business processes of DBI and DCP, but must address the integration points described above.
- (b) An RFP development subcommittee shall consist of the City Planning CAO, the DBI Assistant Director, and other DBI and Planning Staff as appropriate. The RFP development subcommittee shall be responsible for coordinating the development and dissemination of an RFP, as well as for review of vendor proposals for a joint Permit Tracking System.
- (c) An implementation subcommittee shall consist of the City Planning CAO, the DBI Assistant Director, and other DBI and Planning Staff as appropriate. The implementation subcommittee shall be responsible for coordinating the implementation of a new Permit Tracking System between the two departments, including establishing priorities and resolving any conflicts between the department's priorities.

5. Timeframes / milestones / deadlines - DBI and DCP estimate the following deadlines or milestones:

- (a) RFP issuance by January 1, 2009.
- (b) Recommendation to DBI and Planning Directors regarding preferred vendor by March 1, 2009.
- (c) Contract Award by May 1, 2009.
- (d) Priority integration points should meet significant progress by June 30, 2010.

Exhibit 6 (4)

(e) New and/or revised systems fully implemented by June 30, 2011.

6. Dispute Resolution - All disputes shall be discussed and resolved at the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee. The Directors of both departments shall be the final arbiters of any unresolved disputes.

7. Budget - Provided sufficient funding is available to both the DBI and DCP, each Department shall provide funding equivalent to their proportional share of the overall costs for integration and/or implementation of a new system. The estimated budget for development and implementation of a new system for both departments is as follows:

ONE-TIME COSTS	Project Budget		
	Planning	DBI	Total
Application Software	\$964,286	\$1,800,000	\$2,764,286
Hardware and Operating System	\$117,660	\$347,256	\$464,916
Implementation	\$1,820,952	\$5,945,091	\$7,766,043
Infrastructure	\$17,649	\$52,088	\$69,737
Contingency	\$379,671	\$1,221,665	\$1,601,336
Project Staffing	\$555,717	\$-	\$555,717
TOTAL ONE-TIME COSTS	\$3,855,935	\$9,366,100	\$13,222,035

8. Reporting - The Coordinating Committee shall provide a report to the Board of Supervisors regarding the status of the Permit Tracking System Replacement Project and the improvements of public access to the Permit Tracking System. Such reports shall be submitted every six (6) months beginning March 2009 and ending upon the successful implementation of Permit Tracking System.

9. Term – MOU shall be in effect until the completion of all projects described above, or may be extended by mutual agreement. Termination of the MOU shall be by mutual agreement of the parties.

In Witness Whereof, the departments hereto have executed this Memorandum of Understanding:

Department of Building Inspection:

San Francisco

Planning Department:

Acting DBI Director

Director of Planning

Date

Date

This is a very large project for an information technology project.

The City should assign a project manager to *BuildLA* on a 100% full-time basis for the length of the project before the contract is awarded. The sole function of the project manager should be to manage *BuildLA*. The project manager should be an employee of Department of Building and Safety.

“Project management is the linchpin of a successful IS project. The project manager is responsible for the schedule, budget, functionality, risk management, and overall implementation of the project. Project managers must be proficient in understanding and communicating both the technology of the project and the business concerns of the organization.”¹¹

The project manager should be accountable by the *BuildLA* governance committee for ensuring that *BuildLA* is delivered within the agreed on scope as identified within the contract with the information technology vendor, and within the defined budget and schedule. The project manager should develop a formal written project plan, and manage the staff and the *BuildLA* information technology vendor assigned to the project. The project manager is also responsible to secure acceptance and approval of deliverables from the executive sponsor (Office of the Mayor) and the departments participating in *BuildLA*. The project manager is accountable for communication, including status reporting, risk management, escalation of issues that cannot be resolved in the team, managing change, managing information technology vendors, and managing constraints to ensure that the project is delivered within budget, schedule and scope.

¹¹ Office of the City Auditor, Portland Oregon, Best Practices for Information Systems Software Acquisition and Implementation, June 2003

Recommendation #10: The City of Los Angeles should select and dedicate a full-time project manager to *BuildLA* for the life of the project.

Recommendation #11: The *BuildLA* project manager should be an employee of the Department of Building and Safety.

7. THE EXECUTIVE SPONSOR AND THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE SHOULD TAKE STEPS TO ASSURE THE SUCCESS OF *BUILDLA*.

The *Standish Group* has been collecting information regarding the success of software development projects since 1985. The 2012 report indicates that 39% of all information technology projects were successful, 31% were cancelled, 12% were required features, or with less than required features and functions); and 18% failed to completion or delivered and never used).

The Standish Group further reported “very few large projects perform well to the project management triple constraints of cost, time, and scope. In contrast to small projects, which have more than a 70% chance of success, a large project has virtually no chance of coming in on time, on budget, and within scope, which is the *Standish Group* definition of a successful project. Large projects have twice the chance of being late, over budget, and missing critical features than their smaller project counterparts. A large project is more than 10 times more likely to fail outright, meaning it will be cancelled or will not be used because it outlived its useful life prior to implementation.”

The Executive Sponsor and the Governance Committee should take steps to assure the success of *BuildLA*. The Office of the City Auditor of Portland, Oregon has defined *Best Practices for Information Systems Software Acquisition and*

¹² Standish Group, the CHAOS Manifesto, 2013.

*Implementation.*¹³ The Executive Sponsor and the Governance Committee should use these best practices as a guide to assure the successful implementation of *BuildLA*. These best practices are described in summary in the exhibit on the following page.

There are indications that there the City adheres to some of these best practices. It appears that *BuildLA* has been designed in layers of smaller software modules that allow the building of *BuildLA* in pieces that can be deployed independently and more quickly versus a large project with dependent pieces. However, there appear to be some shortcomings in the project concept and solution definition phase of *BuildLA* as noted below:

- The functional requirements for some aspects of *BuildLA* have not been fully developed;
- It does not appear that the project has been evaluated financially with some of the costs of *BuildLA* still speculative including the costs of data migration, hardware, etc.; and
- Users have not been involved early and often. Users of the system – Planning Assistants, Planning Associates, Structural Engineering Associates, etc. have not been consistently involved during system design.

The Executive Sponsor and the Governance Committee should take steps, in the near-term, to address these shortcomings.

The Executive Sponsor and the Governance Committee should utilize these best practices as a guide to assure the success of *BuildLA*.

Recommendation #12: The Executive Sponsor and the Governance Committee should take steps, in the near-term, to address the shortcomings in the project concept and solution definition phase of *BuildLA* as noted within this report.

Recommendation #13: The Executive Sponsor and the Governance Committee should utilize the best practices developed by the Office of the City Auditor of Portland, Oregon as a guide to assure the success of *BuildLA*.

¹³ Office of the City Auditor, Portland Oregon, Best Practices for Information Systems Software Acquisition and Implementation, June 2003

Exhibit 7

**Best Practices for Information Systems
Software Acquisition and Implementation**

Phase	Best Practices
Project Concept and Solution Definition	Determine if you have a project
	Try to keep projects small and modular
	Describe the project in functional terms
	Know your business processes
	Evaluate the project financially
	Use project deliverables to define success
	Involve users early and often
	If you need outside help, get it
Selection and Acquisition	Write a detailed and clear request for proposal
	Make it a team effort but speak with one voice
	Select two or three top finalists and see working versions of their software
	Negotiate a good contract
	Don't be afraid to stop and re-evaluate if things are not going well
Design, Building, Testing and Acceptance	Have good systems in place for communicating and monitoring deliverables and milestones
	Create a process for managing scope change requests
	Keep risks visible and managed
	"Chunk it" and clearly define end points
	Insist on thorough system documentation
	Test
	Prepare a system implementation plan early
On-Going Maintenance and Operation	Plan for Maintenance
	Invest in training
	Conduct a post-implementation review

8. THE EXECUTIVE SPONSOR SHOULD ESTABLISH A CUSTOMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR *BUILD*LA.

The Request for Proposals for *Build*LA defines a number of challenges with the development services in terms of how the City interacts with its customers. These include the challenges noted below.

- The customer is responsible for shepherding applications through the process, interacting with each involved department, in a mostly sequentially manner. In essence, the customer “is” the workflow.
- There is no consolidated portal, interface or database for customers to interact with development services – information is available only through the respective websites of the individual departments.
- For the development community, doing business with the City of Los Angeles is perceived as confusing, abstract and inefficient.

The future vision of *Build*LA was defined as establishing a series of end-to-end service categories that allow customers, homeowners, and developers to interact with the City through a single portal and request bundled services tailored to the nature of their project.

Yet the customer – permit applicants, homeowners, and developers – have largely been looking from the outside in in the process that has lead up to the issuance of the Request for Proposals for *Build*LA.

The City of Portland took a different approach. It established a citizen advisory committee. The citizen advisory committee consisted of approximately 12 members representing architects, developers, engineers, permit / land use consultants, contractors, neighborhood representatives / councils, and trades. The role of the committee included:

- Assisting with identifying problems with current business processes to consider

for fixing in the new permit system or that are unrelated to information technology and that we can work to fix in advance of implementation;

- Reviewing and providing feedback on proposed work flow and processes for the new permit system;
- Providing input on the citizen web portal and application submittal process;
- Feedback on prioritization of work to include in the project; and
- Providing input on different options for changes to business practices.

Meetings are held monthly.

The City of Los Angeles should establish a similar customer advisory committee for *BuildLA*.

Recommendation #14: The City of Los Angeles should establish a customer advisory committee for *BuildLA*.

Recommendation #15: The *BuildLA* customer advisory committee should consist of architects, developers, engineers, permit / land use consultants, contractors, neighborhood representatives / councils, and trades.

Recommendation #16: The role of the *BuildLA* customer advisory committee should be to provide the customers' perspective in the development and implementation of *BuildLA*.

9. THE CITY SHOULD INTEGRATE THE EXISTING PERMIT INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN ADVANCE OF THE *BUILDLA* "GO LIVE".

BuildLA is built around services rather than creating a new system for each agency that needs to deliver the same or similar service. A Service is comprised of a single or multiple processes by the City of Los Angeles grouped in a meaningful manner to meet the needs of a customer. A Process represents an internal City function that must be completed as part of the delivery of a Service. It is envisioned that the *BuildLA* Portal would contain many services (e.g., entitlement review, plan review, inspection, etc.).

The *BuildLA* Portal should be developed earlier and outside the *BuildLA* project, and should consist of the following four key services:

- Web User Registration;
- Universal Project ID;
- Project Status Tracking; and
- Payment.

These key services are the building blocks needed to successfully implement *BuildLA*, so this would not be a wasted effort. Additionally, building the foundation of the *BuildLA* Portal will be the first effort in providing a virtual integration of development services. The chart, below, presents a graphical depiction of the portal and how it would interface with these existing systems.

A description of the Four Initial Services of the *BuildLA* Portal is presented in the paragraphs below.

(1) Web User Registration Service.

Web user registration facilitates multiple channels of interaction across the Portal. A list of portal functions that cannot be achieved without creating web user registration is provided below.

- **Web self-service.** Facilitating customer interaction that is low in complexity but high in volume, such as applying for an express building permit or requesting an inspection, are key *BuildLA* concepts. Web self-service employs previously saved customer profile information to simplify these processes.
- **Community.** Leveraging the collective intelligence of customers enables the City to provide a whole new dimension to support Web self-service. Enabling customers to help their peers and collaborate with minimal involvement from the City is a cost savings. Community interaction requires user registration to regulate postings.

- **E-mail.** This communication channel allows asynchronous communication between customers and the City. Web user registration by customers enables e-mail communication.
- **Delivering a Personalized Experience.** Web user customer registration allows the Portal to know the customer, hence avoiding the need to ask for customer information repeatedly. Memory of user preferences and self-populating forms are personalized features enabled by Web user customer registration.

The Department of Building and Safety currently uses a registration function on their e-Permit System. Below is a sample of the type of data the Registration Service would collect.

User Registration

All items marked with asterisk (*) are required

Personal Information

* First Name

Middle Name

* Last Name

Suffix

* Email

* Phone Number

Fax Number

* User Type

- ☐ Contractor
- ☐ Maintenance Supervisor
- ☐ Property Owner
- ☐ Temporary Special Event Applicant

Address Information

CANCEL SUBMIT

(2) Universal Project ID.

A Universal Project ID (or Project Number) is a user-created container to group inter-related development services transactions pertaining to a location / area bound by the project scope. Participating departments will identify and define the scope that would qualify as a “Project”. The following are two examples:

- A “Kitchen Remodel” project, which consists of a building, electrical, and / or plumbing permits, and where the customer may have to deal with only one City department; and
- A “New Metropolitan Mall” project where the customer may have to deal with multiple City departments for various requirements.

Most Projects will be related to a parcel or a group of parcels. A project that cannot be defined by a parcel boundary must have a unique location/area identifier. A project will consist of one or many department transactions (e.g., permit number, case number, plan check number, etc.).

A project location / area must be defined by at least one unique location / area identifier, which can be one, or a combination, of the following attributes:

- Address – designates the location of a structure or a vacant land, and consists of numerical and text elements such as a street number and street name arranged in a particular format;
- Parcel Identification Number – a unique parcel identifier (e.g., 130-5A213-1);
- X and Y Coordinates – on a map, the X and Y coordinates are used to represent features at the location they are found on the earth's spherical surface; and
- Other Unique Location ID's – such as a Premise ID number for a fire hydrant.

(3) Project Status Tracking.

As part of completing a process, a number of process steps and actions need to be completed. Each process step has a tangible outcome. With each tangible outcome, a department status is placed on the transaction. Currently, each department may have different statuses and different definitions for each status. This is confusing to the customer.

The Status Tracking Service available through the *BuildLA* Portal will standardize the various project statuses and provide a definition of each status placed by a relevant department on their service(s) regarding a project. For example, the customer will be able to query *BuildLA* using a Project ID or parcel identifier (i.e., address) to find out which agencies must process some part of the project and the status of those

processes at the time of the query. Sample processes, such as plan check and inspection statuses, could be “Not Assigned”, “In Progress”, and “Completed”.

(4) Payment Service.

A Payment Service is designed to handle payment requests by customers from various transaction sources – permits, fees, applications, etc. The Payment Service offers a common, reusable interface that various departments can use. The Payment Service is a web service interface that accepts transaction records from other systems, and is a consistent and repeatable process. Therefore, utilizing a common payment service is practical and cost effective.

The payment life cycle concerns the payment phase, which not only includes the payment processing step (handling the payment request and capturing the payment information), but also the pre-payment processing step (capturing the fee inquiry request and retrieving the fee breakdown from a host system) and the post-payment processing step (invoking a host system service to update the payment status on host system).

Utilizing a payment portal service enables the City, in future enhancements, to set up other channels in to receive payment such as: (1) Pay Now Button - integrated payment solution for customized applications;)2) Smart Phone Applications; and (3) Kiosks.

* * * * *

Implementation of the *BuildLA* portal is estimated to take approximately 8 months. This implementation schedule includes implementation of Service Oriented Architecture, Portal, the Web User Registration Service, the Universal Project ID Service, the Project Status Tracking Service, and the Payment Service.

The cost for the development of the BuildLA portal with the four services - Web User Registration Service, Universal Project ID Service, Project Status Tracking Service, and Payment Service - are estimated to cost the City approximately \$1,600,000. The cost includes \$900,000 for Professional Services (design, development, implementation, training and support); \$400,000 for hardware and network communication; \$200,000 for software licenses; and, \$100,000 for the database license. Ongoing annual maintenance costs would approximate \$320,000. These costs are summarized in the table below.

Recommendation	One-Time Cost Impact	Ongoing Annual Costs
The City should integrate the existing automated permit information systems in advance of the BuildLA “Go Live” through the development of the BuildLA portal.	\$1,600,000	\$320,000

Recommendation #17: The City should integrate the existing automated permit information systems in advance of the *BuildLA* “Go Live” through the development of the *BuildLA* portal.

Recommendation #18: The Department of Building and Safety should be assigned lead responsibility for integrating the existing automated permit information systems using the *BuildLA* portal.

10 THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND SAFETY SHOULD ENABLE ELECTRONIC PLAN SUBMITTAL AND PLAN CHECK OF PERMIT PLANS INCLUDING BUILDING PERMITS, DISCRETIONARY REVIEW SUBMITTALS, AND ENGINEERING PERMITS.

Using the current work processes, architects and engineers design new or remodeled buildings on paper or on computers. Multiple copies of that design are then printed out, rolled up and driven to the City's construction services centers where they are received for distribution by plan reviewers in different divisions / departments.

When errors are found in the drawings or the plans do not comply with appropriate sections of the City's regulations, the drawings picked up by the architect / engineer to be corrected. After being corrected, the corrected plans are once again printed out, rolled up and driven to the City's construction services centers where the review process is repeated.

However, electronic plan submittal, the Internet, and large-screen computer monitors make it possible to plan check these building permit plans in an electronic format.

However, the Department of Building and Safety does not accept the submission of building permit plans electronically from permit applicants. It lacks the technological capacity to be able to accept plans electronically.

Over the past several years, more jurisdictions are accepting building plans electronically. The actual review of building plans electronically has been slow to develop. However, there are now an increasing amount of cities and counties that are accepting and plan checking building permit plans electronically. Examples of these cities and counties are presented in the table below.

Cities with Electronic Building Permit Plan Submittal and Plan Check	
Albuquerque, NM	Lancaster, CA
Atlanta, GA	Las Vegas, NV
Baltimore, MD	Lee County, FL
Beaverton,	Martin County, FL
Bellingham, WA	Miami Beach, FL
Bend, OR	Osceola County, FL
Beverly Hills, CA	Palm Coast, FL
Cape Coral, FL	Polk County, FL
Chicago, ILL	Redmond, WA
Cincinnati, OH	Sacramento, CA
Clark County, NV	Salt Lake City, UT
El Paso, TX	San Bernardino County, CA
Fairfax County, VA	Santa Clarita, CA
Fullerton, CA	Santa Monica, CA
Gainesville, FL	Scottsdale, AZ
Goodyear, AZ	Seminole County, FL
Gwinnett County, GA	Springfield, MO
Hillsboro, OR	State of Idaho
Honolulu, HI	Vancouver, WA
Howard County, MD	West Palm Beach, FL
Knoxville, TN	Winter Haven, FL

As the table notes, there are several cities in California that have implemented electronic plan checking including Beverly Hills, Fullerton, Lancaster, Sacramento, San Bernardino County, Santa Clarita, and Santa Monica.

The City of Bend, Oregon (population of 76,000) is requiring, as of October 2010, that all building permit plans be submitted in an electronic media format to their Building and Safety Division. Important points to note regarding the use of this technology by Bend, Oregon are presented below.

- The City is using this technology for electronic plan submission, plan check, and workflow.
- Plans can be submitted in PDF, DWG, and DWF formats, among many others, which allow for a significant amount of flexibility from submitters.
- The technology will keep track of timestamps, detect if changes are present, and prevent overwriting files. Versioning controls are built into the software used to enable electronic plan submittal and plan check. The software detects if changes are present, marks the plans as a new submittal, with all of the changes tracked by login and time stamp. The software also prevents overwriting of files.

- The plans examiner can perform a graphical comparison of two file versions. The software provides a variety of options including overlay differences and a side-by-side view. Deleted geometry displays red, while added geometry is green. Unchanged areas are grey.
- Plan check staff from different divisions / departments have rights to view others' notes and approval status, but can change only their own. Plan check staff from different divisions / departments can also attach direct links to their corrections for the building permit plans.
- Plan checks are done on dual-screen computers - one for reading e-mails and codes, and the other for the plan sheets.
- With the software, users can markup the plans with built-in markup tools, use embedded stamps, and send an electronic e-mail notice back to the applicant to view the corrections on-line. Reviewers have the ability to view others' notes, but can only change their own.
- Plan check staff from different divisions / departments can attach direct links of their corrections to the plans, and the applicant gets the same form with direct links to the pages needing revision. From there the routing slip shows the progress and can be viewed by anyone involved in the workflow.
- Once reviewed and approved, the plans examiner batch stamps the plans and publishes them to the final folder in the project. All markups and stamps are embedded in a PDF file for security.
- When the project is complete, the submitter is given access to download and print from the final folder.
- Building Inspectors can use the software to view the approved building permit plan sets if in doubt of the field set's authenticity, or if a given plan sheet is missing or damaged.

The use of this software to enable electronic plan submission and plan review will enable enhanced cross-departmental collaboration since, with digital plans, no routing is required, and all parties can simultaneously view the same version of each plan. The software will enable enhanced communication since, by retaining copies of digital plans, plan check staff have plans to reference (including comments) when discussing projects with applicants, leading to quick issue resolution.

In addition, another benefit of moving from a paper-based system to electronic plan submittal, plan check, tracking and storage system is that the City will be laying a foundation upon which to move forward to 3D and 4D electronic plan review software programs that incorporate *Building Information Modeling* data and automated code compliance systems that will streamline review and code compliance even further. In addition, the International Code Council (ICC) is currently developing automated code-check tools (based on the family of ICC codes. By putting the ICC codes and related documents in a “smart” format, it is possible for software applications to understand and automatically apply the requirements in the code. The Building and Safety Division will be able to incorporate these “smart” codes into 2-D plan review processes and integrate with the *Building Information Modeling* 3-D and 4-D plan review. The ICC has taken its first step by building a code-compliance checker for the International Energy Code.¹⁴

The City will need to work with and train its customers in how to submit plans electronically, including building permit, discretionary review submittals, and engineering permit plans. In addition, the City will need to train staff in each division / department that is using the electronic plan check software regarding how to plan check permit plans electronically. This should include training for the City’s system administrator from the Department of Building and Safety, training for plan check staff in how to utilize the software for plan checking, workflow training, etc.

The City should develop written guides for electronic plan submission, published on-line at the City’s web site, regarding the requirements for electronic plan submittals. The City of Sacramento has developed such a guide.

¹⁴ Robert Wible, *Steps to Move Your Plan Submittal, Review, Tracking and Storage Processes into the Digital Age*, 2008.

The cost for the acquisition of the software to enable the deployment of electronic submittal and plan checking of permit plans would approximate \$3 million, including \$1,900,000 for software license, and \$1,000,000 for hardware for the seven departments that would need the software. Ongoing annual maintenance costs are estimated at \$380,000 per year. The one-time and annual ongoing costs should be allocated among the seven departments based on the system usage which is as follows: Department of Building and Safety - 45%; Bureau of Engineering - 25.5%; Department of City Planning - 18%; Fire - 6%; Housing Department - 0.5%; Bureau of Sanitation - 4%; and, Department of Transportation - 1%. This software must be interfaced with the automated permit information system. The costs are summarized in the table below.

Recommendation	One-Time Cost	Annual On-Going Cost
The City should acquire software to enable electronic submittal and plan check of building permit plans.	\$3,000,000	\$380,000

Recommendation #19: The City should acquire software to enable electronic submittal and plan check of building permit plans, engineering permit plans (e.g., B-permits), and discretionary review submittals.

Recommendation #20: The City should work with and train its customers in how to submit building permit plans, engineering permit plans (e.g., B-permits), and discretionary review submittals electronically.

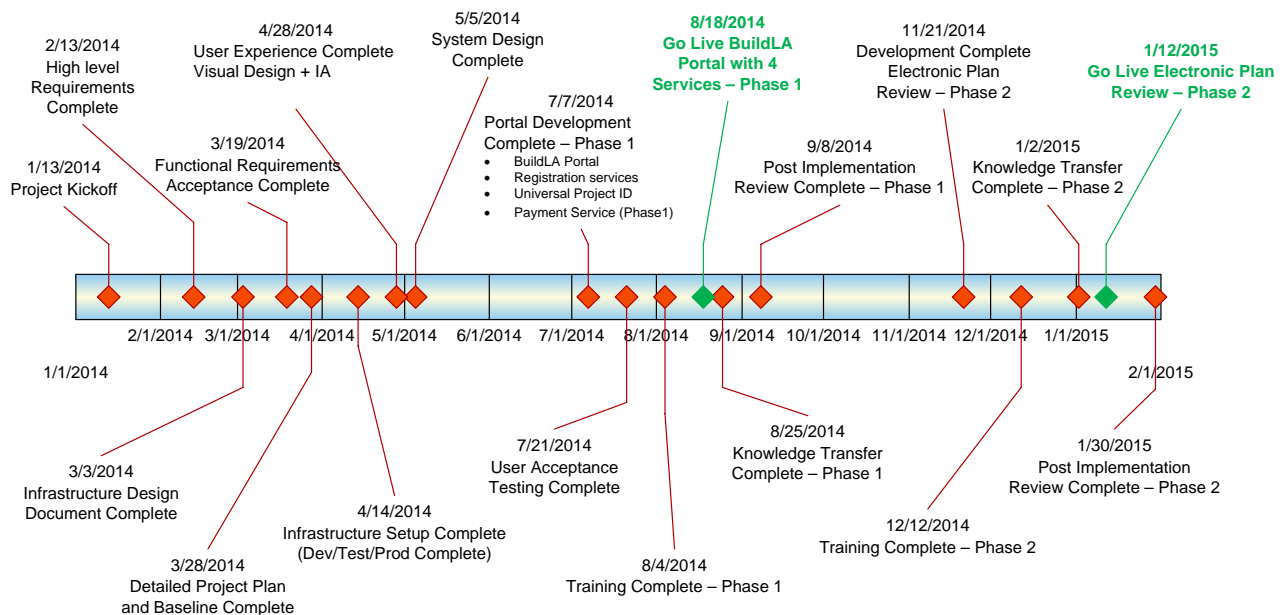
Recommendation #21: The City will need to train its staff in how to plan check plans electronically. This should include training for the City's system administrator from the Department of Building and Safety, training for plan check staff in how to utilize the software for plan checking, workflow training for the staff, etc.

Recommendation #22: The City should develop written guides for electronic plan submission, published on-line on the City's web site, regarding the requirements for electronic plan check building permit submittals.

* * * * *

The implementation of the *BuildLA* portal and the deployment of electronic plan checking is estimated to require approximately 15 months. This implementation schedule, presented below, includes implementation of Service Oriented Architecture, the Portal, the Web User Registration Service, the Universal Project ID Service, the Project Status Tracking Service, Payment Service, and Electronic Plan Review. The schedule uses a January 1, 2014 start-date.

High Level Schedule of this Portal Implementation



11. THE CITY SHOULD PROVIDE A SINGLE WEB SITE PORTAL FOR DEVELOPMENT SERVICES.

The City's multiple web sites for development services at multiple departments should be revised to provide a "virtual" consolidated development services department. This should be accomplished through the development of a single web site portal for all of the development-related services provided by the City with appropriate links to the departments that provide development services. The web site should be developed

from the perspective of the customer, assembling the information needed by the customer in one web site, and not requiring the customer to check multiple web sites at multiple departments to find the necessary information.

The specific recommendations regarding the web site are presented below.

- The City should have one (1) development services web site portal for all development-related permits regardless of whether these are planning, building, engineering, fire, transportation, water and power, etc.
- There should be a link to this one (1) web site portal on the City's home page.
- Once the City deploys *BuildLA* to replace its legacy systems, applicants should be able to navigate to this one (1) web site portal and pay application fees on-line, check the status of their permits on-line, view plan check comments made by staff, schedule or cancel inspections, check the results of inspections, apply for simple permits on-line, electronic plan submission, review, and tracking, automated e-mail notification so that applicants can receive automatic e-mail notifications of plan review or inspection activity etc.
- The one (1) web site portal should include a dedicated web page for businesses that includes resources for starting a business, obtaining / renewing a business license, streamlined permit assistance (e.g., over-the-counter plan check), a link to the City's Economic and Workforce Development Department with up-to-date information on available commercial and industrial land and buildings in the City, utility business incentive programs (e.g., solar energy program, energy audits, etc.), etc.
- The one (1) web site portal should also include streamed information regarding wait times for the construction service centers.

The City should develop one (1) web site portal that provides a single starting point for the information needed for permit applicants of all types that is more user friendly.

Recommendation #23: The City should provide a single web site portal for all development-related permits.

Recommendation #24: The City should provide a link to the development services web site portal on the City's home page.

Recommendation #25: Once the City deploys *BuildLA* to replace its legacy permit information systems, applicants should be able to navigate to this one (1) web site portal for development services and pay application fees on-line; check the

status of their permits on-line; view plan check comments made by staff; schedule or cancel inspections; check the results of inspections; apply for simple permits on-line; electronic plan submission, review, and tracking; automated e-mail notification so that applicants can receive automatic e-mail notifications of plan review or inspection activity; etc.

Recommendation #26: The one (1) web site portal for development services should include a dedicated web page for business that includes resources for starting a business, obtaining / renewing a business license, streamlined permit assistance (e.g., over-the-counter plan check), a link to the City's Economic Development Division with up-to-date information on available commercial and industrial land and buildings in the City, utility business incentive programs (e.g., solar energy program, energy audits, etc.), etc.

Recommendation #27: The one (1) web site portal for development services should also include streamed information regarding wait times for each construction service centers.

12. THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING SHOULD SCAN ITS CASE FILES.

In the 2005 performance audit of the Department of City Planning's case processing function, the Office of the City Controller found that "thousands of case file documents have not yet been scanned into the *Planning Document Imaging System*. We also found that the Department has not established standards that specify which documents should be retained in both paper and electronic files, which has resulted in inconsistently maintained case files."¹⁵

The Department does allocate a Clerk Typist to scanning of case files for the *Planning Document Imaging System*.

Despite this effort, case files largely remain in hard copy form. This impacts customer service. If the Department of City Planning provides a clearance at a construction services center, for example, of a building permit with a previous discretionary review, the customer frequently is told that they will have to return. The

¹⁵ Office of the City Controller, Performance Audit of the Department of City Planning's Case Processing Function, October 2005

Department must request that the hard copy file be delivered to the construction services center.

The Department should expand the extent of scanning of its case files. This should be based upon a discretionary review fee to support the scanning of case files. The Department should immediately begin scanning all of the case files that it receives going forward; the fee that the Department charges for scanning should support that effort. In addition, the Department should request funding to support the scanning of case files retroactively, recognizing that this will require a number of years to accomplish.

Recommendation #28: The Department of City Planning should expand the extent of scanning of its case files, and immediately begin scanning all of the case files that it receives going forward.

Recommendation #29: The Department of City Planning should charge a surcharge on discretionary review fees to support the retroactive scanning of case files.

13. BUILDING AND SAFETY RECORDS SHOULD BE ACCESSIBLE ON-LINE.

The Building and Safety Records Counter provides access to and copies of Building and Safety records. The following types of records are available

- Building Permits (from 1905 to present);
- Certificates of Occupancy (from 1940 to present);
- Range Files (violations);
- Plot Plans;
- Geology/Soils Reports;
- Affidavits / ZI's;
- Approved Building Plans;

- Board Files;
- Administrative Approvals; and
- Electrical, Plumbing, Mechanical (from 1985 to 1990 and from 1996 to present).

These records are available for all commercial and residential buildings. These public records are for viewing and / or copying except for blueprints. To obtain copies of blueprints, the Department requires written authorization from the property owner, the licensed architect / engineer of record, and a copy of a current owner's grant deed.

The Department encounters a significant amount of walk-in traffic for access to these records. In 2012-13, for example, the Metro construction services center experienced 15,891 customer transactions. And customers have to wait lengthy periods of time for this service. The average wait time was 40 minutes at the Metro construction services center in 2012-13 and the average transaction time was 20 minutes.

The department should provide public access to all of these records over the Internet with the exception of blueprints. Other cities, such as Chicago, already provide this access.

Recommendation #30: The Department of Building and Safety should provide public access to all building records over the Internet with the exception of blueprints.

6. ANALYSIS OF DISCRETIONARY REVIEW FUNCTIONS AND PROCESSES

This chapter presents an analysis of the discretionary review functions and processes including the following:

- The common functions and processes that require inter-departmental cooperation and coordination;
- Recommended adjustments to business processes to enhance customer service;
- The identification of business processes where the use of memorandums of agreement between departments will be necessary; and
- The identification of how the existing management and organization of these functions and business processes either support or detract from the goals, objectives, and mission of the City of Los Angeles.

A summary of the recommendations contained within this chapter is presented in the exhibit following this page.

1. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS WITH THE DISCRETIONARY REVIEW PROCESSES IN TERMS OF TIMELINESS.

Overall, the City's discretionary review functions and processes do not result in the timely processing in comparison to metrics utilized by the Matrix Consulting Group. The analysis of the timeliness for discretionary review by the Department of City Planning and the Department of Transportation (for traffic mitigation studies) are presented on the page following the exhibit.

Exhibit 8 (1)

Summary of Recommendations within Chapter 6

Rec. #	Recommendation
31	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit copies of all prior building permits and existing / related entitlements associated with the discretionary review application.
32	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a list of all Q conditions and D limitations for the proposed project site, and a copy of the zoning ordinance establishing these conditions and limitations.
33	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a copy of the appropriate County Assessor's map, City Clerk district map, or ZIMAS map for the project site.
34	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a completed copy of the design guidelines checklist.
35	With the exception of conditional use permits and variances, the discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit findings and justifications.
36	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a copy of building permits and certificates of occupancy for non-conforming rights.
37	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a copy of an Order to Comply issued by the Department of Building and Safety or the Department of Housing and Community Investment.
38	The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit an envelope containing duplicate files of all materials for Council District 11 and Council District 12, for those proposed applications located within those Districts.
39	The applicant for a tentative parcel or tract map should not be required to obtain preliminary information and approval from the Department of Building and Safety prior to submitting an application. The applicant should be able to submit the tentative parcel and tract map application to the Department of City Planning initially, and then have the application routed to the Grading Section, Department of Building and Safety by the Department of City Planning.
40	The Department of Building and Safety should clarify, as part of the tentative parcel and tract map application guide, when a soils report is typically required so that an applicant can have the soils report prepared before submittal of the application.
41	The applicant for a tentative parcel or tract map should not be required to complete and obtain approval of a <i>Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form</i> prior to submittal of the application. Instead, at the time of submittal, the staff from the Department of City Planning should determine whether the <i>Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form</i> is necessary. If it is necessary, the fee should be collected on behalf of the Bureau of Engineering at the time of submittal of the application, and the applicant should complete the <i>Planning Case Referral Form</i> while submitting the tentative parcel or tract map application. The Department should then route the <i>Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form</i> to the Bureau of Engineering with the tentative parcel or tract map application packet.
42	The applicant for a tentative parcel or tract map should not be required to complete a <i>Community Plan Referral Form</i> for a project site in a specific plan or overlay zone or an area that requires Design Review Board approval. At the time of submittal, the staff from the Department of City Planning should determine whether the <i>Community Plan Referral Form</i> is necessary, have the applicant complete the form while submitting the application, and then route the Form to the appropriate staff in the Department of City Planning with the tentative parcel or tract map application packet.

Exhibit 8 (2)

Rec. #	Recommendation
43	The Department of City Planning should electronically route discretionary review applications and associated application material to other City departments for review, as necessary, using an electronic plan check process. The implementation of this recommendation should be based upon the deployment of an electronic plan submission, plan check, and workflow on a citywide basis, as recommended previously. The Department of City Planning should develop instructions for electronic submittal of discretionary review applications and associated application material, and train their customers, architects, engineers, etc. on the process for electronic submittal.
44	If other departments, in using the City's <i>Initial Study Assessment Guidelines</i> and <i>Initial Study Checklists</i> , have questions regarding the discretionary review application and its environmental impacts, those questions should be directed to the case planner in the Department of City Planning, who should collect these questions from these departments, contact the applicant, and obtain answers for these other departments.
45	The applicant for discretionary review applications should not work directly with other departments to conduct the Initial Study analysis of environmental issues to these other department's satisfaction. That should be the role of the case or project planner in the Department of City Planning.
46	The Department of City Planning should not place a discretionary review application on "hold", if an Initial Study is required.
47	The only time a discretionary review application should be placed on "hold" by the Department of City Planning is when the discretionary review application is deemed incomplete from a <i>Permit Streamlining Act</i> perspective. This should be clarified in a departmental policy and procedure.
48	The environmental review process by the Department of City Planning should occur at the same time and in parallel with all other aspects of the discretionary review application review (with the exception of the environmental impact report). The Department of City Planning staff review of the discretionary review application for conformance with development regulations and policies should often be finished prior to the completion of the environmental document (with the exception of the environmental impact report). Public hearings to make decisions on projects should often be held soon after the environmental document has been finalized.
49	The parallel processing of the environmental review and the discretionary review should be utilized as an opportunity to eliminate duplication of public noticing in which the environmental review is provided a public notice and then, subsequently, the discretionary review application is noticed later and separately. If the environmental review process occurs at the same time and in parallel with all other aspects of discretionary review application review, then one public notice of the environmental review and the discretionary review could be provided at the same time.
50	The Department of City Planning should expand the use and application of the "slight modification" process into such areas as fence height, lot area regulations and parking, residential floor area, minor expansions of nonconforming uses, etc.
51	The Department of City Planning should have the ability to approve or disapprove slight modifications over-the-counter at the construction service centers with additional over-the-counter clearance, as appropriate, by the Fire Department, Bureau of Engineering, and the Department of Building and Safety, but also to refer these applications to a public hearing based upon the content and nature of the modification. These over-the-counter clearances should be provided at the construction services centers.
52	The expansion of the slight modification authority for the Department of City Planning should be accompanied by the development of checklists and application guides.

Exhibit 8 (3)

Rec. #	Recommendation
53	With the concurrence of the Board of Public Works, the consideration of requests for removal of street trees should be integrated into the discretionary review process by the Department of City Planning, with referrals to the Public Works Department regarding the requests for removal street trees for comments, conditions of approval, corrections, etc.
54	With the concurrence of the Board of Public Works, the staff of the Public Works Department should be provided the opportunity to address removal of street trees at any public hearing conducted by the Department of City Planning, but the Public Works Department should not conduct a separate public hearing regarding the removal of street trees with the Public Works Commission.
55	The Department of City Planning should incorporate information at its web site regarding street tree removals. It should include an overview of the process, with links to the tree removal permits on the web site of the Department of Public Works.
56	The Department of City Planning should develop a comprehensive list of covenants required during the discretionary review, and identify these as conditions of approval.
57	The Department of Building and Safety should collect the initial traffic study fees on behalf of the Department of Transportation at the time an applicant submits a Site Plan Review application or with the CEQA Initial Study application. This would require co-location of the case planners of the Department of City Planning in the City's construction service centers.
58	The Department of City Planning should schedule (tentatively) tentative parcel and tract map applications for an initial Advisory Agency public hearing or Zoning Administrator applications for an initial Zoning Administrator hearing at the time of submittal, if the application is determined to meet submittal requirements.
59	The Senior City Planner in the Office of Zoning Administration should not examine the Zoning Administrator application to determine whether the proposed environmental clearance is adequate for the project (e.g., categorical exemption) or if an initial study is required. The intervention of the Senior City Planner should be unnecessary with staff that has been properly trained in CEQA. This should be the responsibility of the case or project planner.
60	The Department of City Planning should fully implement the intent of the "one project, one planner" within its Strategic Plan and assign a single project or case planner to a specific discretionary review case throughout the entire discretionary review and environmental review. This project or case planner should field all planning-related questions about their assigned discretionary review projects. Questions about the environmental review of a project should also be directed to the same project or case planner, as the project or case planner should also conduct the environmental analysis for the projects they are reviewing (or coordinate the work of a consultant preparing an environmental impact review). This shift towards a "one project, one planner" approach, as recommended within the Department's Strategic Plan, should enable the Department to provide more accessible, consistent, and personalized service to customers.
61	The Department of City Planning should develop and adopt a written policy and procedure regarding when a discretionary review should be referred or routed to other departments such as the Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Fire Department, etc. for the environmental review, completeness review, development of conditions of approval, etc.
62	The Department of City Planning should refer discretionary reviews beyond tentative parcel and tract map applications to other City departments (e.g., Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Fire Department, etc.) for the environmental review, completeness review, development of conditions of approval, etc.
63	The Department of City Planning should utilize a case management system.

Exhibit 8 (4)

Rec. #	Recommendation
64	The roles and responsibilities of the “case manager” in the Department of City Planning, in managing the review of the discretionary review application across department boundaries, should be clearly identified in a policy and procedure developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.
65	The Department of City Planning should develop a training program for its professional planning staff regarding how to function as a case planner including how to manage the discretionary review, the functions of the case planner in managing the discretionary review, the City’s zoning code and CEQA, etc.
66	The case planner within the Department of City Planning should require a full assessment of dedications by the Bureau of Engineering if the <i>Planning Case Referral Form</i> indicates that the Bureau of Engineering will require dedications associated with the discretionary review.
67	The case planner within the Department of City Planning should not bring the discretionary review application to a decision until the Bureau of Engineering has completed its assessment of dedications, if the <i>Planning Case Referral Form</i> indicates that the Bureau of Engineering will require dedications associated with the discretionary review.
68	The Bureau of Engineering should indicate that the Bureau has completed the assessment of required dedications within the Planning Case Tracking System.
69	All of the case planners in the Department of City Planning should be required to utilize the Planning Case Tracking System for all aspects of the discretionary review process.
70	The Department of City Planning should develop and adopt a written policy and procedure that requires case planners to utilize the Planning Case Tracking System to maintain a current, accurate case status and case history that includes all of the events related to a case (e.g., date the case is deemed complete, date the case was referred to other departments for comment and conditioning, date the case was deemed categorically exempt or the Initial Study was completed, etc.).
71	The written policy and procedure that requires case planners to utilize the Planning Case Tracking System, developed by the Department of City Planning, should assign responsibility to the Senior City Planners or City Planners in the Development Services Bureau for assuring ongoing maintenance of case status information in the Planning Case Tracking System, and require the Senior City Planners or City Planners to sample the caseload assigned to each of their team of case planners under his / her supervision to determine whether the cases are being maintained in the Planning Case Tracking System.
72	The case planner in the Department of City Planning should issue the letters of determination for a discretionary review application within ten (10) business days after the hearing regarding the discretionary review application, with an acknowledgement of the potential of appeals of the decision.
73	The Department of City Planning should prepare a written policy and procedure that requires the issuance of the letters of determination by the case planner within ten (10) business days after the hearing regarding the discretionary review application, with an acknowledgement of the potential of appeals of the decision.
74	The Department of City Planning should establish cycle time metrics for discretionary review.
75	The development of the cycle time metrics should be a collaborative effort by the development services staff of the Department of City Planning.
76	The cycle time metrics should be published to the Department of City Planning website and identified in the application guides published by the Department of City Planning.
77	The Department of City Planning should report its progress in meeting these cycle time metrics on its web site, and update the results on a monthly basis.

Exhibit 8 (5)

Rec. #	Recommendation
78	The <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> utilized by the Department of City Planning should be set up so that discretionary review applications cannot sit in “limbo” either upon application or upon assignment to a case planner without alerting supervisors and managers in the Department.
79	The Senior City Planners in the Development Services Bureau of the Department of City Planning should formally plan and schedule the discretionary review applications processed by their staff using the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> .
80	The Senior City Planners should be held accountable for the ongoing maintenance of this open case inventory using the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> and the completion of the processing of permits by their staff in accordance with the cycle time objectives using the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> .
81	The Department of City Planning should develop and adopt an interdepartmental review committee to review medium to large-scale discretionary review applications. The interdepartmental review committee should meet on a bi-weekly basis.
82	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop a citywide policy and procedure regarding the role and purpose of the Interdepartmental Development Review Committee.
83	The Department of City Planning should continue to work on developing and adopting standard operating procedures for the Department’s business processes.
84	The Resource Management Bureau, Department of City Planning, should prepare an outline of the completed standard operating procedures manual (e.g., what procedures would be included) and a schedule for the completion of the standard operating procedures.
85	The Department of City Planning, in a collaborative effort with the Department of Building and Safety, Bureau of Engineering, Fire Department, Department of Transportation, and other departments involved in the development review process, should develop standard conditions of approval that, ultimately, should be integrated into <i>BuildLA</i> , and also should be published to the web site of the Department of City Planning.
86	The Department of City Planning should develop a full range of application guides or instructions for the various discretionary review applications.
87	The Department of City Planning should provide ongoing training to the staff assigned to the construction service centers regarding how to determine whether a discretionary review application is complete.
88	The Department of City Planning staff assigned to the construction service centers should be rotated on a regular ongoing basis with the case planners that process and analyze the discretionary review applications.
89	The Department of City Planning should be responsible for writing, updating, maintaining, and interpreting the zoning code.
90	The intake for counter plan check in the construction service centers should include a City Planner(s) from the Department of City Planning to provide zoning compliance review. These staff should share responsibility at building check-in with the Department of Building and Safety (which would be responsible for screening the plans for completeness and determining whether the plans can be checked over-the-counter).
91	The Department of Building and Safety should not be in the business of providing answers to zoning code questions at the construction service centers or during building permit plan check; that should be the responsibility of the Department of City Planning.

Exhibit 8 (6)

Rec. #	Recommendation
92	The positions allocated by the Department of Building and Safety to zoning check-in at the construction service centers should be eliminated, through attrition. The Department of City Planning should provide zoning check-in.
93	The Department of City Planning should be authorized two professional-level planning positions for the Metro construction services center and two professional-level planning positions for the Van Nuys construction services center to staff the building check-in window in concert with the Department of Building and Safety whose staff would be responsible for screening the plans for completeness and determining whether the plans can be checked over-the-counter. These positions should advise the building permit applicant of the zoning approvals and zoning clearances that must be obtained, including whether the applicant must first obtain an entitlement permit from the Department of City Planning, and ensure that the applicant's property is appropriately zoned for the proposed construction.
94	The day-to-day responsibility for zoning compliance review in the issuance of express building permits and building permits issued over the Internet should continue to be a joint responsibility of the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning.
95	The Department of Building and Safety should continue to be responsible for zoning compliance review for building permits issued over the Internet and building permits issued as Express Permits (with some exceptions such as permits in the Coastal Zone and in Historical Preservation Overlay Zones).
96	The Department of City Planning should review all of the building permits that require a <u>regular plan check</u> for compliance with the Zoning Code, Community Plans, Specific Plans, etc. This will require that building permits requiring regular plan check be routed to the Department of City Planning for zoning compliance by the Department of Building and Safety at receipt of these plans using the electronic plan check system.
97	The extent of routing of building permit plans requiring <u>counter plan check</u> to the Department of City Planning should depend on the complexity of the type of project: complex projects should be referred to the Department of City Planning as a counter plan check and clearance.
98	The Department of City Planning, after it has received training in the Zoning Code from the Department of Building and Safety, should provide the zoning compliance review for the Parallel Design-Permitting Program.
99	The zoning compliance review by the Department of City Planning for the Parallel Design-Permitting Program should occur during the design process, at the same time that the Department of Building and Safety is plan checking for conformance with the building codes.
100	The division of roles and responsibilities between the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning for zoning compliance review during express, counter, and regular plan check and for the Parallel Design-Permitting Program should be clarified in a Memorandum of Agreement between the two departments, facilitated by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.
101	The development of this memorandum of agreement should include the development of a matrix that defines when building permits should be routed to the staff of the Department of City Planning for plan check (aside from building check-in) for express, counter, and regular plan check.

Exhibit 8 (7)

Rec. #	Recommendation
102	The Department of City Planning is not yet ready to begin the assumption of the responsibility for zoning compliance review. The staff of the Department of City Planning needs training in the Zoning Code and in reading construction drawings to assume this responsibility. The Department of Building and Safety should provide training and mentoring to the staff of the Department of City Planning regarding the Zoning Code.
103	The roles and responsibilities of the Fire Department and the Department of Building and Safety in plan checking of building permit plans, recently revised as noted in the "LADBS and Fire Department Plan Check Matrix", should be formalized in a Memorandum of Agreement developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.
104	The City should assign responsibility for pre-discretionary review to the Department of City Planning.
105	The Department of Building and Safety should continue to be responsible for preliminary review of by-right projects.
106	The Department Building and Safety should provide training and mentoring to the staff of the Department of City Planning regarding the Zoning Code before the Department of City Planning assumes responsibility for pre-discretionary review.
107	A City Planner position should be authorized for the Department of City Planning as a training officer for training of the department's staff in CEQA, the Zoning Code, departmental processes and procedures, etc.
108	The Department of City Planning should develop and implement a program to rotate staff between current planning and long range planning.
109	The Department of City Planning should insource the responsibility for conducting zoning hearings, initially for less complex zoning cases, <u>through attrition</u> , to staff other than the Associate Zoning Administrators.
110	The insourcing of the responsibility for conducting zoning hearings will require training of selected Department of City Planning staff regarding how to conduct hearings, and the development of written policies and procedures regarding how to conduct these hearings. These staff should be expected to field visit the site of the cases, read the staff reports prepared by the case planners for the Department of City Planning, conduct the public hearing, and make a decision. The case planners for the Department of City Planning should prepare the Letters of Determination.
111	The Department of City Planning should eliminate, through attrition, the seven (7) Associate Zoning Administrator positions allocated to conducting public hearings on zoning administration cases, making initial determinations, making final Letters of Determination regarding entitlements, etc.
112	The cost savings for insourcing zoning hearings should be utilized to add a mix of twelve (12) additional City Planners, City Planning Associates, and Planning Assistants, as the seven (7) Associate Zoning Administrator positions become vacant. These staff should be utilized as case planners in the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning.
113	The case planner within the Department of City Planning should coordinate compliance with the CEQA Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.
114	The Department of City Planning should develop and deploy a program for the field enforcement of the CEQA Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. The case planner should assume responsibility for the coordinating enforcement of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program through the use of environmental consultants, whose costs would be paid by the applicant.
115	The City should adopt a fee to recover the costs associated with the CEQA Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. The fees charged and collected from the permit applicant should be equal to the actual costs to the City of implementing the adopted Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

(1) Department of City Planning

The Matrix Consulting Group analyzed the Department's records for cases that were completed in FY 2011-12 and 2012-13. Not all of the cases included a filing date acceptance date, hearing date, and completion date that would allow the calculation of elapsed time periods. The Matrix Consulting Group, therefore, had 2,996 cases based on their completion date within FY 2011-12 and 2012-13. Additionally, 273 cases included incomplete or incorrect dates (e.g., a completion date that precedes the hearing date, or an acceptance date that precedes the filing date). These 273 cases were excluded from the data, leaving a final data set of 2,723 cases. The following table presents the number of cases included in the final data set grouped by the decision-making body that approved or denied the application.

Case Type	Number of Discretionary Review Cases
Advisory Agency	59
Area Planning Commission	39
Cultural Heritage Commission	1
City Planning Commission	99
Director of Planning	1,078
Private Street	2
Tentative Tract	43
Vesting Tentative Tract	67
Zoning Administration	1,335
TOTAL	2,723

Cycle time for planning cases were measured in calendar days, according to the milestones in the planning permit process. These milestones are presented below.

- **Total Time - Filed to Decision:** Date of initial filing of an application to an approval or final decision on the project.
- **Filed to Complete:** Date of initial filing of an application to an acceptance of the application as "complete" as defined by the State's *Permit Streamlining Act*. The *Permit Streamlining Act* clock does not start ticking until the applicant submits a completed permit application. The City has 30 days after an application is submitted in which to inform the applicant of whether the application is complete.

The Department of City Planning, utilizes the date an application is deemed complete in accordance with the *Permit Streamlining Act*, but also utilizes the date of publication of the notice of the intent to adopt a negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration to identify the date of “acceptance”, not the date the application is deemed complete. The Department, as noted later, should measure the date an application is deemed complete in accordance with the *Permit Streamlining Act*.

- **Complete to Hearing:** From date of acceptance of an application as “complete” (per discussion above) to the date a case is scheduled for a hearing by the appropriate approval authority. It should be noted that not all cases require a hearing.
- **Hearing to Decision:** Date of an application’s hearing to the time a determination letter or decision is issued.
- **Complete to Decision:** Total time from the date an application is accepted by the Department as “complete” to an approval or final decision on the project.

The exhibit on the following page presents the Department’s current cycle time data (in calendar days) for cases completed in FY 2011-12 and 2012-13. Important points to note regarding the data contained in the exhibit are presented below.

- **The City itself has established cycle time requirements for entitlement permits within the zoning code.** For example, Section 12.24 of the Zoning Code states that the initial decision for conditional use permits shall be made within 75 days of the date the application is deemed complete, or within an extended period as mutually agreed upon in writing by the applicant and the decision-maker.
- **The cycle time in terms of calendar days for Zoning Administrator cases from the date the application was deemed complete to the decision amounted to 170 days at the 75th percentile.** In addition, these types of applications required 103 calendar days to deem the application complete at the 75th percentile. The metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group for zoning administrator cases (e.g., conditional use permits, variances, etc.) is 60 calendar days from the date the application is deemed complete for applications that are categorically exempt and 90 days from the date the application is deemed complete for applications that require a negative declaration. These Zoning Administrator cases include such permit types as zone variances, condition use permit-beverage, master conditional use permits, master plan approval, etc.

Exhibit 9

Cycle Time in Calendar Days by Application/Case Type

Case Type	Total Time: Filed To Decision			Filed to Complete			Complete to Hearing			Hearing to Decision			Total Time - Complete to Decision		
	Avg.	Med.	75th %	Avg.	Med.	75th %	Avg.	Med.	75th %	Avg.	Med.	75th %	Avg.	Med.	75th %
Advisory Agency (Parcel Maps)	228	126	294	96	15	77	97	68	117	34	13	40	131	81	157
Area Planning Commission	458	241	423	251	93	249	100	40	85	107	61	91	207	101	176
City Planning Commission	317	192	334	156	41	111	97	63	99	63	37	68	160	100	167
Director of Planning	61	19	67	14	4	14	16	0	14	31	7	25	46	11	48
Tentative Tract	289	153	329	60	29	57	189	77	164	40	21	51	229	98	215
Vesting Tentative Tract	340	181	303	128	27	95	156	81	145	56	36	60	212	117	205
Zoning Admin.	249	184	305	80	47	103	98	61	86	71	42	84	169	103	170

- **The cycle time in terms of calendar days for Parcel Maps (Advisory Agency) from the date the application was deemed complete to the decision amounted to 157 days at the 75th percentile.** In addition, these types of applications required 77 calendar days at the 75th percentile to deem the application complete. The metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group for parcel maps is 60 calendar days from the date the application is deemed complete for those permit applications determined to be categorically exempt. Typically, parcel map applications are categorically exempt, when the division is in conformance with the General Plan and zoning, no variances or exceptions are required, all services and access to the proposed parcels to local standards are available, the parcel was not involved in a division of a larger parcel within the previous 2 years, and the parcel does not have an average slope greater than 20 percent.
- **The cycle time in terms of calendar days for Tentative Tract cases from the date the application was deemed complete to the decision amounted to 215 days at the 75th percentile.** In addition, these types of applications required 57 calendar days at the 75th percentile to deem the application complete. The metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group for tentative tract maps is 120 calendar days from the date the application is deemed complete for those permit applications determined to require a mitigated negative declaration.
- **The cycle time in terms of calendar days for Director of Planning cases from the date the application was deemed complete to the decision was 48 days at the 75th percentile.** In addition, these types of applications required 14 calendar days at the 75th percentile to deem the application complete. These Director of Planning cases ranged in terms of their complexity and hearing notice requirements from Specific Plan Project Permit Compliance to Site Plan Review, Design Review Board, etc. This analysis excludes those cases that are approved over-the-counter (e.g., Venice sign-offs, conforming work contributing elements, conforming work non-contributing elements, etc.). The metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group for Director of Planning cases would vary based upon the complexity of the case ranging. The methodology the Department uses in counting their workload, in this instance and in others, limits the ability to develop meaningful metrics for cycle time.

Overall, these cycle times do not meet metrics. However, the Department has reduced the amount of calendar days required to process discretionary reviews over the past several years. For example, in 2008-09, it required the Department 462 days to process a parcel map from deemed complete to the decision at the 75th percentile; in the last two years, it required 157 calendar days. For example, in 2008-09, it

required the Department 562 calendar days to process tentative tract maps from deemed complete to decision at the 75th percentile; in the last two years, it required 215 calendar days. For example, in 2008-09, it required the Department 300 calendar days to process zoning administrator permits from deemed complete to decision at the 75th percentile; in the last two years, it required 170 calendar days.

The Department does not meet metrics, but has made substantive progress in the past several years.

(2) The Department of Transportation

In fiscal years 2011-12 and 2012-13, the Development Services Division, Department of Transportation processed 127 traffic mitigation impact studies. This includes the scope of work study and the traffic mitigation impact study. The cycle time for these 127 studies, in terms of calendar days, is presented in the table below.

	Average	Median	75th
Number of calendar days to complete a traffic mitigation impact study	57	47	71

Overall, the Development Services Division, Department of Transportation required 71 calendar days, at the 75th percentile, to complete the traffic scoping study and the traffic mitigation impact study. This reflects the time required by the Development Services Division, Department of Transportation and excludes “days inactive”.

The Development Services Division, Department of Transportation has adopted a cycle time goal for traffic mitigation impact studies: complete 80% of traffic mitigation impact studies within 90 working days (or approximately 4.2 months or 125 calendar days). The Division’s performance over the past two years is better than this cycle time goal.

The metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group is 30 calendar days to complete the scope of work study and 28 calendar days to complete the first review of the traffic impact study prepared by a traffic engineering consultant, 21 calendar days for the second review, and 7 calendar days to complete the third review.

Typically, the Development Services Division, Department of Transportation requires two reviews, but it does not track the studies and the amount of cycle time by 1st review, 2nd review, 3rd review, etc.

Overall, the amount of calendar days required by the Development Services Division to complete the scope of work study and the traffic mitigation impact study meets metrics at the 75th percentile for a scoping study and two reviews of the traffic mitigation impact study, if those two reviews are required.

2. THE DISCRETIONARY REVIEW PROCESSES UTILIZED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING SHOULD BE STREAMLINED.

The Department of City Planning's existing tentative parcel and tract map process is presented in the first exhibit at the end of this chapter (exhibit 10). The zoning administrator process is presented in the second exhibit at the end of this chapter (see exhibit 11). The Neighborhood Project process is presented in the third exhibit at the end of this chapter (see exhibit 12). These process descriptions were developed based upon interviews conducted by the Matrix Consulting Group with employees of the Department of City Planning. These process descriptions were reviewed with Department of City Planning employees, and modifications made to the process description based upon that feedback.

There are a number of opportunities to streamline the tentative parcel and tract map process, the zoning administrator process, and the neighborhood project process

used by the Department of City Planning. Recommendations regarding streamlining the processes are presented below.

(1) The Discretionary Review Intake Process at the Construction Service Centers Should Be Streamlined.

The intake of discretionary review applications by the Department of City Planning occurs at the construction service centers. The intake of the application requires an appointment, as noted in the Department's own *Master Plan Use Application Instructions*; these instructions highly recommend that appointments be made in advance of filing to avoid potential long wait times. The instructions note that filing may take one to three hours to complete.

As part of the intake, the Department of City Planning spends a significant amount of time with the applicant making sure that the applicant is seeking the appropriate entitlements and explaining the submittal requirements. For most entitlements, the *Master Land Use Application* is submitted by the applicant, and the *Master Land Use Application Instructions* act as a "check list" for items to be submitted by the applicant.

To evaluate the Department's submittal requirements for discretionary review, the Matrix Consulting Group compared the requirements to other large cities and to other large cities in Los Angeles County. Overall, the requirements of the Department of City Planning are more burdensome than these other cities.

In addition to a notarized application and plans, elevations, landscape plans, etc., there are numerous additional items that need to be included with the application and prepared by the discretionary review applicant prior to intake. These are all

detailed in the *Master Land Use Application Instructions*. Some examples include the following:

- Copies of all prior building permits and existing / related entitlements associated with the project, (which requires the applicant to go to Automated Records at City Hall and to Department of Building and Safety Records Center at 201 North Figueroa Street);
- A County Assessor's map, City Clerk district map, or ZIMAS map of the project site;
- A list of all Q conditions and D limitations for the proposed project site, and a copy of the zoning ordinance establishing these limitations;
- A Bureau of Engineering *Planning Case Referral Form* (separate process and fee);
- A *Community Planning Referral Form* (requires contacting and meeting with the Department of City Planning planner associated with that area – only for Specific plan or overly zones, Design Review board locations, or affordable housing density bonus cases);
- A completed copy of a 15-page design guidelines checklist for commercial discretionary review applications or a 13-page checklist for residential discretionary review applications;
- A Penalty of Perjury Statement certifying the abutter's list accuracy;
- An abutters list, and proof that the abutters list mailing labels have been submitted with payment to the City's mailing contractor; and
- An envelope containing duplicate files of all materials, with these materials to be provided to the appropriate Neighborhood Council and Council District 11 and Council District 12, if appropriate.

The process for discretionary review application intake utilized by the Department of City Planning should be streamlined and simplified. The recommendations to streamline and simplify the discretionary review application intake process are presented below.

- **The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit copies of all prior building permits and existing / related entitlements**

associated with the discretionary review application. If the staff of the Department of City Planning needs access to this information, it is available already through the City's existing automated permit information systems.

- **The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a list of all Q conditions and D limitations for the proposed project site, and a copy of the zoning ordinance establishing these conditions and limitations.** If the staff of the Department of City Planning needs access to this information, it is available already through the City's existing automated permit information systems. If the information is not in the City's existing automated permit information systems, the Department of City Planning staff should conduct the research themselves, not the applicant.
- **The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit the Bureau of Engineering *Planning Case Referral Form* or the *Community Planning Referral Form* as noted in the next section of this report.** The Department of City Planning should determine whether these forms are necessary at intake and, if so, have the applicant complete these forms at intake.
- **The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a copy of the appropriate County Assessor's map, City Clerk district map, or ZIMAS map for the project site.** If the staff of the Department of City Planning needs access to these maps, it is available already through the City's existing automated mapping systems.
- **The applicant should not be required to submit a completed copy of the design guidelines checklist for discretionary review applications.** This submittal is required for a discretionary review application that requires a building permit, a building or structure that is visible from the public-right-of-way, and a project that involves the construction of, addition to, or exterior alteration of any building or structure. In short, a significant proportion of discretionary review applications require these checklists. These checklists are as long as 15-pages.

The Department should not require the submittal of these design guidelines checklists for discretionary review applications. This submittal is not required even for cities in Los Angeles County with much more extensive design review requirements and processes than Los Angeles such as Glendale and Pasadena.

- Glendale requires a design review applicant to submit a typed description or statement of their project's compliance with the city's Comprehensive Design Guidelines and / or adopted Community Plans, and to also, state the project's compatibility with the neighborhood.

- The City of Pasadena, similarly, requires the applicant for design review to submit a design narrative describing the project's design concept. The narrative may include diagrams and photographs and are required to answer the following questions:
 - How does the proposed building relate to its site and to its neighbors in terms of setbacks, height, massing, scale, frontage, materiality, open space, landscape, solar orientation, and topography?
 - If the proposed building is immediately adjacent to a lower-density zone, what measures have been employed to ensure that the proposed building is appropriate to and not a visual nuisance to existing, smaller scale buildings in the lower-density zone?
 - What style has been chosen for the proposed building and why?
 - What is the design concept or architectural logic of the design presented?
 - What materials and finishes are proposed and how will they be employed to express the permanence of the building and to reinforce the design concept?
 - What makes the proposed building particular to Pasadena? How does it contribute and respond to Pasadena's architectural legacy and climate?
 - If the proposed building is adjacent to a designated or eligible historic resource, what measures have been employed to insure that the proposed building responds to or enhances the historic resource?
 - What green building measures, including passive environmental control strategies and/or active environmental control systems, does the building incorporate into its design?
 - Images, sketches or diagrams may also be used to illustrate elements of the design concept.

It is simplistic to believe that the City's design guidelines can be reduced to 13 or 15 pages. An analysis of the design of the structure and site proposed within the discretionary review application will, in fact, be required by the Department of City Planning by evaluating such documents as the site plan, elevations, floor plans, landscape plans, roof plans, etc., in comparison to the City's design guidelines.

The Department of City Planning should require the submittal of a design narrative describing the project's design concept. The design narrative should be based upon questions developed by the Department of City Planning such as those developed by the City of Pasadena. The questions should be based upon the design guidelines already developed by the Department, the Community Plans, the Specific Plans, etc.

- **With the exception of conditional use permits and variances, the discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit findings and justifications.** The staff of the Department that were interviewed by the Matrix Consulting Group stated that the “findings” and “justifications” submitted for many of the different types of discretionary review applications were usually irrelevant, often many pages long, and don’t address the legal reasons for granting an entitlement.

The Department of City Planning should not require that the applicant submit findings and justifications, with the exception of conditional use permits and variances. The case planner in the Department of City Planning should independently develop these findings and conditions, with the exception of conditional use permits and variances. The case planner should independently determine whether the discretionary review application is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan, Zoning Code, applicable community plan, and any applicable specific plan.

- **The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a copy of building permits and certificates of occupancy for non-conforming rights.** The discretionary review applicant is required to obtain and provide a copy of the permit that establishes the non-conforming right from the Department of Building and Safety Records Center. The case planner in the Department of City Planning should independently verify non-conforming rights as part of their research regarding the application including accessing the Department of Building and Safety’s Records Center.
- **The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a copy of the order to comply issued by the Department of Building and Safety or the Department of Housing and Community Investment.** The discretionary review applicant is required to obtain and provide a copy of the order to comply from the Department of Building and Safety or the Department of Housing and Community Investment, if appropriate to the application. The case planner in the Department of City Planning should obtain the order to comply from either of these two departments by accessing their automated information systems.
- **The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit an envelope containing duplicate files of all materials for the offices of Council District 11 and Council District 12.** The discretionary review applicant is already required to submit an electronic copy of this material. The electronic copy should be forwarded to the offices of Council District 11 and Council District 12, for those applications located within these Districts.

Overall, there are significant opportunities to simplify and streamline the discretionary review application intake process.

Recommendation #31: The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit copies of all prior building permits and existing / related entitlements associated with the discretionary review application.

Recommendation #32: The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a list of all Q conditions and D limitations for the proposed project site, and a copy of the zoning ordinance establishing these conditions and limitations.

Recommendation #33: The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a copy of the appropriate County Assessor's map, City Clerk district map, or ZIMAS map for the project site.

Recommendation #34: The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a completed copy of the design guidelines checklist.

Recommendation #35: With the exception of conditional use permits and variances, the discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit findings and justifications.

Recommendation #36: The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a copy of building permits and certificates of occupancy for non-conforming rights.

Recommendation #37: The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit a copy of an Order to Comply issued by the Department of Building and Safety or the Department of Housing and Community Investment.

Recommendation #38: The discretionary review applicant should not be required to submit an envelope containing duplicate files of all materials for Council District 11 and Council District 12 offices, for those proposed applications located within those Districts. This information should be provided electronically to Council District 11 and Council District 12 offices.

(2) The Applicant Should Not Be Required to Obtain Preliminary Information And Approval From the Department of Building and Safety and the Bureau of Engineering Prior To Submitting A Tentative Parcel or Tract Map Application.

At the present time, an applicant for a tentative parcel or tract map is required to obtain preliminary information and approval from the Department of Building and Safety and the Bureau of Engineering prior to submitting an application. The steps required for this pre-submittal process are described below.

- The proposed tentative tract or parcel map needs to be stamped as approved and signed by the Department of Building and Safety staff prior to submittal. The applicant goes to the construction services centers to obtain this approval.
- At the construction services centers, the Department of Building and Safety staff informs the applicant whether a soils report is required. If so, the applicant must obtain a soils report from a private engineering firm, which must be stamped by the Department of Building and Safety at the construction services centers. Tentative tract or parcel map permit applicants are required to have their maps stamped as approved by the Grading Section / Department of Building and Safety. This is required before submittal of the tentative parcel or tract map application. These applications, after intake at Department of City Planning, are then routed back to the Grading Section / Department of Building and Safety for a repeat of the plan check.
- A *Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form* (for cases where there may be dedications or improvements) is obtained from and approved by the Bureau of Engineering counter at the construction services centers. There is a separate process and fee associated with obtaining this form. This is required before submittal of the tentative parcel and tract map application.
- A *Community Plan Referral Form* is required for a project site in a specific plan or overlay zone or an area that requires Design Review Board approval. The form must be filled out and signed by the planner for that designated area. This is required before submittal of the tentative parcel or tract map application.

This process should be simplified.

First, the applicant for a tentative parcel and tract map should not be required to obtain preliminary information and approval from the Department of Building and Safety prior to submitting an application. The applicant should be able to submit the tentative parcel and tract map application directly to the Department of City Planning initially, and then have the application routed by the Department of City Planning to the Grading Section, Department of Building and Safety for plan check.

Second, the Department of Building and Safety should clarify, as part of the tentative parcel and tract map application guide, when a soils report is typically required so that an applicant can have the soils report prepared before submittal of the

application. One city indicated that a soils report was required anytime that the parcel or tract had slopes over 10%. Another city required a tentative soils and geologic hazards report for tentative maps located in hazardous areas depicted on the city's storm drain and sanitary sewer base maps.

Third, the applicant for a tentative parcel and tract map should not be required to complete a *Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form* prior to submittal of the application. Instead, at the time of submittal, the staff from the Department of City Planning should determine whether the *Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form* is necessary. If it is necessary, the fee should be collected on behalf of the Bureau of Engineering, and the applicant should complete the *Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form* while submitting the application. The Department should then route the *Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form* to the Bureau of Engineering with the tentative parcel or tract map application packet. This same recommendation was made in the *Development Reform Strategic Plan*.

Fourth, the applicant for a tentative parcel or tract map should not be required to complete a *Community Plan Referral Form* for a project site in a specific plan or overlay zone or an area that requires Design Review Board approval. At the time of submittal, the staff from the Department of City Planning should determine whether the *Community Plan Referral Form* is necessary, and have the applicant complete the form while submitting the application, and then route the Form to the appropriate staff in the Department of City Planning with the tentative parcel or tract map application packet.

Recommendation #39: The applicant for a tentative parcel or tract map should not be required to obtain preliminary information and approval from the

Department of Building and Safety prior to submitting an application. The applicant should be able to submit the tentative parcel and tract map application to the Department of City Planning initially, and then have the application routed to the Grading Section, Department of Building and Safety by the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #40: The Department of Building and Safety should clarify, as part of the tentative parcel and tract map application guide, when a soils report is typically required so that an applicant can have the soils report prepared before submittal of the application.

Recommendation #41: The applicant for a tentative parcel or tract map should not be required to complete and obtain approval of a *Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form* prior to submittal of the application. Instead, at the time of submittal, the staff from the Department of City Planning should determine whether the *Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form* is necessary. If it is necessary, the fee should be collected on behalf of the Bureau of Engineering at the time of submittal of the application, and the applicant should complete the *Planning Case Referral Form* while submitting the tentative parcel or tract map application. The Department of City Planning should then route the *Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form* to the Bureau of Engineering with the tentative parcel or tract map application packet.

Recommendation #42: The applicant for a tentative parcel or tract map should not be required to complete a *Community Plan Referral Form* for a project site in a specific plan or overlay zone or an area that requires Design Review Board approval. At the time of submittal, the staff from the Department of City Planning should determine whether the *Community Plan Referral Form* is necessary, have the applicant complete the form while submitting the application, and then route the Form to the appropriate staff in the Department of City Planning with the tentative parcel or tract map application packet.

(3) Discretionary Review Applications Should Be Routed Electronically by the Department of City Planning to Other Departments.

While the Department of City Planning should routinely collaborate with other departments in the review of discretionary review applications, it should seek to minimize the workload associated with that collaboration by routing these applications electronically with the corrections, conditions, and approvals being provided electronically.

This is not happening presently. For example, tentative map applicants must submit 35 copies of the proposed subdivision map. This process should be converted to an electronic routing process.

The implementation of this recommendation should be based upon the deployment of electronic plan submission, plan check, and workflow on a citywide basis, as recommended previously.

The City of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development Department has developed instructions for electronic submittals. The Department of City Planning would need to do this as well and train their customers, architects, engineers, etc. on the process for electronic submittal.

Recommendation #43: The Department of City Planning should electronically route discretionary review applications and associated application material to other City departments for review, as necessary, using an electronic plan check process. The implementation of this recommendation should be based upon the deployment of an electronic plan submission, plan check, and workflow on a citywide basis, as recommended previously. The Department of City Planning should develop instructions for electronic submittal of discretionary review applications and associated application material, and train their customers, architects, engineers, etc. on the process for electronic submittal.

(4) The Department of City Planning Should Work With Other City Departments In Completing the Initial Study, Not the Applicant.

As part of the initial study for discretionary reviews that are not exempt from CEQA, the case or project planner with the Department of City Planning must prepare an Initial Study. The Initial Study for the discretionary review application should be prepared by the case planner with the Department of City Planning with input from the various departments of the City to determine whether any potentially significant impacts on the environment would result from this project. For example, traffic impacts may require input and requirements from the Department of Transportation.

Under current circumstances, the applicant for discretionary review works with other departments to conduct the analysis of environmental issues to these other department's satisfaction.

This should be the responsibility of the case planner with the Department of City Planning, as the sole point of contact for the discretionary review applicant. If other departments, in using the City's *Initial Study Assessment Guidelines* and *Initial Study Checklists*, have questions regarding the discretionary review application and its environmental impacts for the conditional use permit, variance, etc., those questions should be directed to the case planner, who should collate these questions, contact the applicant, and obtain answers for these other departments.

Recommendation #44: If other departments, in using the City's *Initial Study Assessment Guidelines* and *Initial Study Checklists*, have questions regarding the discretionary review application and its environmental impacts, those questions should be directed to the case planner in the Department of City Planning, who should collect these questions from these departments, contact the applicant, and obtain answers for these other departments.

Recommendation #45: The applicant for discretionary review applications should not work directly with other departments to conduct the Initial Study analysis of environmental issues to these other department's satisfaction. That should be the role of the case or project planner in the Department of City Planning.

- (5) The Tentative Parcel or Tract Map Applications, the Zoning Administrator Applications, or the Neighborhood Project Applications Should Not Be Placed on Hold By the Department of City Planning During the Initial Study and Preparation of Environmental Documents (With the Exception of the Environmental Impact Report), But Should Be Processed In Parallel.**

At the present time, if an Initial Study is required, the Department of City Planning places the tentative parcel and tract map application, zoning administrator application, or the Neighborhood Project application on "hold". The "hold" is entered into the Department of City Planning PCTS information system. The case planner in

the Department of City Planning conducts the environmental review associated with the Initial Study. Once the environmental review is completed, the review of the discretionary review application proceeds.

In fact, the Department's Technical Bulletin 17 states that "the main entitlement case(s) waits until the CEQA processing is complete and triggers the Entitlement Start Clock."¹⁶

The discretionary review application should not be placed on "hold" during the environmental review. In fact, the only time a discretionary review application should be placed on "hold" by the Department of City Planning is when the discretionary review application is deemed incomplete from a *Permit Streamlining Act* perspective.

The environmental review process should occur at the same time and in parallel with all other aspects of the discretionary review application review (with the exception of the environmental impact report). Projects cannot be scheduled for a decision or public hearing until either the project is determined to be exempt from CEQA or the appropriate environmental document has been completed (e.g., mitigated negative declaration), distributed for public review, and then finalized. The Department of City Planning staff that review the discretionary review application for conformance with development regulations and policies should often be finished with this review prior to the completion of the environmental document (with the exception of the Environmental Impact Report). Public hearings to make decisions on projects should often be held soon after the environmental document has been finalized.

¹⁶ Los Angeles Department of City Planning, Technical Bulletin 17: Case Processing and Milestone Dates, March 2012

In addition, this parallel processing will enable an opportunity to eliminate duplication in public noticing in which the environmental review is provided a public notice and then, subsequently, the discretionary review application is noticed later and separately. If the environmental review process occurs at the same time and in parallel with all other discretionary review application review, then one public notice of the environmental review and the discretionary review could be provided at the same time.

Recommendation #46: The Department of City Planning should not place a discretionary review application on “hold”, if an Initial Study is required.

Recommendation #47: The only time a discretionary review application should be placed on “hold” by the Department of City Planning is when the discretionary review application is deemed incomplete from a *Permit Streamlining Act* perspective. This should be clarified in a departmental policy and procedure.

Recommendation #48: The environmental review process by the Department of City Planning should occur at the same time and in parallel with all other aspects of the discretionary review application review (with the exception of the environmental impact report). The Department of City Planning staff review of the discretionary review application for conformance with development regulations and policies should often be finished prior to the completion of the environmental document (with the exception of the environmental impact report). Public hearings to make decisions on projects should often be held soon after the environmental document has been finalized.

Recommendation #49: The parallel processing of the environmental review and the discretionary review should be utilized as an opportunity to eliminate duplication of public noticing in which the environmental review is provided a public notice and then, subsequently, the discretionary review application is noticed later and separately. If the environmental review process occurs at the same time and in parallel with all other aspects of discretionary review application review, then one public notice of the environmental review and the discretionary review could be provided at the same time.

(6) The Department of City Planning Should Expand and Simplify the “Slight Modification” Process.

Currently, the Department of City Planning is assigned all of the authority for discretionary review except for two items under Zoning Code Section 12.26: Yard Area

Modifications and Parking Facility Modifications.

The Department of Building and Safety acts on requests for slight modifications, for example, that permit portions of buildings to extend into a required yard or other open space a distance not to exceed 20% of the width or depth of such required yard or open space (for structures and additions existing prior to January 1, 1995, slight modifications may be granted for yard deviations slightly over 20%).

The Department of City Planning should expand the use and application of the “slight modification” process into such areas as fence height, lot area regulations and parking, residential floor area, minor expansions of nonconforming uses, etc.

The intent is to allow these minor variations to be treated as minor discretionary permits. The Department of Building and Safety has already developed a form for review of *Requests for Modifications of Building Ordinances* for allowing front, side, or rear yards. This includes review and approval / denial of the application as an over-the-counter clearance by the Fire Department, Bureau of Engineering, and Department of City Planning. This form could be expanded to include other slight modifications.

The Department of City Planning should have the ability to approve (or disapprove) slight modifications with staff approval (or disapproval) occurring at the construction services centers. The expansion of the slight modification authority for the Department of City Planning should be accompanied by the development of checklists and application guides.

Recommendation #50: The Department of City Planning should expand the use and application of the “slight modification” process into such areas as fence height, lot area regulations and parking, residential floor area, minor expansions of nonconforming uses, etc.

Recommendation #51: The Department of City Planning should have the ability to approve or disapprove slight modifications over-the-counter at the construction service centers with additional over-the-counter clearance, as appropriate, by the Fire Department, Bureau of Engineering, and the Department of Building and Safety, but also to refer these applications to a public hearing based upon the content and nature of the modification. These over-the-counter clearances should be provided at the construction services centers.

Recommendation #52: The expansion of the slight modification authority for the Department of City Planning should be accompanied by the development of checklists and application guides.

(7) With the Concurrence of the Board of Public Works, Requests for Removal of Street Trees Should Be Incorporated into the Discretionary Review Process.

At the present time, the Public Works Department processes street tree removals and conducts a public hearing with the Board of Public Works during the ministerial process, not the discretionary review process. This can and does result in two public hearings for a discretionary review application – one by the Department of City Planning and another by the Public Works Department. These reviews occur separately – one during the discretionary review process (Department of City Planning) and the other during the ministerial process (Department of Public Works).

The duplication and sequential hearings should be eliminated. The consideration of street tree removals should be integrated into the discretionary review process by the Department of City Planning, with referrals to the Public Works Department regarding the street tree removals for comments, conditions of approval, corrections, etc. The staff of the Public Works Department should be provided with the opportunity to address removal of street trees at any public hearing conducted by the Department of City Planning, but the Public Works Department should not conduct a separate public hearing regarding the removal of street trees.

In addition, the Department of City Planning should incorporate information at its web site regarding tree removals.

Recommendation #53: With the concurrence of the Board of Public Works, the consideration of requests for removal of street trees should be integrated into the discretionary review process by the Department of City Planning, with referrals to the Public Works Department regarding the requests for removal street trees for comments, conditions of approval, corrections, etc.

Recommendation #54: With the concurrence of the Board of Public Works, the staff of the Public Works Department should be provided the opportunity to address removal of street trees at any public hearing conducted by the Department of City Planning, but the Public Works Department should not conduct a separate public hearing regarding the removal of street trees with the Board of Public Works.

Recommendation #55: The Department of City Planning should incorporate information at its web site regarding street tree removals. It should include an overview of the process, with links to the tree removal permits on the web site of the Department of Public Works.

(8) The Department of City Planning Should Identify All of the Covenants That Are Required During the Discretionary Review.

At times, an applicant for discretionary review must make multiple trips to the County Recorder to record covenants because all of the required covenants are not identified, initially, as part of the discretionary review. This includes, for example, storm drain easements on final tract maps; currently, the Department of Building and Safety is requiring that such easements be recorded. It also includes, for example, recording a covenant during their entitlement process for "Transportation Demand Management and Trip Reduction Measures for van / car pool" per Section 12.26J. Currently, the Department of Transportation is requiring that such easements be recorded.

The Department of City Planning should develop a comprehensive list of covenants required for discretionary review, and identify these as conditions of approval during discretionary review.

Recommendation #56: The Department of City Planning should develop a comprehensive list of covenants required during the discretionary review, and identify these as conditions of approval.

(9) Some Minor Modifications Should Be Made In The Traffic Mitigation Impact Study Plan Check Process.

The Department of Transportation's existing traffic mitigation impact study plan check process is presented in the fourth exhibit at the end of this chapter (exhibit 13). This process description was developed based upon interviews conducted by the Matrix Consulting Group with employees of the Department of Transportation. The process description was reviewed with Department of Transportation employees, and modifications made to the process description based upon that feedback.

There is a limited opportunity to streamline the Department of Transportation's traffic mitigation impact plan check process as noted below.

At the present time, the Department of Transportation prepares an invoice for the initial traffic study for a Site Plan Review or the Initial CEQA Study to determine whether a traffic mitigation impact study is necessary. Prior to Department of Transportation performing either of these two assessments, the applicant is required to pay the fees. The applicant can pay on-line or in person at Department of Transportation.

The Department of Transportation proceed will proceed with the initial traffic study only after these fees are paid.

The Department of Building and Safety should collect these fees on behalf of the Department of Transportation at the time the applicant submits a Site Plan Review application or the CEQA Initial Study application. This would require co-location of the

case planners of the Department of City Planning in the City's construction service centers.

Recommendation #57: The Department of Building and Safety should collect the initial traffic study fees on behalf of the Department of Transportation at the time an applicant submits a Site Plan Review application or with the CEQA Initial Study application. This would require co-location of the case planners of the Department of City Planning in the City's construction service centers.

3. THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING SHOULD IMPROVE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE DISCRETIONARY REVIEW PROCESSES.

At the same time that the Department of City Planning is streamlining the discretionary review process, it should also enhance the management of that process.

Opportunities to enhance the management of the process are presented below.

(1) The Department of City Planning Should Schedule (Tentatively) Tentative Parcel and Tract Map Applications and Zoning Administrator Applications For a Hearing at the Time Of Submittal if the Application Is Determined to Meet Submittal Requirements.

The Department of City Planning should utilize a process designed to inform an applicant at the time of submittal of a tentative parcel or tract map application or at the time of submittal of a zoning administrator application when the application will be initially heard by the Advisory Agency or by the Zoning Administrator, while the applicant is at the counter submitting their application.

The steps that need to be taken by the Department of City Planning to provide this scheduled date to the applicant are as follows:

- Utilize the existing tentative parcel / tract map application checklists or the Zoning Administrator checklist to determine if the application meets submittal requirements while the applicant is at the counter;
- Develop an application processing schedule to determine the appropriate Advisory Agency or Zoning Administrator hearing date(s) for the application;

- Inform the applicant of the tentatively scheduled Advisory Agency or Zoning Administrator hearing date while the applicant is at the counter submitting his / her application;
- Set a maximum number of items that can be heard by the Advisory Agency or Zoning Administrator, and once that maximum is reached, schedule subsequent applications for the following meeting; and
- Utilize two hearing tracks: one for applications that will be CEQA exempt and one that will require an Initial Study and further environmental review.

This process lets the applicant know at the time of submittal of his / her application the tentatively scheduled Advisory Agency or Zoning Administrator hearing dates for their application. This has the potential to significantly increase customer satisfaction.

This is a practice that at least one large city – Dallas – utilizes. The City published a schedule for submittal of zoning case applications with the schedule including the application deadline, the date for completion of 1st review, the date comments (corrections) are available, the date revisions are due from the applicant, the date notices are sent and the advertisement placed, the date the docket is available, the date of the public hearing, etc. The schedule includes scheduled dates that the applicant is responsible for (e.g., revisions due).

Recommendation #58: The Department of City Planning should schedule (tentatively) tentative parcel and tract map applications for an initial Advisory Agency public hearing or Zoning Administrator applications for an initial Zoning Administrator hearing at the time of submittal, if the application is determined to meet submittal requirements.

(2) The Case Planner in the Department of City Planning Should Determine Whether the Proposed Environmental Clearance Is Adequate for the Project (e.g., Categorical Exemption) or if an Initial Study Is Required for a Zoning Administrator Application.

The Department of City Planning, several years ago, had a specialized unit that conducted the environmental reviews for all discretionary review applications submitted to the Department of City Planning.

As part of the Department's 2010-11 strategic plan, the Department moved to the concept of "one project, one planner". The intent of "one project, one planner" was to assign a single project or case planner throughout the entire discretionary review. This project or case planner was to field all planning-related questions about that particular project. Questions about the environmental review of a project would also be directed to the same point of contact, as the project or case planner would also conduct or coordinate the environmental analysis for the projects they were reviewing. This shift towards a "one project, one planner" approach would enable the Department to provide more accessible, consistent, and personalized service to the public.

The Department is still growing into this concept. Additional training, particularly regarding the City's zoning code and CEQA, are necessary.

At the present time, the Senior City Planner in the Office of the Zoning Administration analyzes Zoning Administrator applications to determine whether the proposed environmental clearance is adequate for the project (e.g., categorical exemption) or if an Initial Study is required. The assigned case planner actually conducts the environmental review. The intervention of the Senior City Planner should be unnecessary; the case planner should be capable of determining whether the

environmental clearance is adequate for the project (e.g., categorical exemption) or if an Initial Study is required.

This same process is utilized in Neighborhood Projects and in Subdivisions; the case planner analyzes the application to determine whether the proposed environmental clearance is adequate for the project (e.g., categorical exemption) or if an Initial Study is required: the Senior City Planner does not intervene.

As recommended in a subsequent chapter, the Department should be authorized a position whose sole assignment should be training the staff of the Department of City Planning, including the City's zoning code and CEQA. The Department has sufficient staff, based upon metrics, to warrant this position.

With that training, the project or case planner should determine whether an environmental review is necessary while determining whether the discretionary review application is complete and conducting its completeness review. The intervention of the Senior City Planner in the Office of the Zoning Administration should be unnecessary with staff that has been properly trained in CEQA. This should be the responsibility of the case or project planner.

Recommendation #59: The Senior City Planner in the Office of Zoning Administration should not examine the Zoning Administrator application to determine whether the proposed environmental clearance is adequate for the project (e.g., categorical exemption) or if an initial study is required. The intervention of the Senior City Planner should be unnecessary with case planners that have been properly trained in CEQA. This should be the responsibility of the case planner.

Recommendation #60: The Department of City Planning should fully implement the intent of the "one project, one planner" within its Strategic Plan and assign a single project or case planner to a specific discretionary review case throughout the entire discretionary review and environmental review. This project or case planner should field all planning-related questions about their assigned discretionary review projects. Questions about the environmental review of a

project should also be directed to the same project or case planner, as the project or case planner should also conduct the environmental analysis for the projects they are reviewing (or coordinate the work of a consultant preparing an environmental impact review). This shift towards a “one project, one planner” approach, as recommended within the Department’s Strategic Plan, should enable the Department to provide more accessible, consistent, and personalized service to customers.

(3) The Department Of City Planning Should Establish a Procedure to Guide Its Staff When Discretionary Review Applications Should Be Routed to Other City Departments For Comment and Review.

With the exception of the tentative parcel and tract map process used by the Department of City Planning, other departments have little, if any, participation in the review of discretionary review applications until the building permit conditions clearance process.

This can have negative impacts on the applicant. The applicant may be unaware of required dedications and improvements until conditions clearance at the conclusion of the building permit process, after the discretionary review has been approved. This inevitably results in “late hits” for the applicant.

The referral of the discretionary review to other bureaus and departments is important to identify potential problems with stormwater management (NPDES), traffic management (need for a traffic mitigation study), infrastructure, fire life safety,

The Department of City Planning should develop and adopt a written policy and procedure regarding when a discretionary review should be referred or routed to other departments such as the Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, etc. for the development of conditions of approval, corrections, etc.

Recommendation #61: The Department of City Planning should develop and adopt a written policy and procedure regarding when a discretionary review should be referred or routed to other departments such as the Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Fire Department, etc. for the

environmental review, completeness review, development of conditions of approval, etc.

Recommendation #62: The Department of City Planning should refer discretionary reviews beyond tentative parcel and tract map applications to other City departments (e.g., Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Fire Department, etc.) for the environmental review, completeness review, development of conditions of approval, etc.

(4) The Case Planner in the Department of City Planning Should Function as the Case Manager in the Review of Discretionary Review Applications.

At the present time, the discretionary review applicant works directly with the departments other than the Department of City Planning to identify and resolve issues during the analysis of their discretionary review application. It is the applicant's job to work directly with these departments during the process and resolve problems including conflicts between departments.

This should be the responsibility of a "case manager" or case planner in the Department of City Planning, a fulfillment of the concept of the "one project, one planner" identified in the strategic plan for the Department of City Planning in 2010-11.

The "case manager" – or the case planner - should be empowered to manage the review of discretionary review applications to assure the review by all disciplines (Building and Safety, Public Works-Bureau of Engineering, Fire, Department of Transportation, etc.) is timely, predictable, coordinated, and that the discretionary review application gets to an decision in accordance with cycle time objectives adopted by the Department.

The "case manager should be a critical feature of the process. Case managers should make the City's discretionary review process seamless to the applicant. Each discretionary review applicant should be assigned a "case manager", who manages

the review by the various disciplines in departments other than the Department of City Planning, sets processing deadlines for the review of the application by this multi-disciplinary team in accordance with the cycle time objectives, and holds the multi-disciplinary team accountable for meeting those cycle time objectives. Using *BuildLA*, the “case manager” develops these processing deadlines and shares the tentative schedule with the applicant.

The “case manager” would **not** be an advocate for the application, but someone the applicant can always contact in the City to find out their application’s progress, to ensure disputes between codes and regulations are settled, and to keep their project on a predictable processing schedule.

And, up-front in the application review, the “case manager” should give the applicant a "road map" of the process including the timing for the process.

More specifics regarding the role of the “case manager” are presented in the paragraphs below.

- **The “case manager” is there to make sure the City’s evaluation of discretionary review applications is timely, predictable, and that the application gets to a decision point in accordance with the Department’s cycle time objectives.** The “case manager” should accomplish this by developing -- and monitoring -- a schedule for the multi-disciplinary team in departments other than the Department of City Planning in accordance with the cycle time objectives, and holding the multi-disciplinary team accountable for meeting those cycle time objectives.
- **The “case manager” would serve as the applicant’s single point of contact for any issue regarding the discretionary review.** The applicant should be able to call their “case manager” at any time. The applicant should still be able to call any member of the discretionary review team in any department directly - they’ll still have to answer questions concerning technical questions on specific items such as public improvement requirements -- but the “case manager” should be responsible for managing these reviews and always be there to handle complex issues and pulling these comments from the team together.

- **The “case manager” is not an advocate for a discretionary review application, etc., but he or she will make sure the applicant gets to a clear decision point in a timely basis.** The “case manager” is not an advocate for a permit application, and should not design or redesign the application for the applicant. The “case manager”, however, will make sure the applicant fully understands the City’s requirements. If an issue arises with the review of the permit application with which the applicant doesn’t agree, the “case manager” is the applicant’s contact to get the issue resolved. The case manager should take the applicants concerns with the appropriate staff level, up to and including the Deputy Director for Case Processing in the Department of City Planning. The case manager is there to ensure the application review proceeds in a timely and predictable fashion. The “case manager” should not be expected to always give the applicant the answer the applicant wants -- the City's codes and regulations don't allow everything. So, the answer may be "no, you can't build that, but, we will give you an option as to what you can build.”
- **The “case manager” should be responsible for complete and timely communication among the multi-disciplinary team.** Each member of the multi-disciplinary team, Building and Safety, Public Works-Bureau of Engineering, Fire, Department of Transportation, etc., will still be there. The “case manager” makes sure communications occurs among the multi-disciplinary team, a schedule is set and complex issues are resolved, such as when code issues conflict. The “case manager” should lead any discussions that focus on resolving conflicting conditions of approval or competing code requirements. His or her job is to keep the review of the application coordinated and predictable.
- **The “case manager” should develop a schedule for processing the discretionary review application after consulting with the applicant and the multi-disciplinary team, and in accordance with the cycle time objectives.** This schedule should be developed within five (5) working days after submittal of the application.
- **The role of the “case manager” should be clarified in a written policy by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.** The responsibility and the authority of the “case manager” should be clearly spelled out in a written policy by the Office of the City Administrative Officer. The responsibility and authority, in addition to that previously identified, should include:
 - Conducting pre-application meetings and review as appropriate;
 - For complex applications, intake of the permit application and materials;
 - Determining application completeness for all of the City's requirements;

- Collecting and integrating comments from other bureaus, divisions and departments;
- Resolving inter-division or inter-departmental problems such as conflicting conditions;
- Assuring that the conditions of approval suggested by other divisions or departments are reasonable;
- Analyzing the application;
- Coordinating citizen input and comments;
- Working with the applicant to resolve problems and revise the project as appropriate;
- Changing from a regulator and collector of other's opinions to a problem solver that is focused on how to get the job done and build a better community;
- Functioning as an advocate for the process (maintaining cycle time objectives and seeing that they are met);
- Promptly reviewing and issuing notifications of omissions or problems with the project;
- Making presentations at public meetings;
- Coordinating with key decision makers; and
- Signing the staff reports; and following up on enforcement of conditions.

In summary, the “case manager” in the Department of City Planning is a team leader for a multi-disciplinary team who is responsible for keeping the review of a discretionary review application on track, making sure issues involving conflicting code or regulatory issues are resolved, charting a clear course for the applicant through the review process, and making sure issues regarding the application are identified early in the review process. The “case manager” is not an advocate for an application, nor are they responsible for the design or redesign of an application.

Recommendation #63: The Department of City Planning should utilize a case management system.

Recommendation #64: The roles and responsibilities of the “case manager” in the Department of City Planning, in managing the review of the discretionary review application across department boundaries, should be clearly identified in a policy and procedure developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.

Recommendation #65: The Department of City Planning should develop a training program for its professional planning staff regarding how to function as a case planner including how to manage the discretionary review, the functions of the case planner in managing the discretionary review, the City’s zoning code and CEQA, etc.

(5) The Case Manager Within The Department of City Planning Should Ensure That the Discretionary Review Applicant Obtains the Assessment of Dedications Required By the Bureau Of Engineering.

If a *Planning Case Referral Form* indicates that the Bureau of Engineering will require dedications associated with the discretionary review, the case planner in the Department of City Planning may require the applicant to obtain an assessment of these dedications in order for the project to proceed.

However, in some cases the applicant apparently did not obtain this assessment from the Bureau of Engineering, in which case the specific engineering requirements were not included as conditions on the entitlement. As a result, “late hits” would occur with the applicant discovering required dedications during clearances of building permits. This is not desirable for the applicant or the City.

Recommendation #66: The case planner within the Department of City Planning should require a full assessment of dedications by the Bureau of Engineering if the *Planning Case Referral Form* indicates that the Bureau of Engineering will require dedications associated with the discretionary review.

Recommendation #67: The case planner within the Department of City Planning should not bring the discretionary review application to a decision until the Bureau of Engineering has completed its assessment of dedications, if the *Planning Case Referral Form* indicates that the Bureau of Engineering will require dedications associated with the discretionary review.

Recommendation #68: The Bureau of Engineering should indicate that the Bureau has completed the assessment of required dedications within the Planning Case Tracking System.

(6) The Department Of City Planning Should Establish a Policy And Procedure Requiring That Case Planners Utilize and Enter Case Data Into the *Planning Case Tracking System*.

Incomplete discretionary review case files and incomplete/inaccurate data in the department's automated permit information system – the *Planning Case Tracking System* - was a significant barrier to the analysis by the Matrix Consulting Group. In terms of cases, the status was often not accurately recorded or recorded at all.

Discretionary reviews should always have a current, accurate case status indicating whether the project was active or not, if the case was on hold, which Department of City Planning employee the responsibility was assigned to address deficiencies, and to Department of City Planning employee the project has been assigned (the case planner).

On a monthly basis, the Senior City Planners or City Planners in Development Services should be required to sample the caseload assigned to each of the case planners under his / her supervision to determine whether the cases are being maintained in the *Planning Case Tracking System*, and counsel those case planners to take corrective action that are not consistently maintaining the case status if their discretionary reviews in the *Planning Case Tracking System*.

This policy should also apply to *BuildLA* when that permit information system goes "live."

Recommendation #69: All of the case planners in the Department of City Planning should be required to utilize the *Planning Case Tracking System* for all aspects of the discretionary review process.

Recommendation #70: The Department of City Planning should develop and adopt a written policy and procedure that requires case planners to utilize the *Planning Case Tracking System* to maintain a current, accurate case status and case history that includes all of the events related to a case (e.g., date the case is deemed complete, date the case was referred to other departments for comment and conditioning, date the case was deemed categorically exempt or the Initial Study was completed, etc.).

Recommendation #71: The written policy and procedure that requires case planners to utilize the *Planning Case Tracking System*, developed by the Department of City Planning, should assign responsibility to the Senior City Planners or City Planners in the Development Services Bureau for assuring ongoing maintenance of case status information in the Planning Case Tracking System, and require the Senior City Planners or City Planners to sample the caseload assigned to each of their team of case planners under his / her supervision to determine whether the cases are being maintained in the Planning Case Tracking System.

- (7) **The Department of City Planning Should Establish a Written Policy and Procedure Regarding the Amount of Time That Should Lapse Between the Decision Regarding a Discretionary Review and the Completion of the Letter of Determination By the Case Planner.**

The Matrix Consulting Group conducted a review of a sample of discretionary reviews. In a number of instances, there was a significant time lapse between the decision for approval or denial regarding a discretionary review and the issuance of the Letter of Determination. Examples are presented in the table below.

Case #	Case Description	Date of Decision	Date of Letter of Determination	Elapsed Time
APCNV-1212-3551-ZC-CU	Construction of two single-story restaurants with drive-through service	15-May-13	17-Jun-13	33
CPC-2010-3152-ZCC-HD-SPE-SPR-SPP-CUB	500 condo unit project with 55,000 sf commercial	15-Apr-13	18-Jun-13	64
CPC-2011-2480-CU	Major campus expansion including residential housing	11-Apr-13	01-May-13	20
DIR-2013-717-DIR-SPP	Request to put a sign on an awning	11-Apr-13	02-May-13	21
DIR-2013-1851-CWC	Installation of a driveway and rear yard hardscape, and overhead light at the front door	02-May-13	20-Jun-13	49

Case #	Case Description	Date of Decision	Date if Letter of Determination	Elapsed Time
DIR-2012-1774-SPP-DRB	Addition to an existing single family dwelling	24-Apr-13	24-Jun-13	61
DIR-201203517-DRB-SPP	Signage in a Design Review area; remove awning and tile divider and replace with windows	04-Apr-13	01-May-13	27

The elapsed time between the decision and the issuance of the letter of determination by the case planner is simply too long. The number of calendar days for even simple discretionary reviews is three weeks or longer.

The case planner should issue the letter of determination for a discretionary review within ten (10) business days after the hearing regarding the discretionary review, with an acknowledgement of the potential of appeals of the decision. The Department of City Planning should prepare a written policy and procedure that requires the issuance of the letter of determination by the case planner within ten (10) business days after the hearing regarding the case, with an acknowledgement of the potential of appeals of the decision.

Recommendation #72: The case planner in the Department of City Planning should issue the letters of determination for a discretionary review application within ten (10) business days after the hearing regarding a discretionary review application, with an acknowledgement of the potential of appeals of the decision.

Recommendation #73: The Department of City Planning should prepare a written policy and procedure that requires the issuance of the letters of determination by the case planner within ten (10) business days after the hearing regarding a discretionary review application, with an acknowledgement of the potential of appeals of the decision.

(8) The Department of City Planning Should Establish Cycle Time Metrics for Discretionary Review Applications.

Cycle time metrics should be established for all discretionary review applications for the length of time -- in calendar days -- required to process applications from the date of an application being deemed complete (in terms of the *Permit Streamlining Act*) to the date of the applicant's initial public hearing or the approval / disapproval of the application by staff. Examples of possible calendar date benchmarks for processing different types of discretionary applications are presented in the table below.

Type of Permit	Categorically Exempt	Mitigated Negative Declaration
Certificate of Appropriateness - Staff	7	NA
Lot Line Adjustment	30	NA
Conditional Use Permit (Alcohol Sales)	60	NA
Conditional Use Permit (Use only permitted with conditions)	60	90
Tentative Parcel Map	60	NA
Tentative Tract Map	NA	120
Variance	60	90

These cycle time metrics should be developed for all of the major types of discretionary reviews. The development of these objectives should be a collaborative effort by the development services staff of the Department of City Planning.

Some key components of case processing that contribute greatly to the timeline include:

- Authority / Type of Case: A DIR case typically requires staff level review with more controlled timeline versus a CPC case with a Zone change and General Plan Amendment.
- Environmental Review: Categorical exemption, mitigated negative declaration,

and environmental impact report. The discretionary review with a categorical exemption will be processed more quickly than a review with an environmental impact report.

- Hearing(s): Hearing requirements increase the timeline because of notification requirements or the time and possibility of continuance, or a second meeting requirement.
- Complexity: single versus multiple entitlement requests

Based on these factors, the Department of City Planning has tentatively identified four case types that would each have different cycle times:

- Process 1: Case with categorical exemption and no hearing;
- Process 2: Case with mitigated negative declaration, but no hearing;
- Process 3: Case with categorical exemption / mitigated negative declaration, and one hearing (example: DIR case with a Design Review Board); and
- Process 4: Case with mitigated negative declaration, with multiple entitlement requests, and with more than one hearing (example: CPC case with a Zone Change / General Plan Amendment / Site Plan Review, which would have one meeting at staff level with a hearing officer, followed by a meeting at CPC for the staff presentation and final decision).

Upon development of these cycle time metrics, the Department of City Planning should publish these cycle time objectives to the Department's website and within the application guides published by the Department. The Department should report its progress in meeting these metrics on a monthly basis, publishing the results to its web page.

Recommendation #74: The Department of City Planning should establish cycle time metrics for discretionary review applications.

Recommendation #75: The development of the cycle time metrics should be a collaborative effort by the development services staff of the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #76: The cycle time metrics should be published to the Department of City Planning website and identified in the application guides published by the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #77: The Department of City Planning should report its progress in meeting these cycle time metrics on its web site, and update the results on a monthly basis.

(9) The Department of City Planning Should Establish a Formal Discretionary Review Planning and Scheduling System.

The recommendation for the development and installation of a planning and scheduling system is not based on a public administration textbook.

It is based upon actual instances in which discretionary review cases remained unassigned to a case planner for a lengthy period of time. The Matrix Consulting Group reviewed discretionary review case files and identified some instances in which discretionary review applications had not been assigned to a case planner for one to two months after submittal (e.g., expansion of a laundry room to make it handicap accessible, eliminating 3 parking spaces; legalization of a duplex that had been converted into a 6-unit rental complex without additional parking; application for extension of a CU-B plus expansion of hours, etc.).

The Department of City Planning should effectively use the Planning Case Tracking System to avoid this problem.

The Planning Case Tracking System utilized by the Department of City Planning should be set up so that discretionary review applications cannot sit in “limbo” either upon application or upon assignment to a case planner without alerting supervisors and managers in the Department. The Planning Case Tracking System should be utilized to manage the cycle time and to assist supervisors and managers of the Department in managing workload in accordance with agreed upon metrics.

The Senior City Planners in Development Services in the Department of City Planning should prepare and maintain a schedule for processing of discretionary review applications by the case planners under their supervision using the Planning Case Tracking System. The purpose of the schedule in the Planning Case Tracking System should be to make visible the amount of calendar days required to analyze and reach a decision on the discretionary review application. The specific objectives related to the design and development of this system should be as follows:

- To establish a process whereby specific calendar day targets are set for each application based upon cycle time objectives established by the Department of City Planning;
- To utilize the Planning Case Tracking System to ease the tracking of the timeliness of the processing of discretionary review applications and enable the Senior City Planners to hold the case planners accountable; and
- To generate data sufficient to assist in the assessment of the performance of case planners in comparison to those cycle time objectives;

Major elements of the recommended planning and scheduling system are presented below.

- The Senior City Planners would review incoming applications and analyze application characteristics, focusing in particular on potential processing difficulties. Once difficulties are identified, the Senior City Planners would (1) set calendar day targets for completing the processing of the application to a decision, and (2) set overall staff hours allocated to the case planners for processing the application. The Senior City Planners would review the most recent open case inventory report and note the workload of case planners. Cases would then be assigned as appropriate. The Senior City Planners would then enter the target dates and the names of the case planners in the Planning Case Tracking System.
- When projects are first assigned, the case planner, to whom the application is assigned, would review the calendar day and staff hour target established for the case. If the case planner believes that the targets are unreasonable after a review of the application, the case planner should discuss them with their Senior City Planner and negotiate appropriate changes.

- The Planning Case Tracking System should be utilized by the Senior City Planner to track the extent to which the specific cycle time objectives are met, to 'red flag' permits that exceed these guidelines, and to counsel the performance of the case planner as appropriate.

The Senior City Planners should be held accountable for the ongoing maintenance of this open case inventory, and the planning and scheduling of the processing of permits by their staff in accordance with the cycle time objectives using the Planning Case Tracking System. The planning and scheduling system should be utilized to:

- Evaluate employee performance;
- Balance workload among different case planners; and
- Quantify the anticipated completion date of various applications given all work in progress.

The planning and scheduling system should be designed to manage the workload including reviewing actual progress versus scheduled deadlines and facilitate the shifting of work assignment and schedules in the face of changing priorities or workload.

Recommendation #78: The *Planning Case Tracking System* utilized by the Department of City Planning should be set up so that discretionary review applications cannot sit in "limbo" either upon application or upon assignment to a case planner without alerting supervisors and managers in the Department.

Recommendation #79: The Senior City Planners in the Development Services Bureau of the Department of City Planning should formally plan and schedule the discretionary review applications processed by their staff using the *Planning Case Tracking System*.

Recommendation #80: The Senior City Planners should be held accountable for the ongoing maintenance of this open case inventory using the Planning Case Tracking System and the completion of the processing of permits by their staff in accordance with the cycle time objectives using the *Planning Case Tracking System*.

(10) The Department of City Planning Department Should Utilize an Interdepartmental Development Review Committee for Review of Entitlement Applications Upon Submittal.

The Department of City Planning can increase the effectiveness and efficiency of its discretionary review program by breaking down the formal and informal walls that exist between the bureaus and departments involved (or that should be involved) in the discretionary review process.

Instituting a highly focused and well-developed Interdepartmental Development Review Committee will accomplish this objective quickly. Most, if not all, cities have them. It is a “best practice.” At a minimum, representatives from the City Planning, Bureau of Engineering, Building and Safety, Transportation, Fire and Water and Power should be participants in the Development Review Team.

The Interdepartmental Development Review Committee should have a number of basic functions, which include the following:

- Placing conditions of approval on medium to large-scale entitlement applications;
- Identifying needed corrections for the application submittal;
- Monitoring the consistent application of standards and conditions of approval adopted by the various bureaus and departments that are member of the Interdepartmental Development Review Committee;
- Identifying and resolving land use permitting problems for the applicant;
- Disseminating information regarding development review policies and procedures to other staff members in the City and to the applicant, and providing training as needed; and
- Monitoring customer service through all aspects of the discretionary review process.

A mature Interdepartmental Development Review Committee will continually heighten awareness of time frames, and produce consistent and clear application of development standards.

The Interdepartmental Development Review Committee should be lead by the Department of City Planning. This will facilitate interdepartmental coordination and team building. The Interdepartmental Development Review Committee should immediately begin work on formulating its agenda for its bi-weekly meetings, identifying categories of discretionary review applications that should be considered by the Interdepartmental Development Review Committee (e.g., probably not all types of DIR applications), and processes to facilitate the inter-departmental review.

The Interdepartmental Development Review Committee meetings should include technical discussions regarding discretionary review applications and policy discussions regarding the policy implications of these applications. Attendance should be mandatory. In short, the Interdepartmental Development Review Committee should become the center stage for development coordination in the City.

Recommendation #81: The Department of City Planning should develop and adopt an interdepartmental review committee to review medium to large-scale discretionary review applications. The interdepartmental review committee should meet on a bi-weekly basis.

Recommendation #82: The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop a citywide policy and procedure regarding the role and purpose of the Interdepartmental Development Review Committee.

(11) The Department of City Planning Should Continue to Develop Standard Operating Procedures for the Business Processes of the Department.

The Department of City Planning has begun the development of standard operating procedures for its business processes. Its standard operating procedure for

nuisance abatement revocations, for example, while draft, is some 35 pages long. This draft dates from April 2012. Its standard operating procedure for public counters, while still draft, is some 29 pages long. This draft dates from February 2013.

The Department of City Planning should continue to work on developing and adopting standard operating procedures for the Department's business processes. The Resource Management Bureau, Department of City Planning, should prepare an outline of the completed standard operating procedures manual (e.g., what procedures would be included) and a schedule for the completion of the standard operating procedures.

Recommendation #83: The Department of City Planning should continue to work on developing and adopting standard operating procedures for the Department's business processes.

Recommendation #84: The Resource Management Bureau, Department of City Planning, should prepare an outline of the completed standard operating procedures manual (e.g., what procedures would be included) and a schedule for the completion of the standard operating procedures.

(12) The Department of City Planning Should Develop Standard Conditions of Approval For Discretionary Review Applications and Publish These to the Department's Web Site.

The stakeholder meetings conducted by the Matrix Consulting Group found that stakeholders reported that each department exercises its authority and reviews applications independent of other departments, and, when conflicts arise, "the applicant is left on their own to resolve the conflicts." Experienced applicants often appeal to the offices of the Mayor or City Council to get department representatives together in a meeting to negotiate a solution to these conflicts.

Stakeholders repeatedly stated that the conditions of approval, which the Department of City Planning attaches to all discretionary approvals, are too numerous

and often unreasonable. Some conditions repeat what is already required in the Zoning Code and / or included in the approved plans. Many others were reported as “boilerplate” and unnecessary, “cut and pasted” from one application to another. Vague conditions create uncertainty for the applicant, such as conditions which state “to the satisfaction of” In other instances, the conditions appeared to be unenforceable.

The Department of City Planning, in a collaborative effort with the Department of Building and Safety, Bureau of Engineering, Fire Department, Department of Transportation, and other departments involved in the development review process, should develop standard conditions of approval for discretionary review applications that, ultimately, should be integrated into *BuildLA*, and also should be published to the web site of the Department of City Planning.

This is a common practice. Orange County, California, for example, has developed standard conditions of approval, published to the County’s web site, regarding public park dedications, drainage studies, drainage facilities, drainage improvements, easement subordination, fire station facilities, fire alarm and monitoring facilities, cross lot drainage, tree preservation plans, access easements, etc.

The intent is to enhance consistency and the ability of the City to enforce the conditions.

Recommendation #85: The Department of City Planning, in a collaborative effort with the Department of Building and Safety, Bureau of Engineering, Fire Department, Department of Transportation, and other departments involved in the development review process, should develop standard conditions of approval doe discretionary review applications that, ultimately, should be integrated into *BuildLA*, and also should be published to the web site of the Department of City Planning.

(13) The Department of City Planning Should Develop Application Guides and Provide Training to its Staff in the Development Services Center Regarding How to Determine When a Discretionary review Application Is Complete from the Perspective of the *Permit Streamlining Act*.

The Matrix Consulting Group sampled discretionary review case files. The review indicated that, despite the fact that staff of the Department spends one to three hours at intake for discretionary review applications, these applications still end up being accepted, in some instances, with flaws. As an example, an application for a variance:

- Cited zoning code sections that did not exist;
- Requested an adjustment for a zoning code definition, which was not possible;
- Sought relief from building code regulations, which was not possible; and
- Included an illegible notice of exemption that asked for the wrong exemption.

The Department of City Planning should take two steps to address this problem.

- **First, it should develop a full range of application guides or instructions for the various discretionary review applications.** It has already done this for tentative tract maps. These instructions consist of 9-pages regarding what an applicant must submit to achieve a complete submittal. It has also done this for a master land use application. It has not done this for specific discretionary permit applications such as conditional use permits or variances. The instructions for conditional use permits should include information unique to conditional use permits such as a description of the proposed use or business operation (e.g., change of use, change of hours, alterations, new construction, etc.), the hours of operation, number of employees on the largest shift, the reasons for requesting the conditional use permit at this particular location, why the project will benefit or not adversely affect the surrounding neighborhood; a list of existing and proposed tenants and the square footage per tenant; a list of existing and proposed uses; etc. These should be developed as checklists that the applicant has to check for each submittal requirement and sign the checklist.
- **Second, the Department should provide ongoing training to its staff the Department has assigned to the construction service centers regarding how to determine whether a discretionary review application is complete.** The staff, in some instances, are accepting incomplete applications. These

instances should be used as case studies for these staff and learning opportunities.

- **Third, the Department of City Planning staff assigned to the construction service centers should be rotated on a regular ongoing basis with the case planners that process and analyze the discretionary review applications.** There is no better way to understand the implications of incomplete submittals than if these same staff must process and analyze incomplete submittals themselves.

The Permit Streamlining Act requires that “all public agencies must establish one or more lists specifying, in detail, the information required from applicants for a development project” (Government Resources Code §65940). The Department should develop these lists that are permit-specific.

Recommendation #86: The Department of City Planning should develop a full range of application guides or instructions for the various discretionary review applications.

Recommendation #87: The Department of City Planning should provide ongoing training to its staff the Department has assigned to the construction service centers regarding how to determine whether a discretionary review application is complete.

Recommendation #88: The Department of City Planning staff assigned to the construction service centers should be rotated on a regular ongoing basis with the case planners that process and analyze the discretionary review applications.

4. **THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING AND THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND SAFETY SHOULD DEVELOP A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT THAT DEFINES THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH DEPARTMENT REGARDING ZONING COMPLIANCE REVIEW FOR BUILDING PERMITS.**

At the present time, the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning are both responsible for zoning compliance review for building permits.

For example, for regular plan checks, the Department of Building and Safety reviews the building permit plans for compliance with the building codes and the

zoning code. In reviewing for zoning code issues, the staff of the Department of Building and Safety use the Zoning Information Mapping Access System (ZIMAS) to obtain a parcel profile to determine if the property is located in any special zones, such as a Community Redevelopment Area, a Specific Plan area, a Historical Preservation Overlay Zone, or any other areas that will require a clearance from the Department of City Planning. The staff of the Department of Building and Safety also reviews the parcel profile to determine the existence of Department of City Planning documents that need to be reviewed. The staff of the Department of Building and Safety will review existing planning documents to determine if a clearance from the Department of City Planning is needed. The staff of the Department of Building and Safety will use the applicability matrix to determine whether clearances are required. If the planning documents refers to any requirements such as height, number of stories, and floor area, the staff of the Department of Building and Safety reviews the building plans to ensure these quantifiable requirements are addressed.

On the other hand, if the Department of City Planning documents refer to more qualitative aspects, the structural engineering associate will create a PCIS clearance for Department of City Planning by clicking on the appropriate clearances shown in PCIS.

In addition, the Department of Building and Safety allocates staff to plan check for zoning compliance in the construction services center. For example, at the Metro construction services center, a Structural Engineering Associate II and a Office Engineering Technician I are responsible for providing zoning information to the public

at the counter, responding to written requests for zoning information, and providing zoning clearances for business license applications.

This creates confusion for the City's the discretionary review applicants. In focus group meetings and phone calls with stakeholders conducted by the Matrix Consulting Group, the stakeholders frequently cited conflicts between the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety regarding administration and interpretation of the Zoning Code. The Department of City Planning writes and amends the Zoning Code, but the Municipal Code authorizes the Department of Building and Safety to enforce it. *"A project may receive entitlement from the Department of City Planning, only to have the Department of Building and Safety issue corrections on the building plans for Zoning Code violations."*

The "ownership" of the Zoning Code should be clearly assigned to the Department of City Planning. This "ownership" should take a number of directions for the City, the Department of City Planning, and the Department of Building and Safety.

(1) The Department of City Planning Should Be Responsible For Writing, Updating, Maintaining, and Interpreting the Zoning Code.

At the present time, the Department of Building and Safety is responsible for the City's Zoning Code manual and commentary that provides a cumulative summary of written policies and interpretations made by the Department of Building and Safety, the Department of City Planning, and the Office of the City Attorney pertaining to the interpretation and administration of specific sections of the City of Los Angeles Planning and Zoning Code.

This is an unusual assignment; this should be assigned to the Department of City Planning.

It is critical to note, however, that the Department of City Planning is **NOT** ready to begin the assumption of the responsibility maintaining the Zoning Code manual including commentary that provides a cumulative summary of written policies and interpretations made by the Department of Building and Safety, the Department of City Planning, and the Office of the City Attorney pertaining to the interpretation and administration of specific sections of the City of Los Angeles Planning and Zoning Code.. Training of the staff of the Department of City Planning is required.

Recommendation #89: The Department of City Planning should be responsible for writing, updating, maintaining, and interpreting the zoning code.

(2) The Intake for Counter Plan Check in the Construction Service Centers Should Include a City Planner(s) From the Department Of City Planning.

At the present time, intake for counter plan check is entirely the responsibility of the Department of Building and Safety. The Department of City Planning is only involved to the extent that the Department of Building and Safety refers counter plan check submittals to that to the Department of City Planning.

This creates problems for applicants as noted in the focus groups and phone calls conducted by the Matrix Consulting Group. Participants cited as a problem that both the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning exercised discretion in the interpretation and administration of the Zoning Code. *“The two departments often disagree in the interpretation of the Zoning Code.”* Conflicts between the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety regarding administration and interpretation of the Zoning Code were a frequently cited problem.

The lack of zoning compliance review at intake by the Department of City Planning is unusual. In the peer review, the responsibility for zoning compliance occurred at intake, and was typically assigned to the Department of City Planning (or its equivalent). For example:

- **Portland, Oregon.** In Portland, for example, Permit Technicians at the set-up station provide an intake function, entering the application into the permit information system. Applicants then move on to the planning station, where compliance with zoning is determined by planners and any necessary entitlement permits are identified. Applicants whose projects are cleared for zoning consistency move on to a building permit plan check station. Approximately 80% of all building and trade permits are issued over the counter.
- **San Diego, California.** In San Diego, for example, first step is application intake, where the application is entered into the permit information system. Zoning compliance is then checked by city planners assigned to the Building Construction and Safety Division; applications requiring entitlement permits are referred to City Planning. If not necessary, applicants move on to building permit plan check.
- **San Jose, California.** The Building Division manages the Permit Center. Professional-level planners are assigned to the Permit Center to provide zoning compliance review. The professional-level planners report to the Chief Building Official and include Planner I / II's and a Senior Planner.

The Matrix Consulting Group has found this to be the case in all of the development review studies it has conducted, with rare exception, in large cities such as San Francisco and in cities in Los Angeles County (e.g., Pasadena). This is a prevailing practice.

The intent of providing review by the Department of City Planning at intake, is, in part, to advise the applicant of the zoning approvals and zoning clearances that must be obtained, including whether the applicant must first obtain an entitlement permit from the Department of City Planning, and ensure that the applicant's property is appropriately zoned for the proposed construction.

Professional-level planners should be providing zoning compliance review of building permits at intake, excluding building permits that are issued over the Internet and express building permits (with some exceptions such as permits in the Coastal Zone and in Historical Preservation Overlay Zones).

Using the Metro construction services center as an example, once the applicant's q-number is called, the applicant goes to window 14 on the 4th floor for building check-in. At window 14, the Department of Building and Safety usually assigns two Office Engineering Technicians to screen the plans for completeness and determine whether the plans can be checked over-the-counter. City Planner(s) should also be located at window 14. At that window, the City Planner(s) should advise the applicant of the zoning approvals and zoning clearances that must be obtained, including whether the applicant must first obtain an entitlement permit from the Department of City Planning, and ensure that the applicant's property is appropriately zoned for the proposed construction.

At the Metro construction service center, there were a total of 41,290 transactions for building check-in, and each transaction required an average of 6 minutes. If the Department of City Planning replicated that average transaction time, it would require two City Planners.

On the other hand, however, there were 15,176 zoning check-in transactions handled by the Department of Building and Safety on the 4th floor of the Metro construction services center (or approximately 36% of the building check-in transactions). The average transaction time was 7 minutes. This window is staffed by two Department of Building and Safety positions. These two positions could be

eliminated, through attrition. There are the equivalent of two positions at the Van Nuys construction services center providing zoning check-in, and a 0.25 full-time equivalent position at the West Los Angeles construction services center. The equivalent of two positions should be eliminated at the Van Nuys construction services center.

The Department of Building and Safety should not be in the business of providing answers to zoning code questions at the construction service centers or during building permit plan check; that should be the responsibility of the Department of City Planning.

It is critical to note, however, that the Department of City Planning is **NOT** ready to begin the assumption of the responsibility for zoning compliance review of building permits in the construction service centers. Training of the staff of the Department of City Planning is required.

Recommendation #90: The intake for building permit counter plan check in the construction service centers should include a City Planner(s) from the Department of City Planning to provide zoning compliance review. These staff should share responsibility at building permit check-in with the Department of Building and Safety (which would be responsible for screening the plans for completeness and determining whether the plans can be checked over-the-counter).

Recommendation #91: The Department of Building and Safety should not be in the business of providing answers to zoning code questions at the construction service centers or during building permit plan check; that should be the responsibility of the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #92: The positions allocated by the Department of Building and Safety to zoning check-in at the construction service centers should be eliminated, through attrition. The Department of City Planning should provide zoning check-in.

Recommendation #93: The Department of City Planning should be authorized two professional-level planning positions for the Metro construction services center and two professional-level planning positions for the Van Nuys construction services center to staff the building check-in window in concert

with the Department of Building and Safety, whose staff would be responsible for screening the plans for completeness and determining whether the plans can be checked over-the-counter. These Department of City Planning positions should advise the building permit applicant of the zoning approvals and zoning clearances that must be obtained, including whether the applicant must first obtain an entitlement permit from the Department of City Planning, and ensure that the applicant's property is appropriately zoned for the proposed construction.

- (3) The Day-To-Day Responsibility For Zoning Compliance Review in the Issuance of Building Permits Issued Over the Internet and Express Permits Should Continue to be a Joint Responsibility of the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning.**

The previous recommendations should not suggest that the Department of City Planning should provide all of the zoning compliance review in the City's construction service centers.

The Department of Building and Safety should continue to be responsible for the zoning compliance review for building permits issued over the Internet and building permits issued as Express Permits (with some exceptions such as permits in the Coastal Zone and in Historical Preservation Overlay Zones).

Recommendation #94: The day-to-day responsibility for zoning compliance review in the issuance of express building permits and building permits issued over the Internet should continue to be a joint responsibility of the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #95: The Department of Building and Safety should continue to be responsible for zoning compliance review for building permits issued over the Internet and building permits issued as Express Permits (with some exceptions such as permits in the Coastal Zone and in Historical Preservation Overlay Zones).

- (4) The Department of Building and Safety Should Develop a Matrix to Identify the Types of Building Permit Plans That Should Be Routed to the Department of City Planning for Counter and Regular Plan Check.**

Counter plan check building permit plans are typically reviewed over-the-counter and are small and medium size projects, such as tenant improvements, small

office and retail buildings that can be reviewed in approximately 45 minutes to 60 minutes.

Large, more complex, or projects requiring time consuming review are submitted for regular plan check. These are typically plan checked behind the counter over a 30 calendar day period.

The Department of City Planning should review all of the building permits that require a regular plan check for compliance with the Zoning Code, Community Plans, Specific Plans, etc. This will require that building permits requiring regular plan check be routed to the Department of City Planning for zoning compliance by the Department of Building and Safety at receipt of these plans using the electronic plan check system.

The review of the regular building permits by the Department of City Planning should occur within thirty (30) business days after the date of intake.

The extent to which building permit plans are routed to the Department of City Planning that require counter plan check depends on the complexity of the type of project: complex projects should be referred to the Department of City Planning as a counter plan check and clearance. For example, any project in a Coastal Zone should be routed to the Department of City Planning. For example, some types of projects in a Specific Plan area should be routed to the Department of City Planning (e.g., single family additions in a non-hillside area, decks in a non-hillside area, change of use, storefront or exterior alterations, awnings, etc.).

It is not unusual to have zoning compliance review by a Department of Building and Safety for simple building permits. That is a best practice. Clarification of what counter plan check permits should be routed to the Department of City Planning

should be resolved through the development of a routing matrix jointly developed by the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety.

Recommendation #96: The Department of City Planning should review all of the building permits that require a regular plan check for compliance with the Zoning Code, Community Plans, Specific Plans, etc. This will require that building permits requiring regular plan check be routed to the Department of City Planning for zoning compliance by the Department of Building and Safety at receipt of these plans using the electronic plan check system.

Recommendation #97: The extent of routing of building permit plans requiring counter plan check to the Department of City Planning should depend on the complexity of the type of project: complex projects should be referred to the Department of City Planning as a counter plan check and clearance.

(5) The Department of City Planning Should Provide Zoning Compliance Review for the Parallel Design Permitting Program.

The Department of Building and Safety has initiated an innovative process entitled the “Parallel Design Permitting Program.”

Typically, only a building permit plan with detailed and complete construction drawings could be submitted for plan check. That means the design process and the building permitting process run sequentially. Each process requires a lengthy period of time to complete.

The Parallel Design-Permitting Program, used for major project developments if the applicant so desires, will allow the design process and the permitting process to occur concurrently. The Department of Building and Safety will start plan checking of the plans at the conceptual design phase and continue to provide plan check, correction verification, and code consultation services to the applicant throughout your various design phases. When the final drawings are completed, the building permit is ready to be issued.

This has occurred with the Department of Building and Safety providing zoning compliance review. The Department of City Planning, after it has received training in the Zoning Code from the Department of Building and Safety, should provide the zoning compliance review for the Parallel Design-Permitting Program. This zoning compliance review should occur during the design process, at the same time that the Department of Building and Safety is plan checking for conformance with the building codes.

Recommendation #98: The Department of City Planning, after it has received training in the Zoning Code from the Department of Building and Safety, should provide the zoning compliance review for the Parallel Design-Permitting Program.

Recommendation #99: The zoning compliance review by the Department of City Planning for the Parallel Design-Permitting Program should occur during the design process, at the same time that the Department of Building and Safety is plan checking for conformance with the building codes.

- (6) The Office of the City Administrative Officer Should Develop a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning that Defines the Roles and Responsibilities of Each Department Regarding Administration of the Zoning Code, Including Zoning Compliance Review, for the Review of Building Permit Plans.**

The division of roles and responsibilities for counter plan check and regular plan check should be clarified for the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety in a process facilitated by the Office of the City Administrative Officer. This should include the clarification of the role of the Department of City Planning in the construction service centers as it pertains to zoning compliance review based upon the previous recommendations contained in this analysis.

The development of this memorandum of agreement should include the development of a matrix that defines when building permits should be routed to the

staff of the Department of City Planning for plan check (aside from building check-in) for express, counter, and regular plan check.

Recommendation #100: The division of roles and responsibilities between the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning for zoning compliance review during express, counter, and regular plan check and for the Parallel Design-Permitting Program should be clarified in a Memorandum of Agreement between the two departments, facilitated by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.

Recommendation #101: The development of this memorandum of agreement should include the development of a matrix that defines when building permits should be routed to the staff of the Department of City Planning for plan check (aside from building check-in) for express, counter, and regular plan check.

(6) The Department of Building and Safety Should Provide Training to the Staff of the Department of City Planning in the Zoning Code.

It is critical to note, however, that the Department of City Planning is **NOT** ready to begin the assumption of the responsibility for zoning compliance review of building permits in the construction service centers. The staff of the Department of City Planning needs training in the Zoning Code to assume this responsibility. The Department of Building and Safety would need to provide training and mentoring to the staff of the Department of City Planning regarding the Zoning Code. This would include the following:

- Developing a training program and schedule that includes basic methodology for zoning compliance review of new construction, additions and alterations to residential, commercial and industrial buildings, changes of use, parking calculation and design etc.;
- Training on how to research and analyze permit history to determine existing permitted uses and legal parking counts of an existing use, determination of required parking etc.;
- Training on how to initiate applications in PCIS, supplemental permits, charge fees, assign status and disposition & timekeeping etc.; and

- Preparing written training material (handbook), PowerPoint presentations, webinars etc.

This training would likely require a period of two or more years including the necessary mentoring by the Department of Building and Safety for the staff of the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #102: The Department of City Planning is NOT yet ready to begin the assumption of the responsibility for zoning compliance review. The staff of the Department of City Planning needs training in the Zoning Code and in reading construction drawings to assume this responsibility. The Department of Building and Safety should provide training and mentoring to the staff of the Department of City Planning regarding the Zoning Code.

(7) The Recent Revisions of the Roles of the Fire Department and the Department of Building and Safety in the Plan Checking of Building Permit Plans Should Be Clarified in a Memorandum of Agreement.

The Fire Department and the Department of Building and Safety mutually agreed, recently, to revise their roles in plan checking of building permit plans to reduce overlap in plan checking for life safety. This is a good thing.

While the two departments generated a plan check matrix (“LADBS and Fire Department Plan Check Matrix”) that defined what types of building permit plans that would be plan checked by each department, this should be formalized in a Memorandum of Agreement to avoid possible confusion and disagreements in the future.

Recommendation #103: The roles and responsibilities of the Fire Department and the Department of Building and Safety in plan checking of building permit plans, recently revised as noted in the “LADBS and Fire Department Plan Check Matrix”, should be formalized in a Memorandum of Agreement developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.

5. THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING SHOULD MANAGE THE PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF DISCRETIONARY REVIEW APPLICATIONS, WHILE THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND SAFETY SHOULD MANAGE THE PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF BY-RIGHT PROJECTS.

At the present time, the Department of Building and Safety is responsible for managing the preliminary application review for entitlement projects and by-right projects. The Department calls this service *Case Management*. It has provided this service since 1995. The service includes staff from the departments of Building and Safety, City Planning, Transportation, Water and Power, and Public Works (including the Bureau of Engineering, Bureau of Street Lighting, and the Bureau of Street Services Urban Forestry Division).

The services provided as part of *Case Management* include the following:

- A feasibility study to provide site specific zoning parameters to help define the building envelope at the initial design stage;
- A pre-development meeting to outline the requirements and various permitting processes at the early stage of the discretionary review project, and coordinate a round table meeting with the city departments involved in permitting the project;
- A preliminary review coordinates a one-time meeting with City staff to answer specific questions; and
- Project navigation to provide a clear, transparent road map of the permitting process that identifies the city departments' permit clearances required for your project.

It is highly unusual for a department other than the Department of City Planning to manage the preliminary application review for discretionary review projects. Examples from the peer survey conducted by the Matrix Consulting Group are noted below.

- In Glendale, California, a case planner from the Planning and Neighborhood Services Division calls upon the Concierge Service staff in the Departmental Director's office to arrange an interdepartmental meeting (Fire, Public Works

engineering and/or transportation, Water and Power, and Police) to advise the applicant on the project and its processing.

- In Portland, Oregon, the Land Use Services Division will arrange a pre-application conference at the request of an applicant. The staff from Land Use Services and other departments and bureaus that participate in the entitlement review (Engineering, Transportation, Sewer, Water, etc.) attend the conference. Plan Review and Permitting Services staff does not normally attend the conference. The purpose of the conference is to advise the applicant on procedural and substantive requirements.
- In San Jose, California, the Planning Division offers a preliminary review program wherein planners review the preliminary proposal and offer suggestions and guidance regarding its entitlement processing.

This responsibility is typically managed by planning departments since it involves pre-application for a discretionary review, with involvement by other relevant departments such as Building and Safety, Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Fire, etc. This is prevailing practice.

The simple reason for this assignment to the Department of City Planning is that the next step, after the *Case Management* process, is typically a discretionary review application (e.g., site plan review), which will be submitted to the Department of City Planning.

The Department of Building and Safety has delivered this service since 1995. The Department takes pride in this service. The Department should take pride in this service. However, the service is just misplaced, organizationally.

However, the Department of Building and Safety should continue to manage *Case Management* for by-right building permit projects, in which the applicant requests case management services for by-right projects. There are a number of projects handled by *Case Management* within the Department of Building and Safety that do not involve preliminary review of discretionary review applications. These types of

projects, for example, would be by-right projects that do not require site plan review and that involve sites that are zoned appropriately for the proposed project. These could be substantive projects since site plan review is required for projects that result in 50,000 square feet or more non-residential floor area, 50 or more dwelling units or guest rooms, involve a change of use to a fast food establishment resulting in an increase of 500 or more daily vehicle trips, or involve a change of use other than a fast-food establishment resulting in a net increase of 1,000 or more average daily vehicle trips.

The City should assign responsibility for managing pre-discretionary review application review to the Department of City Planning. It is critical to note, however, that the Department of City Planning is **NOT** ready to begin the assumption of the managing pre-discretionary review application review. Training of the staff of the Department of City Planning is required.

Recommendation #104: The City should assign responsibility for pre-discretionary review to the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #105: The Department of Building and Safety should continue to be responsible for preliminary review of by-right projects.

Recommendation #106: The Department Building and Safety should provide training and mentoring to the staff of the Department of City Planning regarding the Zoning Code before the Department of City Planning assumes responsibility for pre-discretionary review.

6. A TRAINING OFFICER SHOULD BE AUTHORIZED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING.

Training is recognized as an important and essential organizational function. The training officer of a planning department is directly responsible to ensure that staff are well prepared, knowledgeable regarding the Zoning Code, CEQA, and

departmental standard operating procedures, and capable of performing required duties consistently including in different departmental offices. The training officer of yesterday will not suffice in today's evolving world. Along with increased training needs, training officers' have seen increases in their own duties and responsibilities. In some cases, they may add to their own workload by assuming additional duties (e.g., development of standard operating procedures), adding or expanding services, or the changing the direction of their position.

The Department of City Planning should be authorized a training officer position. This training officer position should be a professional-level planner, not a generalist. This position should be responsible for creating training programs, delivering training programs, creation of an annual training program for the staff of the Department, etc. More specifically, the position should:

- Analyze the departments training needs through surveys or interviews and establishes department training objectives, plans and schedules;
- Plans and recommends training programs to departmental management;
- Researches and designs departmental training programs or activities;
- Implements departmental training programs by arranging and coordinating all activities;
- Conducts training programs by serving as instructor or facilitator;
- Researches and designs departmental training media programs and materials;
- Produces edits or evaluates departmental media programs using tape or print formats;
- Writes or produces scripts, manuals, or narrative materials for use in training; prepares graphics, teaching aids or other visual materials for use in training; and

- Coordinates distribution of training or staff development materials through department.

The American Society of Training and Development, in their State of the Industry 2011, a survey of 412 organizations with 28,000 employees, found a ratio of one (1) trainer for every 227 staff in an organization (when adjusted for outsourcing of training).¹⁷ This is comparable to the extent of training officers for the Department of Building and Safety; the department has four (4) training officers and some 730 positions (including resolution positions).

The annual salary and fringe benefit cost at the top step of the salary range – for a recommended City Planner as a training officer – is presented in the table below.

Recommendation	Annual Ongoing Cost
A City Planner position should be authorized for the Department of City Planning as a training officer.	\$140,600

Recommendation #107: A City Planner position should be authorized for the Department of City Planning as a training officer for training of the department's staff in CEQA, the Zoning Code, departmental processes and procedures, etc.

7. THE PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING SHOULD BE PERIODICALLY ROTATED BETWEEN CURRENT PLANNING AND ADVANCED PLANNING.

At present, the Department of City Planning does not rotate staff between current planning and advanced planning even though it has a policy providing for such rotation.

\ The rotation of staff between these divisions would have significant benefits for the staff assigned to these two divisions. Rotation widens the experience and knowledge base of a Planner to the mutual benefit of the Planner and the Department

¹⁷ American Society for Training and Development, State of the Industry 2011, 2012.

of City Planning. There are benefits for both individuals and department, and the two are intertwined.

Rotations are an opportunity for the staff in these two divisions to develop new skills and experience, provide these two staff with exposure to new tasks and, more specifically, develop new skills. Staff assigned to organizations with formal rotation programs has supported this view. These staff commented on the skills they acquired, and on the new ways of working that they learned. In turn, such development builds both personal and institutional knowledge, and is beneficial in keeping staff motivated and thus in retaining their skills within the Department of City Planning.

Rotation of staff also contributes to network and relationship building within the Department of City Planning. Staff assigned to organizations with formal rotation programs described them as "a good networking opportunity" for individuals.

The risks of this rotation program relate primarily to training costs and managing the rotation process adequately.

However, the rotation of staff between current planning and long range planning is essential to "ground" staff assigned to advanced planning in the "real world" of processing planning and ministerial permits and of increasing the depth of knowledge of staff assigned to current planning of the general plan and Community Plans, the elements of the general plan, the Community Plans, and the Zoning Code.

Recommendation #108: The Department of City Planning should develop and implement a program to rotate staff between current planning and long range planning.

8. THE SEVEN POSITIONS THAT FUNCTION AS HEARING OFFICERS FOR ZONING ADMINISTRATOR CASES SHOULD BE CONVERTED, THROUGH ATTRITION, TO CITY PLANNERS, CITY PLANNING ASSOCIATES, AND PLANNING ASSISTANTS AND THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ZONING HEARINGS INSOURCED TO OTHER POSITIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING.

At the present time, the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning, is authorized seven (7) Associate Zoning Administrators with responsibility for conducting public hearings on zoning administration cases, making initial determinations, making final Letters of Determination regarding entitlements, etc. In 2012, these seven (7) Associate Zoning Administrators conducted 734 public hearings. The annual salary and fringe benefit costs for each of these seven Associate Zoning Administrators, at top step, approximates \$200,000, or \$1,400,000 for all seven of these positions. That is a cost of \$1,900 per hearing.

Most other cities, including cities with large population, have outsourced this responsibility to hearing officers. The cost of these hearing officers approximates 40% to 45% of the cost of the City's Associate Zoning Administrators. If the City outsourced zoning hearings, through attrition, the City would experience annual cost savings of approximately \$800,000.

The Matrix Consulting Group recommends that the responsibility for conducting these hearings be insourced, not outsourced, but to staff in the Department of City Planning other than Associate Zoning Administrators. The responsibility for conducting hearings zoning administration cases, making initial determinations, making final Letters of Determination regarding entitlements, etc. should be reassigned to senior level professionals in the Department of City Planning that are not involved in processing the application. This will require training of these staff regarding how to

conduct hearings, and the development of written policies and procedures regarding how to conduct these hearings. These staff should be expected to field visit the site of the cases, read the staff reports prepared by the case planners for the Department of City Planning, conduct the public hearing, and make a decision. The case planners for the Department of City Planning should prepare the letter of determination.

The Matrix Consulting Group has observed this approach elsewhere in other cities. It works.

As the seven (7) Associate Zoning Administrator positions become vacant, the positions should be reclassified as City Planners, City Planning Associates, and Planning Assistants. The cost savings should enable the addition of converted to temporary zoning hearing officers, and the cost savings used to add a mix of twelve (12) additional City Planners, City Planning Associates, and Planning Assistants. These staff should be utilized as case planners in the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning.

The annual cost impact of this recommendation is presented in the table below.

Recommendation	Annual Cost Savings	Recommendation	Annual Cost Increase
Eliminate, through attrition, seven (7) Associate Zoning Administrator positions.	\$1,400,000	Add a mix of twelve (12) City Planners, City Planning Associates, and Planning Assistants officers, as Associate Zoning Administrator positions become vacant	\$1,400,000

Recommendation #109: The Department of City Planning should insource the responsibility for conducting zoning hearings, initially for less complex zoning cases, through attrition, to staff other than the Associate Zoning Administrators.

Recommendation #110: The insourcing of the responsibility for conducting zoning hearings will require training of selected Department of City Planning staff regarding how to conduct hearings, and the development of written policies and procedures regarding how to conduct these hearings. These staff

should be expected to field visit the site of the cases, read the staff reports prepared by the case planners for the Department of City Planning, conduct the public hearing, and make a decision. The case planners for the Department of City Planning should prepare the Letters of Determination.

Recommendation #111: The Department of City Planning should eliminate, through attrition, the seven (7) Associate Zoning Administrator positions allocated to conducting public hearings on zoning administration cases, making initial determinations, making final Letters of Determination regarding entitlements, etc.

Recommendation #112: The cost savings for insourcing zoning hearings should be utilized to add a mix of twelve (12) additional City Planners, City Planning Associates, and Planning Assistants, as the seven (7) Associate Zoning Administrator positions become vacant. These staff should be utilized as case planners in the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning.

9. THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING SHOULD DEVELOP AND DEPLOY A CEQA MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that the City of Los Angeles include mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant environmental impacts as part of the City's approval of construction projects. These measures are identified through an environmental analysis prepared for the construction project via a Mitigated Negative Declaration or Environmental Impact Report under CEQA. At the time of approval of such projects, the City is required to make findings as to how the project will avoid or substantially reduce its significant environmental effects through modification of the project or the incorporation of mitigation measures described in the project Mitigated Negative Declaration or Environmental Impact Report.

In order to ensure that the required mitigation measures and/or project revisions are implemented as identified in the Mitigated Negative Declaration or Environmental Impact Report, CEQA requires adoption by the City of a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the construction project and its implementation. CEQA requires

that mitigation measures be fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements or other measures with an expectation that there be consequences to the project for noncompliance with performance objectives. This has been legally required by the State since 1988.

Overall, the case planner within the Department of City Planning should coordinate compliance with the Code Enforcement Bureau. The case planner should assume responsibility for the coordinating enforcement of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program through the use of environmental consultants, whose costs would be paid by the applicant.

The City should adopt a fee to recover the costs associated with the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. This is not unusual; other cities use the same approach e.g., Pasadena. The fees charged and collected from the permit applicant should be equal to the actual costs to the City of implementing the adopted Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

Recommendation #113: The case planner within the Department of City Planning should coordinate compliance with the CEQA Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

Recommendation #114: The Department of City Planning should develop and deploy a program for the field enforcement of the CEQA Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. The case planner should assume responsibility for the coordinating enforcement of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program through the use of environmental consultants, whose costs would be paid by the applicant.

Recommendation #115: The City should adopt a fee to recover the costs associated with the CEQA Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. The fees charged and collected from the permit applicant should be equal to the actual costs to the City of implementing the adopted Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

Exhibit 10 (1)

**Tentative Parcel and Tract
Map Process Description**

Subdivision Process Element	Steps Involved
1. Application and acceptance	<p>1.1 Applicant determines that a Subdivision is required. Visits the Planning Public Counter at Downtown Figueroa Plaza at 201 North Figueroa Street, 4th floor or the Valley at 6262 Van Nuys Avenue offices to obtain information regarding requirements.</p> <p>1.2 City Planner at the public counter reviews proposed project or use with the applicant and determines whether the project is a subdivision and what information may be required. For small lot subdivision cases, the applicant is referred to the subdivision unit for a pre-consultation meeting.</p> <p>1.3 Applicant is instructed to obtain preliminary information and approval from the Building and Engineering offices prior to submitting an application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Of the 35 copies of the proposed subdivision map, 5 need to be stamped and signed by Department of Building and Safety staff. The applicant goes to the Building counter at the public counter (also on the 4th floor of 201 North Figueroa Street or 6262 Van Nuys). - Building and Safety staff at the counter inform the applicant whether a soils report is required. If so, the applicant obtains a soils report from a private engineering firm, which must be stamped by DBS at the Building counter. - Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form (for cases where there may be dedications or improvements), which needs to be obtained from the Engineering counter. There is a separate process and fee associated with obtaining this form. - Community Plan Referral Form is required for a project site in a Specific Plan or overlay zone or requires Design Review Board approval. The form must be filled out and signed by the planner for that designated area. <p>1.4 When materials are ready, applicant submits a request for an appointment with a Planner at the DSC on-line using the department's web site.</p> <p>1.5 Senior City Planner at the Development Services Center reviews the submitted request and schedules the appointment with the applicant and a DSC City Planner, contacting the applicant by e-mail regarding when the appointment will occur. The Senior City Planner will designate the individual for the project based on the availability of planners as well as their specific areas of qualification.</p>

Exhibit 10 (2)

Subdivision Process Element	Steps Involved
Application and acceptance, cont.	<p>1.6 At one of the two Public Counters (Downtown or Valley), the applicant and a City Planner review all materials, make necessary copies, and submit the application packet. This process can take between two and three hours.</p> <p>1.7 The DSC staff will determine whether a Categorical Exemption is appropriate for the project. If it is anticipated to be a CE, the staff designated it as such. However, the final decision regarding the environmental review decision will be made by the assigned planner. If an EAF is to be prepared, a second case file is prepared for the Environmental review.</p> <p>1.8 Counter clerical staff logs the applications into PCTS (Planning Case Tracking System), which establishes two case number, one for the environmental review and one for the main entitlement.</p> <p>1.9 The applicant pays the relevant fee at the cashier counter [need location] and obtains a payment receipt, which is returned to the Planning counter to complete the submission.</p> <p>1.10 The case is sent by courier to the Division of Land office, except under the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cases that meet certain criteria for which the applicant has requested Expedited review are sent to Expediting. Specific procedures associated with projects being accepted by Expediting are outlined at the end of this section. - Major projects are sent to the Major Projects office. Specific procedures associated with projects being accepted by Major Projects are outlined at the end of this section. - Neighborhood Council representing the area where the project site is located reviews a copy of the application material. - At any point in this process, the applicant is advised to contact the Neighborhood Council to discuss the case, and strongly advised if the case may be, is, or will be controversial. Staff and DAA will consider a letter from the Neighborhood Council supporting the project. <p>1.11 Clerical staff in the Subdivision office create a file and retain information required to prepare for the public hearing, including mailing labels to abutters (provided as part of the application.) Location of the file and the assignment to a Planner are logged into PCTS system. The clerk conducts a basic proofreading of the application, prints a cover sheet, and provides it to the Planner responsible for the jurisdiction where the project is located.</p> <p>1.12 File is reviewed by the planner and either "deemed complete" or placed on hold. If deemed complete, Planner logs file as Complete in the PCTS system. If placed on hold, Planner logs the hold into PCTS (though a review of and physical files indicated that this information is not always entered correctly). The applicant is instructed either by letter or e-mail what additional information is needed. Depending on the complexity of the information required, the material may need to be re-submitted at the counter or may be sent directly to the Planner.</p>

Exhibit 10 (3)

Subdivision Process Element	Steps Involved
2. Project Completion and Scheduling of Hearing	<p>2.1 Senior Planner examines file to confirm whether that the proposed environmental clearance is adequate for the project (i.e. Categorical Exemption or if an Initial Study is required). If an Initial Study is required, the primary entitlement is placed on hold. The Hold is entered into the PCTS system. Planner conducts the environmental review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) As part of the environmental review, other agency requirements may be identified. For example, Traffic impacts may require input and requirements from DOT. In most cases, it is the applicant's job to work with other agencies to conduct the analysis of environmental issues to their satisfaction. b) Planner prepares a report of ND (Negative Declaration) or MND (Mitigated Negative Declaration) and provides copies to the State Clearinghouse c) Clerical staff submit Notice of Intent to Adopt Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration through newspaper and mailings to owners of contiguous properties. d) Public has 20 or 30 days to comment on Intent to Adopt depending on the nature of the report. <p>2.3 Once project is deemed complete and environmental review is complete, review of the main entitlement proceeds.</p> <p>2.4 <i>If serious issue or omission is identified during review process, project may be placed on hold. For example, if the planner determines that additional entitlements will be required, or that additional studies or information are required, the project may be delayed. It is the objective of the department to identify all deficiencies before project is "deemed complete" but cases do get placed on hold at other times during this process.</i></p>
3. Entitlement review	<p>3.1 All Subdivision cases are heard by an Advisory Agency and representatives from different agencies. The committee meets on a monthly basis. In preparation for the Committee review, Subdivision Clerk Typist routes the application, maps, radius maps, and supporting documentation to the appropriate agencies: DOT, Engineering (9 copies), Building and Safety (5 copies, which had been stamped at the Building and Safety counter), Fire, Grading and Zoning, Sanitation, Urban Forestry, Council District.</p> <p>3.2 Applicant works with the reviewing agencies to identify and resolve issues identified during those agencies' review. It is the applicant's job to work directly with these agencies during the review process.</p> <p>3.3 Once comments are received from Engineering and Grading (part of DBS), the case is scheduled, with the assumption that any additional comments will be provided in time for the meeting, at the meeting, or that there are no comments.</p> <p>3.4 City Planner sets the hearing date and prepares a hearing notice, for the next hearing once these comments have been received.</p> <p>3.5 Clerk Typist sends notice to the city's mailing contractor, and ensures that hearing notices are posted correctly.</p>

Exhibit 10 (4)

Subdivision Process Element	Steps Involved
3. Entitlement review (Cont'd)	<p>3.6 Committee members are notified of the meeting and the cases that will be heard.</p> <p>3.7 The Advisory Agency holds a hearing to review the proposed case and issues a decision, including conditions associated with the entitlement.</p>
4. Appeals	<p>4.1 If there is no appeal, the applicant may go forward and file a final map with the Bureau of Engineering</p> <p>4.2 Appeals are to the Area Planning Commission or Planning Commission, depending on the scope of the project. This is the same process used to appeal OZA cases.</p>
5. Post Entitlement	<p>5.1 Final map is prepared by the applicant, using a Certified Licensed Surveyor. The map must be approved and filed with the Bureau of Engineering and placed on the land records.</p> <p>- Note: Engineering has a conditions clearing process required for the filing of subdivisions and accepting and approving the new map. This is different from the DBS conditions clearing process.</p> <p>5.2 The applicant then obtains final approval from DCP at the counter, following the "condition clearance" process.</p> <p>a) Applicant requests appointment with staff at Planning Counter to clear conditions.</p> <p>b) Applicant must have taken all required actions regarding preparation and filing of final maps and meeting any associated conditions.</p> <p>c) Senior Planner reviews request and establishes appointment time with applicant and a City Planner</p> <p>d) Clerical staff request delivery of relevant file(s)</p> <p>e) Planning staff review file with applicant to ensure that all conditions tied to entitlement have been met.</p> <p>f) Planning staff enter that conditions have been cleared into the PCTS system.</p> <p>5.3 Currently, there is minimal involvement by DCP in post-entitlement monitoring and enforcement of conditions associated with subdivisions.</p>

Exhibit 11 (1)

Zoning Administrator Permit Process

Process Element	Steps Involved
1. Application and acceptance	<p>1.1 Applicant determines that an entitlement permit may be required. Visits the Planning Development Services Center (public counter) at Downtown Figueroa Plaza or the Valley offices to obtain information regarding requirements.</p> <p>1.2 Development Services Center (DSC) staff reviews proposed project or use with the applicant and determines what entitlement permits are required. The applicant is provided a list of materials to submit.</p> <p>1.3 Depending upon the location or scope of the project, materials to submit MAY include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form (for cases where there may be dedications or improvements; this form which needs to be obtained from the Engineering counter and involves an initial assessment of the project simply stating whether dedications or improvements will be required. There is a separate process and fee associated with obtaining this form. - Community Plan Referral Form is required for a project site in a Specific Plan or overlay zone or requires Design Review Board approval. The form must be filled out and signed by the planner for that designated area. <p>1.4 When entitlement permit materials are ready, the applicant submits a request for an appointment (on-line using the Department's web site or via telephone). Appointments are not required, but strongly encouraged.</p> <p>1.5 Senior City Planner reviews the submitted appointment request and schedules the appointment with the applicant and a City Planner, contacting the applicant by e-mail regarding when the appointment will occur. The Senior City Planner will designate the individual for the project based on the availability of planners as well as their specific areas of expertise.</p> <p>1.6 At one of the two DSC Public Counters (Downtown or Valley), the applicant and an assigned Planner, Assistant City Planner, or Associate City Planner review all permit application materials, make necessary copies, and submit the application packet. This process can take between two and three hours. If the application is not complete or there are obvious errors or omissions, the reviewer may advise the applicant to return when the application is complete and ready.</p> <p>1.7 The DSC staff will determine whether a Categorical Exemption is appropriate for the project. If it is anticipated to be a CE, the staff designated it as such. However, the final decision regarding the environmental review decision will be made by the assigned planner. If an EAF is to be prepared, a second case file is prepared for the Environmental review.</p>

Exhibit 11 (2)

Process Element	Steps Involved
1. Application and acceptance (Cont'd)	<p>1.8 Counter clerical staff enters the cases into PCTS (Planning Case Tracking System). Staff use the fee calculator system to determine the total fee, and provide a receipt to the applicant.</p> <p>1.9 The applicant pays the relevant fee at the cashier counter and obtains a payment receipt, which is returned to the DSC counter to complete the submission.</p> <p>1.10 The case is sent by courier to the OZA offices in City Hall. The courier typically transports forms two times per week.</p> <p>1.11 Clerk at the OZA retains information required to prepare for the public hearing, including mailing labels to abutters (provided as part of the application). Location of the file and the assignment to a Project Planner are logged into PCTS system. In addition, the Clerk prepares a physical file card with a record of the application. This file card is used to obtain quick information regarding the status of an application if the file is not available.</p> <p>1.12 File is reviewed by planner and either "deemed complete" or placed on hold. If deemed complete, Project Planner logs file as Complete in the PCTS system. If placed on hold, the Project Planner logs the hold into PCTS. (A review of electronic and physical files indicated that this information is not always entered correctly). The applicant is instructed either by letter or e-mail what additional information is needed. In most cases, additional information can be submitted directly to the planner.</p>
2. Project Completion and Scheduling of Hearing	<p>2.1 If a hearing waiver is requested, the DSC confers with the Chief Zoning Administrator to determine if a hearing is required.</p> <p>2.2 Senior Planner examines file to confirm whether that the proposed environmental clearance is adequate for the project (i.e. Categorical Exemption or if an Initial Study is required). If an Initial Study is required, the primary entitlement is placed on hold. The Hold is entered into the PCTS system. Planner conducts the environmental review. (The only exception is a full Environmental Impact Report which processed via Major Projects Environmental Review section, not prepared by the OZA).</p> <p>a) As part of the environmental review, other department requirements may be identified. For example, Traffic impacts may require input and requirements from Department of Transportation (DOT). In most cases, it is the applicant's job to work with other departments to conduct the analysis of environmental issues to their satisfaction.</p> <p>b) Planner prepares a report of ND (Negative Declaration) or MND (Mitigated Negative Declaration) and provides copies to the State Clearinghouse.</p> <p>c) Clerical staff submits Notice of Intent to Adopt Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration through newspaper and mailings to owners of contiguous properties.</p> <p>d) Public has 20 days to comment on Intent to Adopt; or 30 if the action requires review by other responsible State agencies via State Clearing House.</p>

Exhibit 11 (3)

Process Element	Steps Involved
2. Project Completion and Scheduling of Hearing (Cont'd)	<p>2.3 Once project is deemed complete and environmental review is complete, review of the main entitlement proceeds.</p> <p>2.4 <i>If serious issue or omission is identified during review process, for example, if the planner determines that additional entitlements or additional studies or information are required, the project may be delayed. It is the objective of the department to identify all deficiencies before project is "deemed complete" but cases do get placed on hold at other times during this process.</i></p> <p>2.5 Senior City Planner coordinates with Hearing Coordinators to schedule project for a hearing. Hearing date is logged into PCTS by clerical staff. Clerk sends Notice and mailing labels to mailing service, which sends the notice to properties within a 500 foot radius as well as to other potentially affected parties</p> <p>2.6 City Clerk's office advertises and posts notices per regulatory requirements</p>
3. Entitlement review	<p>3.1 A team at the OZA offices, either at City Hall or the Valley office, is assigned to analyze the permit application. The team consists of a Zoning Administrator, City Planner and Associate/Assistant Planner (Project Planner) to identify potential issues that should be addressed during investigation</p> <p>3.2 Project Planner conducts investigation, including consultation with the Senior City Planner, visiting the site, assembling photographs, etc. If a Community Plan Referral form indicates that other City departments require the satisfaction of their respective conditions, Planning staff will refer the applicant to the appropriate agency. <i>Note: in some cases the applicant does not obtain information from other agencies regarding their requirements in advance of OZA entitlement review or issuing the grant; in such cases, conditions of the grant would not reflect any recommendations or requirements from these other agencies.</i></p> <p>3.3 Process may include consultation with other departments (Police for safety and enforcement, DBS for parking and other zoning requirements). However, there is no consistent protocol for "routing" of the entitlement application to different departments for comments. Based on the specifics of the case, the Planner determines whether other departments need to be contacted.</p> <p>3.4 Planner and Assistant Planner (Project Planners) prepare draft Letter of Determination (LOD) providing background information, and proposed conditions and findings associated with the project. (Note: in the past, the Planner has been responsible for drafting a staff report on the application.)</p> <p>3.5 Zoning Administrator holds hearing, which is attended by the City Planner responsible for the project. Hearing includes the applicant and any interested parties with comments on the application. (If hearings are waived hearings, staff prepares draft LOD for Zoning Administrator review, final draft for submittal to clerical for final formatting and camera-ready document for signature.</p>

Exhibit 11 (4)

Process Element	Steps Involved
3. Entitlement review (Cont'd)	<p>3.6 Zoning Administrator either states entitlement decision at hearing or takes the matter "Under Advisement" with no decision issued. Decision is not official or effective until Letter of Determination is issued.</p> <p>3.7 Zoning Administrator drafts Letter of Determination to include determination regarding the entitlement(s) and any conditions if entitlement is granted. Findings issued in association with all decisions (conditional approval or denial).</p> <p>3.8 Draft determination letter is provided to Senior Clerk Typist at Office of the Zoning Administrator offices at City Hall for formatting, final editing and preparation of final for signature.</p> <p>3.9 Upon completion of ZA review and signature, Senior Clerk Typist at the Office of Zoning Administrator at City Hall sends final determination to applicant and all interested parties. The LOD issue date and action are logged into PCTS. File is retained in Appeals File for 15 days.</p>
4. Appeals	<p>4.1 If there is no appeal after 15 days, clerical staff issue notice of determination and other required documentation to applicant and required Noticed parties. Clerical staff sent file to Records and log final entitlement findings into PCTS. The LOD is scanned and posted in the Planning Document Information System (PDIS).</p> <p>4.2 If appealed, staff determines whether appeal is to City Council or Area Planning Commission.</p> <p>4.3 If appealed, noticing regarding appeal is sent to all interested parties.</p> <p>4.4 Planning Commission Office secretariat is responsible for scheduling hearing and ensuring that hearing notices are appropriately noticed (mailings and publications); if appeal is to City Council, City Clerk's office, in cooperation with Planning Commission secretariat, is responsible for scheduling and ensuring that hearing notices are appropriately noticed.</p> <p>4.5 Appeal hearing is held. Appropriate decision making body secretariat is responsible for drafting and distribution of new Letter of Determination (Zoning Administrator provides draft findings and assists secretariat if necessary).</p> <p>4.5 In limited cases, appeal is further appealed to City Council (Sec. 12.27.1 Nuisance Abatement/Revocations action are appealed directly to Council and do not go to APC).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Clerical staff update information and transmit the case file to the Commission Secretariat b) Commission Secretariat transmits to the City Clerk c) City Clerk schedules PLUM (Planning and Land Use Management) hearing and mails notice to mailing list in ZA case file d) PLUM conducts hearing and prepares recommendation e) City Council conducts a Hearing and takes final action on the application. f) City Clerk posts final Council actions online via the Council File Index.

Exhibit 11 (5)

Process Element	Steps Involved
5. Post Entitlement	<p>5.1 After appeal and/or ZA determination provides for Entitlement, applicant is required to meet conditions associated with the Entitlement.</p> <p>5.2 CLEARANCE AND PERMITS -If permit is required, Applicant initiates clearance review at the Development Services Center and submits for permits to appropriate department (typically DBS or Engineering for certain requirements)(Note: OZA staff does not clear conditions nor review project plans...this is all conducted by DSC staff. DSC staff may consult with OZA for clarification or guidance.)</p> <p>5.3 As part of the permitting process for building permits, applicant "clears conditions" with DCP, demonstrating that conditions tied to any entitlements associated with the building permit are met in submitted plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Applicant requests appointment with staff at Planning Counter to clear conditions. b) Applicant must have taken all required actions associated with clearing conditions or, for actions related to construction, must demonstrate that the construction drawings re consistent with the entitlement and/or any conditions associated with the entitlement. For example, any required recording on the land records must be made before clearing conditions with DCP. c) Senior Planner reviews request and establishes appointment time with applicant and a City Planner d) Clerical staff request delivery of relevant file(s) e) Planning staff review file with applicant to ensure that all conditions tied to entitlement have been granted. f) Planning staff prepare a memo for each cleared condition and electronically sign off on the conditions in the Building Permit electronic records. g) Planning staff enter that conditions have been cleared into the PCTS system. <p>5.4 Currently, there is minimal involvement by DCP in post-entitlement monitoring and enforcement of conditions. However, the department has recently added a pilot program for Condition Compliance to track CUB approvals, especially for conditions that do not have an associated building permit and therefore are not subject to routine inspection(s) by DBS inspectors. (DCP does not have any inspectors on staff. Condition Compliance Unit is a pilot program until additional staffing capacity is approved by City Council.).</p>

Exhibit 12 (1)

**Neighborhood Projects: Director's Determinations
and Planning Commission Projects**

Neighborhood Project Process Element	Steps Involved
1. Application and acceptance	<p>1.1 Applicant determines that an Entitlement may be required. Visits the Planning Public Counter at Downtown Figueroa Plaza at 201 North Figueroa Street, 4th floor or the Valley at 6262 Van Nuys Avenue offices to obtain information regarding requirements.</p> <p>1.2 City Planner at the public counter reviews proposed project or use with the applicant and determines what entitlements are required. The applicant is provided a list of materials to submit.</p> <p>1.3 Depending upon the location or scope of the project, materials to submit MAY include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bureau of Engineering Planning Case Referral Form (for cases where there may be dedications or improvements; this form which needs to be obtained from the Engineering counter and involves an initial assessment of the project simply stating whether dedications or improvements will be required. There is a separate process and fee associated with obtaining this form. - Community Plan Referral Form is required for a project site in a Specific Plan or overlay zone or requires Design Review Board approval. The form must be filled out and signed by the planner for that designated area. <p>1.4 When materials are ready, applicant submits a request for an appointment on-line using the department's web site.</p> <p>1.5 Senior City Planner at the Development Services Center reviews the submitted request and schedules the appointment with the applicant and a DSC City Planner, contacting the applicant by e-mail regarding when the appointment will occur. The Senior City Planner will designate the individual for the project based on the availability of planners as well as their specific areas of qualification</p> <p>1.6 At one of the two Public Counters (Downtown or Valley), the applicant and a City Planner review all materials, make necessary copies, and submit the application packet. This process can take between two and three hours.</p> <p>1.7 The DSC staff will determine whether a Categorical Exemption is appropriate for the project. If it is anticipated to be a CE, the staff designated it as such. However, the final decision regarding the environmental review decision will be made by the assigned planner. If an EAF is to be prepared, a second case file is prepared for the Environmental review.</p> <p>1.8 Counter clerical staff logs the applications into PCTS (Planning Case Tracking System), which establishes two case number, one for the environmental review and one for the main entitlement.</p> <p>1.9 The applicant pays the relevant fee at the cashier counter and obtains a payment receipt, which is returned to the counter to complete the submission.</p>

Exhibit 12 (2)

Neighborhood Project Process Element	Steps Involved
1. Application and acceptance (Cont')	<p>1.10 The case is sent by courier to the Neighborhood Projects office, except under the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If multiple entitlements are being requested and if they include an OZA component, the entitlements are combined into a single case that is managed by OZA, but also worked on by Neighborhood Projects for the non-OZA elements. - Cases that meet certain criteria for which the applicant has requested Expedited review are sent to Expediting. Specific procedures associated with projects being accepted by Expediting are outlined at the end of this section. - Major projects are sent to the Major Projects office. Specific procedures associated with projects being accepted by Major Projects are outlined at the end of this section. <p>1.11 Clerical staff in the Neighborhood Projects office retain information required to prepare for the public hearing, including mailing labels to abutters (provided as part of the application.) Location of the file and the assignment to a Planner are logged into PCTS system. The clerk conducts a basic proofreading of the application, prints a cover sheet, and provides it to the Planner responsible for the jurisdiction where the project is located.</p> <p>1.12 File is reviewed by planner and either "deemed complete" or placed on hold. In the Valley office if no faults are identified within 30 days the project is deemed complete. In Metro, the planner must make a determination that the case is complete. If deemed complete, Planner logs file as Complete in the PCTS system. If placed on hold, Planner logs the hold into PCTS (though a review of electronic and physical files indicated that this information is not always entered correctly). The applicant is instructed either by letter or e-mail what additional information is needed. Depending on the complexity of the information required, the material may need to be re-submitted at the counter or may be sent directly to the Planner.</p>

Exhibit 12 (3)

Neighborhood Project Process Element	Steps Involved
2. Project Completion and Scheduling of Hearing	<p>2.1 Senior Planner examines file to confirm whether that the proposed environmental clearance is adequate for the project (i.e. Categorical Exemption or if an Initial Study is required). If an Initial Study is required, the primary entitlement is placed on hold. The Hold is entered into the PCTS system. Planner conducts the environmental review.</p> <p>a) As part of the environmental review, other agency requirements may be identified. For example, Traffic impacts may require input and requirements from DOT. In most cases, it is the applicant's job to work with other agencies to conduct the analysis of environmental issues to their satisfaction.</p> <p>b) Planner prepares a Mitigated Declaration Report and provides copies to the State Clearinghouse</p> <p>c) Clerical staff submit Notice of Intent to Adopt Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration through newspaper and mailings to owners of contiguous properties.</p> <p>d) Public has 20 or 30 days to comment on Intent to Adopt depending on the project.</p> <p>2.3 Planner also commences review of the main entitlement.</p> <p>2.3 <i>If serious issue or omission is identified during review process, project may be placed on hold. For example, if the planner determines that additional entitlements will be required, or that additional studies or information are required, the project may be delayed. It is the objective of the department to identify all deficiencies before project is "deemed complete" but cases do get placed on hold at other times during this process.</i></p> <p>2.4 Complexity of the entitlement process depends somewhat on whether the case should be heard by an Area Planning Commission, Citywide Planning Commission, or is a Director's Determination.</p> <p>2.5 For all commission cases, the Planner establishes a date for a Hearing Officer hearing, at which the public may comment on the request. Hearing date is logged into PCTS by Clerical staff. Note: at The Valley office the Hearing Officer hearing is tentatively scheduled during completeness review and the applicant is provided with estimated timelines for completion. For the Metro office, the scheduling is done once environmental review is complete, as the environmental review may result in changes to the plan.</p> <p>2.6 Once Hearing date is confirmed, Clerk sends Notice to mailing service, which sends the notice to properties within a 500 foot radius as well as to other potentially affected parties. All notices must be sent out at least 24 days before the hearing.</p> <p>2.7 City Clerk's office advertises and posts notices per regulatory requirements.</p>

Exhibit 12 (4)

Neighborhood Project Process Element	Steps Involved
3. Entitlement review	<p>3.1 The City Planner reviews the application to assess conformance with City of LA zoning regulations including, if necessary, what conditions may need to be attached to the entitlement. The review takes into account citywide planning and zoning regulations and additional requirements associated with Specific Plans or Community Design overlays, as well as conditions that have been placed on the proposed location in the past (known as Q conditions).</p> <p>3.2 If a Planning Case Referral Form (PCRF) indicates that Engineering will require dedications associated with the entitlement, the Planner may require the applicant to obtain a full assessment of these in order for the project to proceed. Note: in some cases the applicant does not obtain this assessment from Engineering, in which case the specific engineering requirements are not included as conditions on the entitlement.</p> <p>3.3 Process may include consultation with other agencies (Police for safety and enforcement, DBS for parking and other zoning requirements). However, most staff do not follow a formal process for routing of entitlement applications to different departments. Based on the specifics of the case, the Planner determines whether other agencies need to be contacted. However, if these agencies have not been heard from by the time of the hearing, their input on the entitlement is deferred until the Permit Clearance stage.</p> <p>3.4 During the review process, the applicant may also meet with local officials and other interested parties to obtain additional impact and seek support for the project.</p> <p>3.5 For Director's Determinations, the Planner and Assistant/Associate Planner prepare a draft determination letter which includes a proposed Determination, conditions, and analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Director's determinations are for cases where the CPC has deferred to the director for certain entitlements, to avoid the time-consuming process of taking these cases to a Commission. - The letter is reviewed and approved by the Principal City Planner and then forwarded to the Director for approval. <p>3.6 For all Commission and Council cases, a Hearing Officer hearing is held at which the applicant presents the project and comments may be heard.</p> <p>3.7 Based on feedback at the hearing, the applicant may modify his plan.</p> <p>3.8 Planner and Assistant/Associate Planner prepare a Staff Report on the proposed projects, including exactly what Entitlements are being requested, consistency of the request with the City's regulations, and recommendations regarding action. The staff report is reviewed by the Principal City Planner, Senior, and Principal Planner.</p>

Exhibit 12 (5)

Neighborhood Project Process Element	Steps Involved
3. Entitlement review (Cont'd)	<p>3.9 For CPC cases, a briefing is held with CPC president and/or VP, and includes CP, Senior, Principal. Often questions are asked that involve research, additional changes, drafting of additional language, and coordinating with applicant prior to Commission.</p> <p>3.10 Copies of the project materials, including plans, elevations, supporting documents, and the staff report are distributed to the responsible Commission Executive Assistant in the Commission Office.</p> <p>3.10 Staff member in charge of the project briefs the City Attorney, who provides feedback regarding any legal issues associated with the project.</p> <p>3.11 For Citywide Commission cases, staff may prepare a PowerPoint presentation describing the project 3.12 Planning Commission projects, hearings are held. City Planning Commissions are held on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month, alternating location between City Hall and the Valley City Hall. Area Planning Commission schedules vary, and the meetings are located within the Commission's jurisdiction.</p> <p>3.12 Planner drafts a Letter of Determination based on results from the commission hearing; LOD is reviewed by Senior Planner.</p> <p>3.13 Planning Commission issues a Letter of Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commission includes actions required to approve or disapprove the proposed project and conditions associated with the approval. - In many cases, the approval will require actions by the City Council and/or the Mayor. The Letter of Determination includes a listing of these required actions and recommended actions for these two bodies. <p>3.14 Cases that are required to go before the City Council are scheduled and noticed by the City Clerk.</p> <p>3.15 Staff meet with the PLUM (Planning and Land Use Committee of the City Council) to review the required actions. PLUM acts on the recommendation and refers it to the City Council.</p> <p>3.16 Council takes up the item, typically as part of a Consent agenda.</p>

Exhibit 12 (6)

Neighborhood Project Process Element	Steps Involved
4. Appeals	<p>4.1 If there is no appeal, clerical send file to Records and log final entitlement findings into PCTS.</p> <p>4.2 Appeals to City Council are managed by City Clerk.</p> <p>4.3 In some cases, the appeal decision is further appealable to full City Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Clerical staff update information and transmit the case file to the Commission Office. b) Commission Secretariat transits to the City Clerk c) City Clerk schedules PLUM (Planning and Land Use Management) hearing and mails notices d) PLUM conducts hearing and prepares recommendation e) City Council conducts a Hearing and takes final action on the application. f) Final action is recorded by City Clerk.
5. Post Entitlement	<p>5.1 After appeal and/or determination provides for Entitlement, applicant is required to meet conditions associated with the Entitlement.</p> <p>5.2 If permit is required, Applicant submits for permits to appropriate agency (typically DBS or Engineering for certain requirements)</p> <p>5.3 As part of the permitting process for building permits, applicant “clears conditions” with DCP, demonstrating that conditions tied to any entitlements associated with the building permit are met in submitted plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Applicant requests appointment with staff at Planning Counter to clear conditions. b) Applicant must have taken all required actions associated with clearing conditions or, for actions related to construction, must demonstrate that the construction drawings re consistent with the entitlement and/or any conditions associated with the entitlement. For example, any required recording on the land records must be made before clearing conditions with DCP. c) Senior Planner reviews request and establishes appointment time with applicant and a City Planner d) Clerical staff request delivery of relevant file(s) e) Planning staff review file with applicant to ensure that all conditions tied to entitlement have been granted. f) Planning staff prepares a memo for each cleared condition and electronically sign off on the conditions in the Building Permit electronic records. g) Planning staff enter that conditions have been cleared into the PCTS system. <p>5.4 Currently, there is minimal involvement by DCP in post-entitlement monitoring and enforcement of conditions. However, the department has recently added two offices to focus on these areas, but this is office is currently not monitoring Neighborhood Projects cases.</p>

Exhibit 13 (1)

**Department Of Transportation
Traffic Impact Study Process**

Traffic Impact Studies	Steps Involved
Initial Traffic Assessment Studies	<p>1.1 The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) Development Services Division reviews traffic impact studies to predict and analyze the circulation and congestion impacts of project-generated traffic, and to identify feasible traffic mitigation measures, when required. LADOT Development Services has three offices: Metro Development Review located at 100 S. Main Street, 9th Floor, West Los Angeles Development Review located at 7166 W. Manchester Avenue, Los Angeles, and Valley Development Review located at 6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, 3rd Floor.</p> <p>1.2 In response to proposed development, City Planning submits one of two forms to request LADOT Development Services to perform an initial assessment to determine whether a traffic study is necessary. The Site Plan Review Group submits a Site Plan Review Form and the Environmental Review Group submits an Initial Study Assessment Form (ISAF). The Site Plan Review Form is required if the project will add more than 50 additional housing units or 50,000 square feet of development.</p> <p>1.3. LADOT prepares an invoice for either the Site Plan Review or the Initial Study Assessment. Prior to LADOT performing either of these two assessments, the applicant is required to pay either the Site Plan Review fee (\$1,789) or the Initial Study Assessment fee (\$434). The applicant can pay on-line or in person at LADOT.</p> <p>1.4 Once the applicant has paid the appropriate fee, LADOT completes the appropriate initial assessment form using the Institute of Engineers "Trip Generation Handbook", which calculates the trip generation rates based on the land use type and number of proposed new units. LADOT determines that a Traffic Study is required when the project is likely to add 43 or more morning or afternoon peak hour trips. A Traffic Study is a nine-step process designed to predict and analyze the circulation and congestion impacts of project-generated traffic, and identify feasible traffic mitigation measures. A Technical Memorandum is required when the project is likely to add 25 to 42 morning or afternoon peak hour trips. A Technical Memorandum is a scaled-down version of a Traffic Study. At a minimum, the Technical Memorandum must address the potential impacts to intersections adjacent to the project. LADOT must approve the scope of the Technical Memorandum.</p> <p>1.5 When completed, LADOT returns the Site Plan Assessment or the Initial Study Assessment to City Planning with a determination of whether a Traffic Study or Technical Memorandum is required.</p> <p>1.6 City Planning notifies the applicant as to whether a Traffic Study will be required and to contact LADOT to initiate the required Traffic Study.</p>

Exhibit 13 (2)

Traffic Impact Studies	Steps Involved
Pre-Traffic Study Process	<p>2.1 The first step in the Traffic Study process is for the applicant to contract with a consultant to prepare the Traffic Study. LADOT maintains a list of qualified consultants to perform the Traffic Study. The applicant can select from the list or contract with a consultant not on the list.</p> <p>2.2 Once Traffic Study consultant is selected, a scoping meeting is typically convened between LADOT and the applicant's team. The purpose of the scoping meeting is to obtain LADOT's approval on the assumptions and content of the Technical Memorandum or Traffic Study. Prior to the scoping meeting, the Traffic Study consultant will need to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Provide a general description of the project size (defined by square-footage by use and/or number of dwelling units), the uses and heights of proposed new buildings and other structures that need to be remodeled and/or removed. The consultant must include any sequence of phased construction and any unusual conditions. The project description should also specify a building address, legal description and project title. (b) Submit a site plan to LADOT for preliminary discussion of driveway location(s), loading/unloading area, and parking scheme of the proposed project. The estimated distribution of project trips must be according to LADOT recommended turn prohibitions for the proposed driveways. (c) To the extent possible, the project should incorporate the use of existing alleys into the design of site access and circulation plans. (d) Identify any Congestion Management Program (CMP) intersections and other CMP requirements. <p>2.3 At the scoping meeting, the traffic consultant uses the above information to develop the assumptions that will be used in the Traffic Study and how it will be conducted. Once the LADOT and the consultant agree on the Traffic Study requirements, LADOT prepares a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) defining how the Traffic Study will be conducted. Issues are usually resolved at meeting.</p> <p>2.4 Before the MOU can be executed, the applicant is required to pay the MOU fees required per LAMC Section 19.15 (Currently, \$1,143).</p> <p>2.5 After paying the necessary fees, the Consultant and LADOT execute a MOU on the agreed upon assumptions for the Traffic Study. The purpose of the MOU is to clearly define how the Traffic Study will be conducted. The agreed upon assumptions include the study intersections, residential street segments and freeway segments; related projects; trip generation rates; ambient growth rate, trip distribution patterns and trip assignments; trip credits for existing active or previous land use, vehicle trip discounts for transit, internal or pass-by trips; and projected build-out year and traffic study methodology.</p>

Exhibit 13 (3)

Traffic Impact Studies	Steps Involved
Traffic Study	<p>3.1 After the MOU is executed, the Traffic Study consultant initiates the Traffic Study. The applicant is required to keep LADOT informed on the progress in completing the traffic study. LADOT must approve any changes to the assumptions or any other changes to the Traffic Study. A key aspect of the study is to determine the traffic impacts from the proposed development to the available transportation infrastructure. The significance of the impacts is measured in terms of the change to volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio between the “future no project” and the “future with project” scenarios. The change in the V/C ratio is compared to LADOT’s established threshold standards to assess the project-related traffic impacts</p> <p>3.2 If the Traffic Study determines that the project will have traffic impacts beyond the allowable threshold, the consultant will need to develop mitigation measures to address the traffic impacts.</p> <p>3.3 When the review is completed, the Traffic Study consultant submits the study to LADOT for review.</p> <p>3.4 Prior to LADOT review of the Traffic Study, the applicant is required to pay a Traffic Study Review Fee, which is currently \$7,396 for studies that evaluate 10 intersections or less. LADOT’s review fee for Traffic Studies with more than ten intersections is higher.</p> <p>3.5 After the applicant pays the review fee, LADOT initiates the review of the Traffic Study. Typically, the review process is an iterative process in which LADOT prepares and issues comments to the consultant and the consultant revises the Traffic Study.</p> <p>3.6 If the Traffic Study determines that the project will have traffic impacts, the consultant will propose mitigations measures to address the traffic impacts.</p> <p>3.7 The review of traffic mitigation proposals often requires consultation with other LADOT divisions including Signal Timing, Design, Operations, Bikeways, and Transit. Feedback from these divisions often requires modifications to the mitigation proposals. When required, LADOT prepares comments on the proposed mitigation measures and the consultant revises the mitigation measures if necessary.</p> <p>3.8 When LADOT is satisfied with the Traffic Study, including any required traffic mitigation measures, the consultant submits an electronic copy of the Traffic Study to DOT.</p>

Exhibit 13 (4)

Traffic Impact Studies	Steps Involved
Traffic Impact Assessment Report	<p>4.1 After the Traffic Study is completed, the LADOT prepares a Traffic Impact Assessment. The assessment will be either the project has traffic impacts or the project does not have traffic impacts. LADOT typically takes 30-90 days to complete the assessment depending on the complexity of the project and whether or not the project has traffic impacts, which would require mitigation measures.</p> <p>4.2 If the project does not have traffic impacts, the Traffic Impact Assessment report includes the project description, the estimated increase in the daily and peak hour trips, any specific projects requirements such as construction impacts, any highway or street widening requirements, parking requirements, driveway access and circulation requirements, and fee requirements. The assessment also includes the Traffic Study's detailed analysis on the peak hour level of service assuming the project is built.</p> <p>4.3 If the project has traffic impacts, the Traffic Impact Assessment includes all of the above information, as well as a description of the traffic impacts due to the proposed project. In addition, Traffic Impact Assessment will include the Traffic Mitigation Program and any public improvements required for the project.</p> <p>4.4 LADOT submits the completed Traffic Impact Assessment report to City Planning for its review and consideration of the proposed project.</p>

7. ANALYSIS OF MINISTERIAL FUNCTIONS AND PROCESSES

This chapter presents an analysis of the ministerial permitting functions and processes including the following:

- The common functions and processes that require inter-departmental cooperation and coordination, paying particular attention to the management and organization of the work;
- Recommendations that modify functions and business process to enhance customer service;
- The identification of business processes where the use of memorandums of agreement between departments will be necessary; and
- The identification of how the existing management and organization of these functions and business processes either support or detract from the goals, objectives, and mission of the City of Los Angeles.

Priority was given to related and overlapping functions, including but not limited to the following:

- Building and Safety related and overlapping functions including clearances, public counter services, condition compliance, development services case management, plan check, code enforcement, inspection, administration, and technology;
- Fire related and overlapping functions including Plan Check and Case Management; and

A summary of the recommendations contained within this chapter is presented in the exhibit following this page.

Exhibit 14 (1)

Summary of Recommendations within Chapter 7

Rec. #	Recommendation
116	The City should require that all development-related fees received in construction service centers be paid to and processed by the cashiers employed by the Department of Building and Safety.
117	The City should create a simple universal payment process for all development-related fees that allows permit applicants to set up their accounts on line. In these instances, the permit applicant could pay their fees, without visiting the cashiers employed by the Department of Building and Safety, by allowing their fees to be posted and charged on-line to their account on the next business day.
118	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop a memorandum of agreement with all of the divisions, bureaus, and departments located in the construction service centers that would clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Building and Safety in collecting and processing all development-related fees received in construction service centers.
119	For applicants who do not visit construction service centers often, the Department should enable a permit applicant to set up a temporary account during their visit and pay the total fees at the conclusion of their visit.
120	The reference within the Municipal Code that offers a money back guarantee if a express permit customer waits more than 30 minutes in the queue or more than 60 minutes to complete the permit processing from the time the service begins should be removed from the Municipal Code.
121	The Department of Building and Safety, in conjunction with the Fire Department and Department of City Planning, should develop standard building permit plans and checklists for solar photovoltaic permits for single-family dwellings for systems 4 kW and under.
122	The Department of Building and Safety should enable the issuance of solar photovoltaic permits over the Internet for systems under 4 kW with no reviews beside the Department of Building and Safety if these plans meet all requirements by using the standard plans and checklists.
123	The Department of Building and Safety should publicize the availability of on-line permitting for solar photovoltaic permits for single-family dwellings for systems 4 kW and under with the primary solar contractors in Los Angeles County.
124	The Department of Building and Safety should establish a cashier station in the express permit center at the Metro construction services center, as planned. The express building permit applicant should be able to obtain and pay for their permit in the same location.
125	The Department of City Planning should work with the Department of Building and Safety to simplify the express building permit process so that, where practical, the Department of Building and Safety can issue an express building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning.
126	The Department of City Planning should develop standard conditions of approval that could be utilized by the Department of Building and Safety to issue an express building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning (e.g., Christmas and pumpkin sale lots) and develop checklists, standard drawings, provide training, and initial quality control to simplify the express building permit process, where practical.
127	The staff assigned by the Department of City Planning to the construction service centers should provide the clearances for a building permit in a Historical Preservation Overlay Zone.

Exhibit 14 (2)

Rec. #	Recommendation
128	The Department of City Planning should work with the Department of Building and Safety to simplify the counter building permit process so that, where practical, the Department of Building and Safety can issue the counter building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning.
129	The Department of City Planning should develop standard conditions of approval that could be utilized by the Department of Building and Safety to issue a counter building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning and develop checklists, standard drawings, provide training, and initial quality control to simplify the counter building permit process, where practical.
130	The building permit applicant at the Metro construction services center should not be required to (1) proceed to counter station 14 for screening of their building permit plans for completeness and determining whether their plans can be checked over the counter, (2) proceed to one of the four counter stations 9 through 12 to have their plan check fee calculated, and then (3) return to the cashier station adjacent to counter station 14 to pay the plan check fee.
131	One counter station on the 4th floor of the Metro construction services center should screen building permit plans for completeness, determine whether plans can be checked over the counter, and calculate the building permit plan check fees for counter plan check, if the plan check document is complete and can be plan checked over-the-counter. Only then, should the customer pay the plan check fee at the cashier station adjacent to station 14.
132	The Bureau of Engineering staff assigned to the 3 rd floor of the Metro construction services center should be located on the 4th floor of the Metro construction services center.
133	Building permit customers should not be required to go to the 3 rd floor of the Metro construction services center to resolve the clearances with the Bureau of Engineering, and then return to the 4th floor, and get back in line for service.
134	The building permit applicant on the 3 rd floor of the Metro construction services center should be able to immediately proceed to one of the counter stations 9 through 12 on the 4 th floor after obtaining clearances on the 3 rd floor. The Department of Building and Safety staff at counter stations 9 through 12 should verify that the clearances are resolved, verify that the contractor has a valid contractor's license, require the contractor to affirm a number of declarations directly in PCIS, and then sign the permit application with an electronic signature pad. The Department of Building and Safety staff at this window should then print out a copy of the building permit, stamp the plans as approved, and provide the plans to the applicant.
135	After the Department of Building and Safety staff at counter stations 9 through 12 of the Metro construction services center have stamped the plans as approved and provided the plans to the applicant, the building permit applicant should be able to go to the cashier's station adjacent to counter station 14 to pay their permit fee.
136	Station 14 of the Metro construction services center should screen the plans for completeness, calculate the fees, print out the application with the fee information, and have the applicant complete the notification form. After payment of fees, the cashier should accept the plans for regular plan check. The applicant should not have to return to counter station 13.

Exhibit 14 (3)

Rec. #	Recommendation
137	The Department of Building and Safety should assign responsibility for plan checking and inspection of structural, green code, and disabled access to structural engineering associates as part of regular plan check and to building mechanical inspectors as part of their regular building inspection. In other words, the responsibility for structural plan check should include the structural, green code, and disabled access: one structural engineering associate should be responsible for plan checking all aspects of a building permit plan. Similarly, one building mechanical inspector should be responsible for the inspection of all aspects of a building: structural, green code, and disabled access.
138	The Department should train its plan check and inspection staff to make the transition for plan checking and inspection of structural, green code, and disabled access: it cannot happen instantly. It should continue to provide ongoing training to these staff in the green code and disabled access after the transition. The Department should not lessen its standards or expectations in making this transition.
139	The staff that are performing these green code and disabled access plan check responsibilities at the present time should be reassigned responsibility for regular plan check for structural, green code, and disabled access.
140	The clearance process for regular plan check should be replaced with electronic plan checking. The Department of Building and Safety should route these building permit plans for comment and critique to the other bureaus, divisions, and departments. The building permit applicant should not be required to obtain these clearances.
141	The building code requirements for a clearance by the Department of City Planning for grading when the site is greater than one acre in hillside areas should be eliminated.
142	The clearance by the Department of Transportation of construction nearby the Exposition Light Rail Line per ZI-2351 should be eliminated.
143	The Department of Building and Safety should provide the clearance for structural review of temporary shoring adjacent to a public street, and not the Bureau of Engineering. This will require the mutual development of checklists and standards - by the Department of Building and Safety and by the Bureau of Engineering - that would be utilized for the structural review of shoring. The roles and responsibilities for plan check of temporary shoring should be clarified in a Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of Building and Safety and the Bureau of Engineering, developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.
144	The responsibility for checking whether a building permit applicant has a waste hauler permit should be transferred to the Office of Finance from the Bureau of Street Services.
145	The stormwater pollution mitigation clearance by the Bureau of Sanitation and the Bureau of Sanitation clearance for Low Impact Development should be consolidated since the two clearances duplicate each other.
146	The duplication between the Bureau of Engineering and the Bureau of Sanitation for stormwater plan check of building permit plans should be eliminated. The responsibility for plan checking of building permits for stormwater – on-site, off-site, and for compliance with the Low Impact Development ordinance – should be assigned to the Bureau of Engineering. This will require staffing adjustments in both Bureaus. The cost incurred by the Bureau of Engineering for providing this service on behalf of the Bureau of Sanitation should be charged to the Bureau of Sanitation.
147	The Department of City Planning should provide public information for D and Q conditions on its website.
148	The Bureau of Engineering should provide public street dimensions on its website.
149	The Bureau of Engineering should provide information on its website for dwellings beyond 200' from a sewer mainline and dwellings within 200' from a sewer mainline that require connections.

Exhibit 14 (4)

Rec. #	Recommendation
151	The Fire Department and the Department of Building and Safety should work together to link PCIS and the Fire Schedule Information System (Firelog) so that the Fire Department can obtain proof that the payment of the department's fee has been received by the Department of Building and Safety.
151	The Fire Department and the Department of Building and Safety should work together to link PCIS and the Fire Schedule Information System (Firelog) so that the Fire Department can obtain proof that the payment of the department's fee has been received by the Department of Building and Safety.
152	An applicant seeking a Title 19 or Title 24 plan check by the Fire Department should not be required to return to the Fire Department on the 3 rd floor at the Metro construction services center from the 4th floor of the Metro construction services center to provide proof of payment of the Fire Department's fee.
153	The Department of Building and Safety should evaluate the potential expansion of the use and application of the combination building inspector, the advantages and disadvantages, the associated costs and benefits, and develop recommendations for the consideration of the Office of the City Administrative Officer.
154	Building permit plans should be assigned for regular plan checking one (1) business day after receipt for plan check.
155	The Department of Building and Safety should develop and install a case management system for the building permit plan check process, as planned.
156	The responsibility and the authority of the Department of Building and Safety in managing the building permit plan check process on a citywide basis should be clearly spelled out in a written policy developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.
157	The Department of Building and Safety should provide a team leader for a multi-disciplinary team responsible for keeping the review of a building permit plans on track, making sure issues involving conflicting code or regulatory issues are resolved, charting a clear course for the applicant through the review process, and making sure issues regarding the plan are identified early in the review process.
158	The Building and Safety Department should set formal written building permit plan check cycle time metrics as a joint effort by each of the bureaus, divisions, and departments involved in building permit plan checking. Ultimately, however, the General Manager needs to review these metrics to determine whether processing targets are not unacceptably long.
159	The building permit plan check cycle time metrics should identify those bureaus, divisions, and departments that should be routed building permit plans by type of plan.
160	The building permit plan check cycle time metrics should be differentiated according to whether the plan check is the first review, or a recheck of a revised plan.
161	The building permit plan check cycle time metrics should be designed to enable the structural engineering associates in the Engineering Bureau of the Department of Building and Safety to hold the bureaus, divisions, and departments involved in the building permit plan checking process accountable for the length of time the bureaus, divisions, and departments take to review and approve plans.
162	The building permit plan check cycle time metrics should be published to the Department of Building and Safety's web page, and the Department should utilize <i>BuildLA</i> to report the progress of all of the bureaus, divisions, and departments in meeting these metrics on a monthly basis, including the Department of Building and Safety, publishing the results to its web page.
163	The Department of Building and Safety should evaluate opportunities to reduce the average transaction time for building permits in the construction service centers.
164	The Department of Building and Safety should take the lead in reducing the number of customer transactions by simplifying the processes used in the construction service centers.

Exhibit 14 (5)

Rec. #	Recommendation
165	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the City departments that assign staff to the construction service centers to evaluate the level of staffing necessary to meet the goal of serving 85% of the customers at the construction service centers within 15 minutes.
166	The Department of Building and Safety should report the total time for a customer to complete the process; in other words, the Department should report the total time required from start to finish for all of the transactions required to issue an express or counter plan check permit, not just the time per transaction.
167	The Department of Building and Safety should continuously stream the counter wait times at its construction service centers to its web site.
168	The Department of Building and Safety should report the average counter wait time and transaction time for the various counters in the construction service center to its web site on a monthly basis.
169	The City should designate a "Permit Center Manager" for each construction services center. This "Permit Center Manager" should be responsible for managing all of the service delivery by all of the disciplines in the construction services center (Building and Safety, City Planning, Engineering, Fire, etc.) in terms of the customer experience including the "wait" time. The responsibilities should include assuring timely service to all customers and assisting those customers experiencing excessive "wait" time by working with managers from other bureaus / departments to bring "backup" staff to the counter. That "Permit Center Manager" should be a manager(s) with the Engineering Bureau, Department of Building and Safety.
170	The responsibilities of the "Permit Center Manager" should be clarified in a Memorandum of Agreement developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer with all of the bureaus, divisions, and departments assigned to the construction service centers.

1. THE PROBLEMS WITH THE TIMELY PROCESSING OF BUILDING PERMITS RESULTS FROM THE CLEARANCES PROCESS.

The analysis of the time requirements for the processing of permits for ministerial permits by the Department of Building and Safety and the Fire Department are presented below.

(1) Department of Building and Safety

The Department of Building and Safety does an excellent job of issuing a substantive proportion of building permits over-the-counter and over-the-Internet. In calendar year 2013, as of August 3, 2013, the Department issued 76,020 building permits. The methodology by which the Department issued these permits is presented in the table below.

Type of Permit	# of Permits	% of Permits
e-Permits	16,745	22.0%
Express	36,073	47.5%
Over-the-Counter	15,169	20.0%
Appointment	7	0.0%
Regular	8,026	10.6%
TOTAL	76,020	100.0%

As the table indicates, almost 90% of the building permits issued in 2013, as of August 3, 2013, were issued as e-permits (over the Internet), as express permits, or over-the-counter permits. The level of permits issued over-the-counter and over-the-Internet by the Department of Building and Safety is exceptional. These types of permits are typically issued in an extremely short time frame (e.g., same work day as the permit application is submitted).

The Matrix Consulting Group's project team analyzed the Department's records for applications completed in FY 2011-12 and 2012-13 for regular plan check to assess the amount of calendar days required by the City to complete the initial or first

plan check. There were 19,139 cases completed in FY 2011-12 and 2012-13. Of these cases, 242 included a mistake in the dates, (e.g., an approval date that precedes the filing date or a permit issuing date that precedes the date of permit readiness). Therefore, these 242 cases were excluded from the data, leaving a data set of 18,897 cases. The number of projects completed in FY 2011-12 and 2012-13 provided sufficient data to obtain an understanding of cycle time for regular plan check.

Cycle time for regular plan check was measured in calendar days, for first plan check only, and not subsequent plan checks (e.g., 2nd plan check, 3rd plan check, etc.). This also does not include the cycle time for clearances. First plan check represents the elapsed time from date of initial filing of a permit application to date of approval (if no corrections were made), or date of first corrections (if applicable). This plan check cycle time also represents the cycle time for the Department of Building and Safety only; these plans have not been routed to other departments for plan check, which occurs during clearances. That cycle time is not available in any form except the date the clearance was approved, and not 1st check, 2nd check, or 3rd check.

The cycle time is presented in the table on the following page in terms of the number of calendar days required by the Department of Building and Safety to complete the first plan check.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
Analysis of the Opportunities to Improve Development Services

Type of Construction	# of Permits	Number of Calendar Days			
		25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile	Average
1 to 2 Family Building Addition	3,220	9	12	20	18
1 to 2 Family Building Alteration / Repair	1,439	9	11	15	16
1 to 2 Family – New Building	2,479	10	14	39	22
1 to 2 Family – Electrical	994	8	10	13	13
1 to 2 Family – Mechanical	438	9	10	17	17
Apartment – Building Addition	115	10.75	14	35	21
Apartment – Building Alteration and Repair	841	9	12	16	17
Apartment – New Building	233	14	36	46	32
Apartment - Electrical	372	9	15	41.25	23
Apartment - Mechanical	732	9	15	42	25
Commercial – Building Addition	427	10	13	19	19
Commercial – Building Alteration / Repair	3,735	9	12	15	14
Commercial – New Building	445	10	14	25	21
Commercial - Electrical	1,788	9	12	23	19
Commercial - Mechanical	1,639	9	11	24	18

Overall, the analyses of the building permit plan check cycle times for first or initial plan check is presented below.

- The metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group for the initial plan check for single-family additions, alterations, or repairs is 14 calendar days (or two weeks). The Department meets this metric at the median, but not the average or the 75th percentile.
- The metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group for the initial plan check for new single-family dwellings (or a duplex) is 21 calendar days (or three weeks). The Department bests this metric at the median and is close to the metric at the average, but does not meet the metric at the 75th percentile.
- The metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group for the initial plan check for new apartments is 28 calendar days (or four weeks). The Department does not meet this metric at the median or the 75th percentile, but is close to the metric at the average.

- The metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group for the initial plan check for commercial building additions, alterations, and repairs is 21 calendar days (or 3 weeks). The Department bests this metric at the median, 75th percentile, and the average.
- The metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group for the initial plan check for new commercial / industrial shell buildings or commercial / industrial shell - tenant improvements is 28 calendar days (or 4 weeks). The Department bests this metric at the median, 75th percentile, and the average.

However, this is the first or initial plan check by the Department of Building and Safety. It does not include the number of calendar days for first or initial plan check required by other departments that are called “clearances.” These clearances complicate and delay the timely issuance of building permits, permits that are ostensibly express or over-the-counter. An important focus for simplifying the process in the construction service centers must be focused on reducing the number of different counters, bureaus, and departments that a building permit applicant must visit in obtaining their permit. This will require that some bureaus or departments assume the responsibilities of others or to be re-located to another floor so the customer doesn’t have to travel from one floor to another. It will make it more difficult for that bureau or department, but simpler for the customer. That is the whole point; design the process for the ease and convenience of the customer, not staff.

Examples of these challenges are presented below.

- **Approximately 5% of the express building permits required a clearance, based upon data from fiscal year 2012-13.** At the 75th percentile, it required 5 calendar days to obtain the clearance of other departments for the express building permit, from the date of the plan check submittal by the applicant. The largest preponderance of these express building permits required clearances are noted below.
 - A waste hauler permit clearance by the Bureau of Sanitation (385 permits). The applicant choosing a pre-selected list of waste haulers provided by the Bureau of Sanitation typically accomplishes this.

- A clearance by the Community Redevelopment Agency since the permit is located in an Agency area (373 permits).
- A clearance by the Department of City Planning for a Historic Preservation Overlay Zone or for historic or historical monuments (429 permits). The clearance of the express building permits by the Department of City Planning for a Historic Preservation Overlay Zone or for historic or historical monuments would require applicants seeking express building permits at the Department of Building and Safety offices at 201 North Figueroa Street to travel from that City building to the Office of Historic Resources, Department of City Planning offices at 200 North Spring Street, and then return to the Department of Building and Safety offices at 201 North Figueroa Street. While there are Department of City Planning staff located at 201 North Figueroa Street, these staff do not have the requisite training to provide clearances for permits involving a Historic Preservation Overlay Zone or for historic or historical monuments.

The largest proportion of these express building permit clearances only required a clearance by one department.

- **Approximately 30% of the counter plan check building permits required a clearance in fiscal year 2012-13.** At the 75th percentile, it required 14 calendar days to obtain a clearance from other departments, from the date of the plan check corrections being issued by the Department of Building and Safety (or the date of the submittal by the applicant whichever is later). In a sample of the clearances, over-the-counter building permits required as many as 18 clearances. Some of the more significant type of clearances, by volume, are noted below.
 - A clearance by the Bureau of Engineering for a Bureau of Engineering Processing Fee (2,920 clearances). This clearance requires the applicant, at the Department of Building and Safety offices at 201 North Figueroa Street, to leave the 4th floor, go to the 3rd floor, pay the fee, and then return to the 4th floor, and get back in line.
 - A clearance by the Bureau of Engineering for roof and / or site drainage to street (2,011 clearances). This clearance requires the applicant, at the Department of Building and Safety offices at 201 North Figueroa Street, to leave the 4th floor, go to the 3rd floor, obtain the clearance, and then return to the 4th floor, and get back in line.
 - A clearance by the Department of City Planning for zoning administration / information (1,595 clearances). These clearances can be obtained from the Department of City Planning on the same floor as the Department of

Building and Safety staff, who are assigned to the over-the-counter plan check. The Department of City Planning staff that provide these clearances are located on the 4th floor at station 7.

- A Title 19 clearance by the Fire Department (1,628 clearances), which requires the applicant, at the Department of Building and Safety offices at 201 North Figueroa Street, to leave the 4th floor, go to the 3rd floor to obtain the clearance, and then return to the 4th floor, and get back in line.
- A clearance by the Bureau of Engineering for sewer availability and connection (1,491 clearances), which requires the applicant, at the Department of Building and Safety offices at 201 North Figueroa Street, to leave the 4th floor, go to the 3rd floor, obtain the clearance by the Bureau of Engineering, and then return to the 4th floor, and get back in line.
- A clearance by the Community Redevelopment Agency since the permit is located in an Agency area (1,024 permits). These clearances can be cleared by the Community Redevelopment Agency on the same floor as the Department of Building and Safety staff on the 4th floor. The Community Redevelopment Agency staff are located at station 1. However, this service is only provided by the Community Redevelopment Agency staff Monday through Thursday, not on Friday.

Overall, the amount of time required by the Department of Building and Safety compared favorably to metrics, if the Department can resolve the problems that are generated by the clearances process.

(2) Fire Department

The Matrix Consulting Group was provided with a copy of the plan check log for the Construction Services Unit of the Fire Department. The log provided encompassed plan check submittals during one and one-half weeks; it did not identify the 1st check, 2nd check, 3rd check plan check submittals or the time required by the applicant to respond to corrections. It was simply “date received” and “date completed.” The plan check log included 200 different building permits plan checked by the Construction Services Unit during this time period. Almost 90% of the building permits were plan

checked over-the-counter, and almost all over-the-counter plan checks were completed the same day. This is an excellent level of service.

For the plan checks completed in the “backroom”, 80% were completed as an expedited plan check. The median calendar days required to complete the expedited plan check was twelve (12) calendar days: at the 75th percentile, it was fifteen (15) calendar days. This is an excellent level of service.

None of the “backroom” plan checks (N=4 or 2% of the total volume of plan checks during the one and one-half week sample) that were not plan checked using an expedited process had been completed within a month of submittal. However, it is not possible to determine whether these building permits had been returned to the applicant for corrections within that month’s period of time.

2. THE MINISTERIAL PROCESSES UTILIZED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING AND THE FIRE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE STREAMLINED.

The Department of Building and Safety’s existing express building permit plan check process is presented in the first exhibit at the end of this chapter (exhibit 16). The Department of Building and Safety’s existing counter plan check process is presented in the second exhibit at the end of this chapter (see exhibit 17). The Department of Building and Safety’s existing regular plan check process is presented in the third exhibit at the end of this chapter (see exhibit 18). Fire Department’s existing plan check process for Title 19 and Title 24 structures is presented in the fourth exhibit at the end of this chapter (see exhibit 19). These process descriptions were developed based upon interviews conducted by the Matrix Consulting Group with employees of the Departments. These process descriptions were reviewed with

Departments employees, and modifications made to the process description based upon that feedback.

There are a number of opportunities to streamline these processes. Recommendations regarding streamlining the processes are presented below.

A central tenet of the recommendations for streamlining is to enable the Department of Building and Safety to get as close as possible to a single point of contact for the applicant for counter plan check; in other words, there would be only one counter station for the customer to visit to obtain their building permit. That is not the case at the present time. An applicant may have to visit multiple counter stations to obtain their building permit including building check-in, zoning check-in, building plan submittal, grading, City Planning, Fire, Public Works – Bureau of Engineering, Transportation, etc. For counter plan check, the applicant should have a single point of contact and work with an ad-hoc team of City employees representing multiple disciplines to review, plan check, and approve their building permit plans. In other words, staff comes to the plan and the customer, not the reverse. This represents an altogether different construction service center philosophy than currently employed by the City: a “customer sits in one chair” philosophy eliminating the practice of routing customers from counter station to counter station. The City would bring the staff and needed information to the applicant.

(1) The City Should Establish A Central Point Of Payment For Fees In The Construction Service Centers With the Department of Building and Safety Assigned Responsibility for Providing the Cashiers and Cashiering Systems.

There are many different types of development fees such as permit fees, discretionary review fees, transportation fees, engineering fees, etc. Much of this has

been consolidated with the cashiers employed by the Department of Building and Safety, with the exception of the Bureau of Engineering. The Bureau of Engineering has their own system with their cashiers at their locations.

In addition, applicants often have to visit cashiers multiple times during their visit to the construction service centers and pay fees at many locations.

The City should require that all development-related fees be paid to and processed by the cashiers employed by the Department of Building and Safety. This includes the fees for the Bureau of Engineering and any other Bureau or Department located in the construction service centers. The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop a memorandum of agreement with all of the divisions, bureaus, and departments located in the construction service centers that would clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Building and Safety in collecting and processing all development-related fees received in construction service centers.

Moreover, the City should create a simple universal payment process for all development-related fees that allows permit applicants to set up their accounts on line. In these instances, the permit applicant could pay their fees, without visiting the cashiers employed by the Department of Building and Safety, by allowing their fees to be posted and charged on-line to their account on the next business day. For applicants who do not visit construction service centers often, the Department should enable a permit applicant to set up a temporary account during their visit and pay the total fees at the conclusion of their visit.

The process should allow the payment transaction to be completed at the same location where the service is provided similar to department stores.

Recommendation #116: The City should require that all development-related fees received in construction service centers be paid to and processed by the cashiers employed by the Department of Building and Safety.

Recommendation #117: The City should create a simple universal payment process for all development-related fees that allows permit applicants to set up their accounts for payment on line. In these instances, the permit applicant could pay their fees, without visiting the cashiers employed by the Department of Building and Safety, by allowing their fees to be posted and charged on-line to their account on the next business day.

Recommendation #118: The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop a memorandum of agreement with all of the divisions, bureaus, and departments located in the construction service centers that would clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Building and Safety in collecting and processing all development-related fees received in construction service centers.

Recommendation #119: For applicants who do not visit construction service centers often, the Department of Building and Safety should enable a building permit applicant to set up a temporary account during their visit and pay the total fees at the conclusion of their visit.

(2) The Reference To the Money Back Guarantee for the Express Building Permit Should Be Removed from the Municipal Code.

Section 98.0109 (a) of the Los Angeles Municipal Code offers a money back guarantee if an express permit customer waits more than 30 minutes in the queue or more than 60 minutes to complete permit processing from the time the service begins.

In 2012-13, there were approximately 33 customers (or 0.1% of the total) who waited 30 minutes or more for express permit service at the Metro construction services center, approximately 1,102 customers at Van Nuys (or 3.7% of the total), and approximately 55 customers in West Los Angeles (or 0.9%).

This reference should be removed from the Municipal Code.

This level of service is largely dependent on staff resources, and without the staff resources, the City is guaranteed to pay the money or permit fee back to the customer. This guarantee should not be included in the Municipal Code.

In addition, the solution to these problems is to provide a better level of service for express plan check that will require additional staff at peak customer service demand, and not to refund permit fees, which will inhibit the Department's ability to provide timely service.

Recommendation #120: The reference within the Municipal Code that offers a money back guarantee if an express permit customer waits more than 30 minutes in the queue or more than 60 minutes to complete the permit processing from the time the service begins should be removed from the Municipal Code.

(3) The Department of Building and Safety Should Issue Solar Photovoltaic Permits Less Than 4kW On-Line Over the Internet.

Solar photovoltaic permits, in the area served by Metro, are issued through the express permit center at the 1st floor of 201 North Figueroa Street. However, solar permits also require clearance by the Fire Department on the 3rd floor of 201 North Figueroa Street and the Department of Building and Safety's zoning counter on the 4th floor of 201 North Figueroa Street. The process for clearance solar photovoltaic permits is enumerated below.

If the obtaining an electrical permit for a solar photovoltaic for a single-family residence or a duplex, the applicant must obtain at least two clearances, one from the Fire Department's Construction Services and one from DBS's zoning counter. To obtain the clearance from the Fire Department's Construction Services unit, the applicant goes to the 4th floor to obtain a Q-Matic ticket and then goes to the 3rd floor and waits for the Q-number to be called. When called, the Fire Department enters an application in the Fire Department's database and prints out an application. The Fire Department then reviews the sketch of the proposed placement of the solar panels. To approve the clearance, Technical Services stamps the applicant's permit application to provide

evidence that the Fire Department has approved the clearance. The Fire Department keeps the Fire Department application until the applicant returns. All solar photovoltaic permits also require a zoning clearance from the DBS's Zoning Counter on the 4th floor. To obtain this clearance, the applicant goes to the 4th floor and obtains a Q-Matic ticket to get into the queue for the Zoning Counter. The applicant then proceeds to the Zoning Counter when called. The Zoning Counter's staff reviews the clearance and signs off in PCIS. After the two clearances are resolved, the applicant returns to Express Permit Center on the 1st floor and obtains a Q-Matic ticket to get into the queue. When called, the applicant would complete Steps 1.10-1.12 as described in the process description in Exhibit 5 at the end of this chapter. Prior to proceeding to the cashier, the applicant would pick the Fire Department's application on the 3rd floor. The Fire Department stamps the Fire Department application and directs the applicant to the 4th floor to pay the Fire Department's fee of \$176. The applicant would complete Steps 1.13 and 1.14 (as described in the process description in Exhibit 5 at the end of this chapter) by going to the Cashier on the 4th floor.

This is an arduous process, for what should be a simple building permit. The process should be simplified.

First, the Department of Building and Safety, in conjunction with the Fire Department and the Department of City Planning, should develop standard building permit plans and checklists for solar photovoltaic permits for single-family dwellings. The *East Bay Green Corridor* in Berkeley, California has already developed standard plans and checklists, as an example. These standard plans involve the installation of a solar PV systems utilizing 2 wire multiple string central inverters, not exceeding a total AC output of 10kW, in single family dwellings having a 3 wire electrical service not larger than 225 amps at a voltage of 120 / 240. The plan covers Crystalline and Multi-Crystalline type modules where all the modules are mounted on the roof of the single-family dwelling.

Second, the Department should follow the example set by the City and County of San Francisco in allowing the issuance of solar photovoltaic permits over the

Internet. San Francisco allows the issuance of solar photovoltaic permits under 4 kW with no review beside the City and County's Department of Building Inspection if these plans meet all requirements (as established in the checklists). These types of solar photovoltaic permit applications for systems 4 kW and under can now be submitted online, paid for online and, once approved, printed remotely. To facilitate the processing of solar photovoltaic permits, the City and County's Department of Building Inspection developed an *Electrical Permit Application for Roof-Mounted Solar Voltaic Systems*.

Recommendation #121: The Department of Building and Safety, in conjunction with the Fire Department and Department of City Planning, should develop standard building permit plans and checklists for solar photovoltaic permits for single-family dwellings for systems 4 kW and under.

Recommendation #122: The Department of Building and Safety should enable the issuance of solar photovoltaic permits over the Internet for systems under 4 kW with no review besides the Department of Building and Safety if these plans meet all requirements by using the standard plans and checklists.

Recommendation #123: The Department of Building and Safety should publicize the availability of on-line permitting for solar photovoltaic permits for single-family dwellings for systems 4 kW and under with the primary solar contractors in Los Angeles County.

(4) The Department of Building and Safety Should Establish a Cashiering Station in the Express Permit Center at the Metro Construction Services Center, As Planned.

At the present time, after the applicant for the express building permit has obtained clearances from other City departments or bureaus, the counter clerk for the Department of Building and Safety in the Express Permit Center at the Metro construction services center prints out the building permit and a one-page document with the amount of the fee, and provides it to the applicant. The applicant goes from the 1st floor to the 4th floor the Metro construction services center to pay the Express

Permit fee to a Department of Building and Safety cashier. The cashier collects the fees from the applicant, and issues a receipt.

The applicant should not have to leave the Express Permit Center to pay for the building permit.

The Department of Building and Safety should establish a cashier station in the Express Permit Center of the Metro construction services center. The Express Permit applicant should be able to obtain and pay for their permit in the same location at the Metro construction services center.

Recommendation #124: The Department of Building and Safety should establish a cashier station in the express permit center at the Metro construction services center, as planned. The express building permit applicant should be able to obtain and pay for their permit in the same location.

(5) The Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety Should Work Together to Simplify the Clearances Required for Express Building Permits.

If the property of the express permit applicant is located in a Historical Preservation Overlay Zone, a clearance is required from City Planning's Historic Preservation Unit located at City Hall. The applicant leaves the construction services center, travels to City Hall and meets with one of the Historic Preservation Unit Staff. The Historic Preservation Unit Staff review the clearance and approve it in PCIS. The applicant then returns to the express permit center at the construction service centers to complete the application process. The applicant obtains a Q-Matic ticket and waits for the Q-number to be called.

In another example, if the property for which the permit is issued is located in the Community Redevelopment Area, the applicant must obtain a clearance from the Community Redevelopment Agency. The applicant leaves the express permit center

on the 1st floor, goes to the 4th floor and obtains a Q-Matic ticket and waits in the queue for the Q-number to be called. When the Q-Matic ticket number is called, the applicant proceeds to the Community Redevelopment Agency counter to resolve the clearance. The Community Redevelopment Agency counter staff review and approve the clearance in PCIS. When the clearance is obtained, the applicant returns to the Express Permit counter located on the 1st floor to complete the application process. The applicant obtains a Q-Matic ticket and waits for the Q-number to be called. In fiscal year 2012-13, there were a total of 4,688 Q-matic tickets issued for the Community Redevelopment Agency at the Metro construction services center. This is equivalent to 21 customers on a daily basis or approximately 2 an hour.

Express permits are simple construction projects. The projects involve window and door change-outs, kitchen and bathroom remodels, chimney repair, general rehabilitation (non-structural changes less than 10% of the replacement cost of the building), etc.

Yet these simple building permits will require, in some instances, the clearance of the Department of City Planning (e.g., termite damage / dry rot repair less than 10% of the replacement cost, the addition of sill plate anchor bolts and cripple wall plywood to the foundation, or re-plastering an existing swimming pool). Requiring clearances for these types of construction is inappropriate.

The clearance process for express plan check should be simplified. This should include the development of standard conditions of approval by the Department of City Planning that could be utilized by the Department of Building and Safety to issue the express building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning (e.g.,

Christmas and pumpkin sale lots). Other instances could involve the use of checklists, standard drawings, the provision of training, and the initial quality control by the Department of City Planning that could be utilized by the Department of Building and Safety to issue the express building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning.

The Department of City Planning should work with the Department of Building and Safety to develop the capacity within the Department of Building and Safety staff of the express permit center to simplify the express building permit process, where practical, so that the Department of Building and Safety can issue the express building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #125: The Department of City Planning should work with the Department of Building and Safety to simplify the express building permit process so that, where practical, the Department of Building and Safety can issue an express building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #126: The Department of City Planning should develop standard conditions of approval that could be utilized by the Department of Building and Safety to issue an express building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning (e.g., Christmas and pumpkin sale lots) and develop checklists, standard drawings, provide training, and initial quality control to simplify the express building permit process, where practical.

(6) The Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety Should Work Together to Simplify the Clearances Required for Counter Plan Check Building Permits

A counter plan check is an over-the-counter plan check for a building permit that requires plans to be submitted for plan check. It is more complicated construction than that of an express permit, but still over-the-counter.

In some instances the building permit applicant is required to obtain clearances from two different counters staffed by the Department of City Planning. For example,

an applicant for a building permit in a Historical Preservation Overlay Zone is required to obtain a clearance from the City Planning's Historic Preservation Unit located at City Hall. The applicant leaves the construction services center, travels to City Hall and meets with one of the Historic Preservation Unit staff. The Historic Preservation Unit staff reviews the clearance and approves (or not) it in PCIS. The applicant then returns to the construction service centers to complete the application process. If the building permit also involved an entitlement permit, the applicant will also have to obtain the clearance from the City Planning's staff in the construction services center.

There are multiple instances in which a counter plan check applicant must meet with staff of the Department of City Planning for clearances in which standard conditions, checklists, standard drawings, the provision of training, and the initial quality control by the Department of City Planning could be utilized by the Department of Building and Safety to issue the counter building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning. This could such examples as tenant improvements involving a change in use, but no change in parking area; commercial building permits for ADA improvements for the interior only; tenant improvements involving non-bearing partitions and / or suspended ceiling – interior work only; demolition permits for residential accessory buildings; etc.

Recommendation #127: The staff assigned by the Department of City Planning to the construction service centers should provide the clearances for a building permit in a Historical Preservation Overlay Zone.

Recommendation #128: The Department of City Planning should work with the Department of Building and Safety to simplify the counter building permit process so that, where practical, the Department of Building and Safety can issue the counter building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #129: The Department of City Planning should develop standard conditions of approval that could be utilized by the Department of Building and Safety to issue a counter building permit without clearance by the Department of City Planning and develop checklists, standard drawings, provide training, and initial quality control to simplify the counter building permit process, where practical.

- (7) The Staff of the Department of Building and Safety Should Determine Whether the Counter Plan Check Building Permit Application is Complete, Eligible for Counter Plan Check, and Calculate the Plan Check Fees at One Counter Station at the Metro Construction Services Center, and Not Two Counter Stations.**

At the present time, the building permit applicant at the Metro construction services center, after obtaining their Q-matic number at the intake station, proceeds to counter station 14 to screen their building permit plans for completeness and to determine whether the plans can be checked over the counter. This process typically requires six (6) minutes.

The customer then proceeds to one of the four counter stations 9 through 12 to calculate the plan check fees, and then returns to the cashier station adjacent to counter station 14 to pay the plan check fee.

This process should be modified. One counter station, if the plan check document is complete and can be plan checked over-the-counter, should also calculate the plan check fees, not stations 9 through 12. Only then, should the customer pay the plan check fee at the cashier station adjacent to station 14. The intermediate step at counter station 9 through 12, where the plan check fees are calculated, should be eliminated. One counter station should screen the plans for completeness, determine whether the plans can be checked over the counter, and calculate the fees.

Recommendation #130: The building permit applicant at the Metro construction services center should not be required to (1) proceed to counter station 14 for screening of their building permit plans for completeness and determining whether their plans can be checked over the counter, (2) proceed to one of the four counter stations 9 through 12 to have their plan check fee calculated, and then (3) return to the cashier station adjacent to counter station 14 to pay the plan check fee.

Recommendation #131: One counter station on the 4th floor of the Metro construction services center should screen building permit plans for completeness, determine whether plans can be checked over the counter, and calculate the building permit plan check fees for counter plan check, if the plan check document is complete and can be plan checked over-the-counter. Only then, should the customer pay the plan check fee at the cashier station adjacent to station 14.

(8) The Bureau of Engineering Should Provide Services on the 4th Floor of the Metro Construction Services Center.

Exhibit 17 presents the business process for a building permit for the proposed construction of a single-family addition in a specific plan area. A common clearance for an addition for a single-family residence is for a change in the drainage conditions on the site. If the project requires a new drain or alters the existing drainage system, the Department of Building and Safety would require a clearance by the Bureau of Engineering. To obtain the clearance, the applicant would leave the 4th floor, and go to the 3rd floor to meet with the Bureau of Engineering.

The staff of the Bureau of Engineering assigned to the 3rd floor of the Metro construction services center should be moved to the 4th floor.

This will require a space analysis of the staff required on the 4th floor, including the Bureau of Engineering. However, applicants should not be required to go to the 3rd floor to resolve these clearances, return to the counter station 14 on the 4th floor, and get back in line.

Recommendation #132: The Bureau of Engineering staff assigned to the 3rd floor of the Metro construction services center should be located on the 4th floor of the Metro construction services center.

Recommendation #133: Building permit customers should not be required to go to the 3rd floor of the Metro construction services center to resolve the clearances with the Bureau of Engineering, and then return to the 4th floor, and get back in line for service.

- (9) The Department of Building and Safety Staff at Counter Station 9 through 12 at the Metro Construction Services Center Should Verify that Clearances Have Been Obtained, Print A Copy of the Permit, and Provide the Approved Plans to the Applicant, and Then the Applicant Should Pay Their Building Permit Fee.**

At the present time, there are a multitude of stations that the customer has to visit after obtaining their clearances. The customer visits the intake station, counter station 14, one of the counter stations 9 through 12, the cashier station adjacent to counter station 14, and then returns to one of the counter stations 9 through 12. This business process requires five different steps after the customer has obtained the clearances on the 3rd floor.

The detail regarding these steps is presented below.

- After obtaining clearances, the applicant returns to the intake station on the 4th floor of the Metro construction services center.
- Once the Q-matic number is called, the applicant goes to counter station 14. The Department of Building and Safety staff at this window may screen the corrections and check in PCIS whether the clearances are resolved.
- Otherwise, the Department of Building and Safety staff pushes the Q-Matic button to transfer the applicant to Windows 9 to 12 for plan re-check and to verify that the corrections are made and clearances are resolved. If the contractor is pulling the permit, the Department of Building and Safety staff verifies that the contractor has a valid contractor's license, require the contractor to affirm a number of declarations directly in PCIS, and sign the permit application with an electronic signature pad. The Department of Building and Safety staff at this window then prints out a copy of the building permit.

- The applicant goes to the cashier work station adjacent to counter station 14, and pays the permit fee. The cashier stamps the receipt information on the permit application. The cashier also provides the applicant the inspection card.
- The applicant returns to one of the counter stations 9 through 12 and provides the proof of payment to the Department of Building and Safety staff. Department of Building and Safety staff stamps the plans as approved, and provides the plans to the applicant.

This process should be simplified.

The customer should be able to immediately proceed to one of the counter stations 9 through 12 after obtaining the clearances. The Department of Building and Safety staff at counter stations 9 through 12 should verify that the clearances are resolved, verify that the contractor has a valid contractor's license, require the contractor to affirm a number of declarations directly in PCIS, and then sign the permit application with an electronic signature pad. The staff of the Department of Building and Safety counter stations 9 through 12 should then print out a copy of the building permit, stamp the building permit plans as approved, and then provide the plans to the applicant.

Then the applicant should go the cashier's station adjacent to counter station 14 to pay their permit fee.

This reduces the number of steps to two.

Recommendation #134: The building permit applicant on the 3rd floor of the Metro construction services center should be able to immediately proceed to one of the counter stations 9 through 12 on the 4th floor after obtaining clearances on the 3rd floor. The Department of Building and Safety staff at counter stations 9 through 12 should verify that the clearances are resolved, verify that the contractor has a valid contractor's license, require the contractor to affirm a number of declarations directly in PCIS, and then sign the permit application with an electronic signature pad. The staff at these windows should then print out a copy of the building permits, stamp the plans as approved, and provide the plans to the applicant.

Recommendation #135: After the Department of Building and Safety staff at counter stations 9 through 12 of the Metro construction services center have stamped the plans as approved and provided the plans to the applicant, the building permit applicant should be able to go to the cashier's station adjacent to counter station 14 to pay their permit fee.

(10) The Department of Building and Safety Staff Should Assign Responsibility for Pre-Permit Payment Activities at One Station, Not Two Stations.

The process for submittal of building permit plans for regular plan check is presented in the paragraphs below.

- The regular building permit plan check applicant at the Metro construction services center, after obtaining their Q-matic number at the intake counter station, proceeds to counter station 14 to screen the plans for completeness. This process typically requires six (6) minutes.
- The customer then proceeds to counter station 13 where the staff calculates the plan check fee based on the valuation of the work. The staff prints out the application with the fee information and directs the applicant to the cashier counter station.
- The applicant then proceeds to the cashier station and gets in line. When called, the applicant pays the plan check fee.
- The applicant returns to counter station 13. The staff at counter station 13 verifies that the applicant has paid the plan check fee, reviews the plans and estimates the number of hours needed for the plan check, and then has the applicant complete a notification form to notify the applicant when the plans have been checked and are ready for pick-up. The plans are then accepted for plan check at counter station 13.

This process should be modified.

The intermediate step at counter station 13, at which the plan check fees are calculated, the applicant completes the notification form, and the plans are accepted for plan check, should be eliminated. Station 14 should screen the plans for completeness, calculate the fees, print out the application with the fee information, and have the applicant complete the notification form. After payment of fees, the cashier should accept the plans for regular plan check.

The applicant should not have to return to counter station 13.

Recommendation #136: Station 14 should screen the plans for completeness, calculate the fees, print out the application with the fee information, and have the applicant complete the notification form. After payment of fees, the cashier should accept the plans for regular plan check. The applicant should not have to return to counter station 13.

(11) The Responsibility for Structural Plan Check, Green Code Plan Check, and Disabled Access Plan Check Should Be Consolidated with One Structural Engineering Associate.

At the present time, three different plan check staff in three different units are responsible for plan checking structural, green code, and disabled access.

In the Metro construction services center, four staff are assigned to disabled access plan check: a Building Civil Engineer I and three Office Engineering Technician II / III positions. An Office Engineering Technician I plan checks for disabled access in the Van Nuys construction services center, but there are no staff dedicated to plan check for disabled access in West Los Angeles or San Pedro.

For green code plan check, one staff is assigned to plan check for green code compliance in the West Los Angeles office: a Structural Engineer Associate. There are, in addition, two (2) Building Mechanical Inspectors assigned to the West Los Angeles office responsible for conducting building inspections for compliance with the green code. At the Metro construction services center, there are two Structural Engineering Associates and an Office Engineering Technician assigned to plan check for green code compliance. There are, in addition, five (5) Building Mechanical Inspectors and Senior Building Mechanical Inspectors assigned to the Metro construction services center responsible for conducting building inspections for compliance with the green code. The Van Nuys Office is assigned a Structural Engineering Associate for plan

checking for green code compliance and four Building Mechanical Inspectors conducting building inspections for compliance with the green code. All of these staff are supervised by a Building Civil Engineer.

In the experience of the Matrix Consulting Group, this is not typical, even in larger cities. Typically, a structural engineering associate will plan check for all three aspects - structural, green code, and disabled access – at the same.

The current practice can result in service level problems for the applicant such as two different verification conferences with the Department to verify that the building permit plans are correct and clearances are resolved: one with the structural engineering associate responsible for the structural plan check and another for green codes plan check.

The Department of Building and Safety should assign responsibility for plan checking and inspection of structural, green code, and disabled access to structural engineering associates as part of regular plan check and to building mechanical inspectors as part of their regular building inspection. The Department should train these staff to make the transition: it cannot happen instantly. It should continue to provide ongoing training to these staff in the green code and disabled access after the transition.

The Department should not lessen its standards or expectations in making this transition.

The staff that are performing these green code and disabled access plan check responsibilities at the present time should be reassigned responsibility for regular plan check for structural, green code, and disabled access.

Recommendation #137: The Department of Building and Safety should assign responsibility for plan checking and inspection of structural, green code, and disabled access to structural engineering associates as part of regular plan check and to building mechanical inspectors as part of their regular building inspection. In other words, the responsibility for structural plan check should include the structural, green code, and disabled access: one structural engineering associate should be responsible for plan checking all aspects of a building permit plan. Similarly, one building mechanical inspector should be responsible for the inspection of all aspects of a building: structural, green code, and disabled access.

Recommendation #138: The Department should train its plan check and inspection staff to make the transition for plan checking and inspection of structural, green code, and disabled access: it cannot happen instantly. It should continue to provide ongoing training to these staff in the green code and disabled access after the transition. The Department should not lessen its standards or expectations in making this transition.

Recommendation #139: The staff that are performing these green code and disabled access plan check responsibilities at the present time should be reassigned responsibility for regular plan check for structural, green code, and disabled access.

(12) The Building Permit Plan Check Clearance Process for Regular Plan Check Should Be Replaced with Electronic Plan Check; the Building Permit Applicant Should Not Be Required to Obtain Clearances.

At the present time, the building permit applicant is responsible for obtaining clearances for building permit plans after the Department of Building and Safety has completed their initial regular plan check. For example, the applicant for a new single-family residence would be required to obtain clearances from the Fire Department, Public Works - Bureau of Sanitation, and Public Works - Bureau of Engineering.

The clearance process for regular plan check should be eliminated. It should be replaced with electronic plan checking.

The Department of Building and Safety should route these building permit plans electronically for comment and critique to the Fire Department, Public Works - Bureau of Sanitation, and Public Works - Bureau of Engineering, etc.

Recommendation #140: The clearance process for regular plan check should be replaced with electronic plan checking. The Department of Building and Safety should route these building permit plans for comment and critique to the other bureaus, divisions, and departments. The building permit applicant should not be required to obtain these clearances.

(13) The Department Of Building and Safety Should Reduce The Number of Clearances Required For Express and Over-The-Counter Building Permit Plan Checking.

At the present time, there are too many clearances required for building permits during the plan check process. The Department of Building and Safety should take steps to simplify this plan check process by reducing the number of clearances.

Recommendations to reduce the number of clearances are presented below.

- **The building code requirements for a clearance by the Department of City Planning for grading when the site is greater than one acre in hillside areas should be eliminated.** This will require updating of the City's building code. The grading section of the building codes contains a section that requires discretionary review for grading of any hillside site greater than one acre, no matter the amount of grading. Even a counter plan check permit for a single family addition with grading will require discretionary review, regardless of the scope of the project. The City has already developed a hillside ordinance with grading requirements – the Baseline Hillside Ordinance. The references within the building code are duplicative and unnecessary.

The Department of Building and Safety should check building permit plans for the grading exceptions and exemptions allowed under the Baseline Hillside Ordinance, and any building permit plans that do not meet those requirements should be referred to the Department of Building and Safety for clearance.

- **The clearance by the Department of Transportation of construction nearby the Exposition Light Rail Line per ZI-2351 should be eliminated.** This is no longer applicable since the construction of the Rail Line has been completed.
- **The Department of Building and Safety should provide the clearance for structural review of a temporary shoring adjacent to a Public Street and not the Bureau of Engineering.** This is a duplication of the Department of Building and Safety's review for a shoring permit. This will require the mutual development of checklists and standards - by the Department of Building and Safety and by the Bureau of Engineering - that would be utilized for the structural review of shoring, and the development of a Memorandum of Agreement that clarifies roles and responsibilities.

- **The responsibility for checking whether a building permit applicant has a waste hauler permit should be transferred to the Office of Finance from the Bureau of Street Services.** At the present time, the permit applicant must proceed from the construction service centers to the office of the Bureau of Street Services to obtain a waste hauler permit. Contractors and waste haulers responsible for handling construction and demolition waste must obtain a Waste Hauler Permit prior to collecting, hauling and transporting construction and demolition waste from within the City. This responsibility should be transferred to the Office of Finance, at the construction service centers, who are already checking for business licenses and issuing business licenses.
- **The stormwater pollution mitigation clearance by the Bureau of Sanitation and the clearance for Low Impact Development by the Bureau of Sanitation should be consolidated since the two clearances duplicate each other.** The Bureau of Sanitation reviews all plans for new development and redevelopment projects to ensure that the appropriate best management practices are incorporated to address stormwater pollution prevention goals as set forth in the Low Impact Development ordinance. The other clearance by the Bureau of Sanitation – the stormwater pollution mitigation - duplicates this effort and is unnecessary.
- **The duplication between the Bureau of Engineering and the Bureau of Sanitation for stormwater plan check of building permit plans should be eliminated.** One Bureau in the Public Works Department – the Bureau of Sanitation – is responsible for on-site stormwater plan checking of building permit plans. Another Bureau in the Public Works Department – the Bureau of Engineering – is responsible for the off-site stormwater plan checking including roof – waste drainage to the street. This division of responsibilities is inappropriate. The responsibility for plan checking of building permits for stormwater – on-site, off-site, and for compliance with the Low Impact Development ordinance – should be assigned to the Bureau of Engineering. This will require staffing adjustments in both Bureaus. The cost incurred by the Bureau of Engineering for providing this service on behalf of the Bureau of Sanitation should be charged to the Bureau of Sanitation.

Recommendation #141: The building code requirements for a clearance by the Department of City Planning for grading when the site is greater than one acre in hillside areas should be eliminated.

Recommendation #142: The clearance by the Department of Transportation of construction nearby the Exposition Light Rail Line per ZI-2351 should be eliminated.

Recommendation #143: The Department of Building and Safety should provide the clearance for structural review of temporary shoring adjacent to a public street, and not the Bureau of Engineering. This will require the mutual

development of checklists and standards - by the Department of Building and Safety and by the Bureau of Engineering - that would be utilized for the structural review of shoring. The roles and responsibilities for plan check of temporary shoring should be clarified in a Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of Building and Safety and the Bureau of Engineering, developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.

Recommendation #144: The responsibility for checking whether a building permit applicant has a waste hauler permit should be transferred to the Office of Finance from the Bureau of Street Services.

Recommendation #145: The stormwater pollution mitigation clearance by the Bureau of Sanitation and the Bureau of Sanitation clearance for Low Impact Development should be consolidated since the two clearances duplicate each other.

Recommendation #146: The duplication between the Bureau of Engineering and the Bureau of Sanitation for stormwater plan check of building permit plans should be eliminated. The responsibility for plan checking of building permits for stormwater – on-site, off-site, and for compliance with the Low Impact Development ordinance – should be assigned to the Bureau of Engineering. This will require staffing adjustments in both Bureaus. The cost incurred by the Bureau of Engineering for providing this service on behalf of the Bureau of Sanitation should be charged to the Bureau of Sanitation.

(14) Additional Information Should Be Provided On the City's Web Site To Streamline the Building Permit Clearance Process.

There are a number of instances in which clearances are required by departments since information is only available in hard copy. Recommendations regarding the provision of information on-line, versus the existing hard copy, are provided below.

- **The Department of City Planning should provide public information for D and Q conditions on its website.** This information is important for a Case Management feasibility study of a project.
- **The Bureau of Engineering should provide public street dimensions on its website.** This would enable the Department of Building and Safety to verify the street width or continuous paved roadway from the driveway apron to the boundary of the Hillside Area for the Hillside Ordinance required for Fire Department truck and engine company clearances. If this information was available, it would reduce the necessary clearances required by the Bureau of

Engineering except for those that require further in-depth site investigation by the Bureau of Engineering. This would reduce the number of clearances required for the street width or continuous paved roadway from the driveway apron to the boundary of the Hillside Area for the Hillside Ordinance by an estimated 75%.

- **The Bureau of Engineering should provide information on its website for dwellings beyond 200' from a sewer mainline and dwellings within 200' from a sewer mainline that require connections.** Once this information is available, it will reduce the necessary clearances by the Bureau of Engineering. These clearances could be provided by the Department of Building and Safety
- **The Bureau of Engineering should improve the accessibility of its information for the public by providing a link in ZIMAS directly to Navigate LA for a site's sewers, utility lines location, required dedication and street dimensions for hillside areas.** The Bureau should ease the access of the public to this information to reduce its own workload generated by phone calls or counter inquiries for this information.

The City should place as much public information on its web site as possible to provide a more seamless and transparent data experience for the public, reduce the extent of telephone and counter inquiries requesting this basic information, and reduce the number of clearances required.

Recommendation #147: The Department of City Planning should provide public information for D and Q conditions on its website.

Recommendation #148: The Bureau of Engineering should provide public street dimensions on its website.

Recommendation #149: The Bureau of Engineering should provide information on its website for dwellings beyond 200' from a sewer mainline and dwellings within 200' from a sewer mainline that require connections.

Recommendation #150: The Bureau of Engineering should improve the accessibility of its information for the public by providing a link in ZIMAS directly to Navigate LA for a site's sewers, utility lines locations, required dedications and street dimensions for hillside areas.

(15) Some Minor Modifications Should Be Made In the Fire Plan Check Process.

The Fire Department's existing Title 19 or Title 24 plan check process is presented in the ninth exhibit at the end of this chapter (exhibit 19). This process description was developed based upon interviews conducted by the Matrix Consulting Group with employees of the Fire Department. The process description was reviewed with Fire Department employees, and modifications made to the process description based upon that feedback.

There is a limited opportunity to streamline the Fire Department plan check process.

At the present time, an applicant seeking a Title 19 or Title 24 plan check or Fire Alarm plan check by the Fire Department must obtain a ticket from the Q-Matic System on the 4th floor at the Metro construction services center, go to the Fire Department plan check counter located on the 3rd floor and wait for their Q-Number to be called. After the Fire Department completes the plan check, the Fire Department provides the applicant with the invoice and directs the applicant to pay the fees on the 4th floor. The applicant goes to the 4th floor to pay the Fire Department's fees. After paying the appropriate plan check fees, the applicant returns to the Fire Department on the 3rd floor. The plan checker records that the plan check fees have been paid in the Department's Fire Schedule Information System (Firelog).

The Fire Department and the Department of Building and Safety should work together to link PCIS and the Fire Schedule Information System (Firelog) so that the Fire Department can obtain proof that the payment of the fee has been received by the Department of Building and Safety. The applicant should not be required to return to

the Fire Department on the 3rd floor of the Metro construction services center with proof of payment.

Recommendation #151: The Fire Department and the Department of Building and Safety should work together to link PCIS and the Fire Schedule Information System (Firelog) so that the Fire Department can obtain proof that the payment of the department's fee has been received by the Department of Building and Safety.

Recommendation #152: An applicant seeking a Title 19 or Title 24 plan check by the Fire Department should not be required to return to the Fire Department on the 3rd floor at the Metro construction services center from the 4th floor of the Metro construction services center to provide proof of payment of the Fire Department's fee.

(16) The Department of Building and Safety Should Evaluate the Expansion of the Use of Combination Building Inspectors.

The benefits in the use of a combination inspection program are enormous in terms of efficiencies gained by the City. Rather than having three different inspection trades visit a construction site, a combination inspector would visit the construction site with knowledge of the different trades: building, electrical, and plumbing / mechanical.

The Department already utilizes a combination building inspector for one and two family residential units. It uses specialty inspectors for all other construction; these specialty inspectors include building inspectors, electrical inspectors, and plumbing / mechanical inspectors.

The Department, at one time, used the combination inspector concept for residential development of ten units or less. The Department conducted an 18-month pilot program for combination inspection of small commercial projects in 1977, but the concept was never implemented after the pilot project.

Other agencies tend to use combination building inspectors more extensively than the Department of Building and Safety.

This requires that building inspectors possess multiple certifications. For example, Clark County, Nevada, utilizes a classification of Commercial Combination Inspector with the requirement that the applicant must possess valid International Code Council or other nationally recognized inspection certificate in four (4) commercial inspection areas to include Building, Plumbing, Mechanical, and Electrical at the time of their application for an inspection position. Clark County, Nevada compensates the Commercial Combination Inspector classification at a higher rate than non-combination inspector classifications, but the benefit of the use of combination inspectors is enormous.

The effort of creating combination inspection is a very time consuming process and Los Angeles needs to be prepared for the impacts incurred during the transition period. A great deal of training is needed to convert specialty inspection staff to combination inspectors and training consumes time and consequently reduces productivity while being conducted. Therefore prior to starting a combination inspection program, additional temporary staffing resources should be acquired to offset the deficiencies associated with the training effort.

Recommendation #153: The Department of Building and Safety should evaluate the potential expansion of the use and application of the combination building inspector, the advantages and disadvantages, the associated costs and benefits, and develop recommendations for the consideration of the Office of the City Administrative Officer.

3. THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND SAFETY SHOULD IMPROVE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE MINISTERIAL PROCESSES.

At the same time that the Department of Building and Safety is streamlining the ministerial process, it should also enhance the management of that process. Opportunities to enhance the management of the process are presented below.

(1) Newly Received Building Permit Plans Requiring Regular Plan Check Should Be Assigned for Plan Check the Next Business Day.

At the present time, building permit plan check supervisors assign plans to their staff to start plan checking once a week: every Thursday afternoon. These plans are stored in three bin rooms: one for structural, one for green, and one for disabled access. These plans may sit as long as five business days before the plan check supervisor reviews the plan, evaluates the current workload of his or her plan check staff, and assigns the plan for plan check. These plan check supervisors do not assign plans unless there is workload capacity, so the Department, as previously recommended, should fill vacant positions and develop contracts with consulting plan check engineers to outsource peak workload, or develop alternative staffing solutions (e.g., re-hiring retired structural engineering associates) so that plans do not sit waiting.

Once that capacity is developed, these plans should not be assigned once a week. The plan check supervisors should assign the plans for plan check on a daily basis.

Recommendation #154: Building permit plans should be assigned for regular plan checking one (1) business day after receipt for plan check.

(2) The Department of Building and Safety Should Install a Case Management System for Regular Plan Checking.

The Department should, as it already plans, install a case management system for regular plan checking. This is not pre-entitlement case processing, also known as case management. This is assigning a member of the plan checking staff the responsibility for managing the building permit process to assure that the process – on a citywide basis – is timely, predictable, and coordinated.

The case manager –structural engineering associates in the Engineering Bureau of the Department – should be empowered as a team leader of a multi-discipline review team. This feature is a critical to the effective management of the City's building permit plan check process. The structural engineering associates in the Engineering Bureau of the Department should make the City's building permit process seamless to the customer. The structural engineering associates in the Engineering Bureau of the Department would manage the building permit plan check by the various disciplines (fire, engineering, planning, transportation, etc.), set processing deadlines for the review of the application by this multi-disciplinary team (based upon formally adopted cycle time objectives adopted by the City), and hold the multi-disciplinary team accountable for meeting those processing deadlines. Using *BuildLA*, the structural engineering associates would develop these processing deadlines and share the tentative schedule with the applicant.

The structural engineering associates would **not** be an advocate for a building permit application, but someone the applicant can always contact in the City to find out the progress of plan checking of their building permit plans, to ensure disputes regarding codes and regulations are settled, and to keep their project on a predictable review schedule.

And, up-front in the building permit plan check, the structural engineering associates should give the applicant a road map of all the reviews the application will need.

More specifics regarding the role of the structural engineering associates are presented in the paragraphs below.

- **The Structural Engineering Associates Are There to Ensure Reviews of Building Permit Plans Are Timely, that the Plan Check Process Is Predictable and that the Application Gets to a Decision Point in Accordance with Formally Adopted Cycle Time Guidelines.** The structural engineering associates should accomplish this by developing – and monitoring – a schedule for both staff reviews and the applicant.
- **The Structural Engineering Associates Would Serve as the Applicant's Single Point of Contact.** The applicant should be able to call the structural engineering associates at any time. The applicant should still be able to call any member of the building permit plan check team directly – they'll still have to answer questions concerning plan review on specific items such as environmental or public improvement requirements – but the structural engineering associates should be responsible for managing these reviews and always be there to handle complex issues and to pull these comments from the team together.
- **The Applicant Should Be Informed Regarding the Name of the Assigned Structural Engineering Associate within Five Working Days of Submittal of the Building Permit Plans.** The applicant should be informed of the name of the structural engineering associate no later than five working days after the submittal of their building permit plans.
- **The Structural Engineering Associate Should Be Responsible for Complete and Timely Communication Among the Multi-Disciplinary Team.** Each member of the multi-disciplinary team, from City Planning to Engineering to Fire, will still be there. The structural engineering associate should make sure communication occurs on the multi-disciplinary team, a schedule is set and complex issues are resolved, such as when code issues conflict. The structural engineering associate should lead any discussions that focus on resolving conflicting conditions of approval or competing code requirements. His or her job is to keep the plan check of the building permit plan check coordinated and predictable.
- **The Role of the Structural Engineering Associate Should Be Clarified in a Written Policy.** The responsibility and the authority of the Plans Examiners and Senior Plans Examiners in managing the building permit plan check process should be clearly spelled out in a written policy developed by the Building and Safety Division and approved by the Office of the City Administrative Officer. The responsibility and authority, in addition to that previously identified, should include:
 - Coordinate the collection and integration of comments from other divisions and departments;

- Resolving inter-division or inter-departmental problems such as conflicting conditions or corrections;
- Coordinating applicant input and comments;
- Working with the applicant to resolve problems and revise the project as appropriate;
- Functioning as an advocate for the process (maintaining timelines and seeing that they are met); and
- Promptly reviewing and issuing notifications of omissions or problems with the project.

In summary, the structural engineering associate should be a team leader for a multi-disciplinary team responsible for keeping the review of a building permit plans on track, making sure issues involving conflicting code or regulatory issues are resolved, charting a clear course for the applicant through the review process, and making sure issues regarding the plan are identified early in the review process.

- **The Structural Engineering Associates Should Be Given both the Authority and the Responsibility to Work With other Divisions / Departments to Resolve Delays in Plan Checking of Building Permit Plans.** The authority of the structural engineering associate in the Engineering Bureau of the Department should be to resolve delays in plan checking of building permit plans including the following elements:

- Scheduling of the plan check of building permit plans by the various organizational units.
- Identification of the timing and priorities for plan checking of building permit plans by the various organizational units involved in commenting and analyzing the plans.
- Monitoring the timely plan check of building permit plans and contacting the managers or supervisors of these units to prompt the completion of the plan check if the guidelines for completion are exceeded.

This authority and responsibility should be clearly spelled out to other organizational units involved in processing building permit plans by a formal written policy developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.

The case management system is the specific methodology the City should utilize to drive process ownership into the organization and into the ministerial process

specifically.

Recommendation #155: The Department of Building and Safety should develop and install a case management system for the building permit plan check process, as planned.

Recommendation #156: The responsibility and the authority of the Department of Building and Safety in managing the building permit plan check process on a citywide basis should be clearly spelled out in a written policy developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.

Recommendation #157: The Department of Building and Safety should provide a team leader for a multi-disciplinary team responsible for keeping the review of a building permit plans on track, making sure issues involving conflicting code or regulatory issues are resolved, charting a clear course for the applicant through the review process, and making sure issues regarding the plan are identified early in the review process.

(3) The Department of Building and Safety Should Establish Cycle Time Metrics for Regular Plan Check.

The Department of Building and Safety should adopt cycle time metrics for building permit plan checking. The Matrix Consulting Group recommends the cycle time objectives enumerated below should be utilized.

The Matrix Consulting Group has proposed cycle time metrics for regular plan check in the table below. The cycle time metrics are expressed as calendar days.

Type of Permit	1 st Check	2 nd Check	3 rd Check
Regular Plan Check	30 calendar days	20 calendar days	10 calendar days

The Department of Building and Safety should review these cycle time metrics, revise them as necessary, and utilize these metrics to manage the amount of workdays required for plan checking building permit plans by every division / department involved in the plan check process. The Department should use these metrics to manage the plan check process as noted below.

- These metrics include any calendar days required for clearances of building permit plans by any of the divisions, bureaus, and departments that are

conducting regular plan checks. It includes all of these divisions, bureaus, and departments including the Department of Building and Safety.

- The metrics have been differentiated according to whether the plan check is the first review, or a recheck of a revised plan.
- The metrics should be designed to enable the structural engineering associates on the Engineering Bureau of the Department of Building and Safety to hold the other bureaus, divisions, and departments involved in the regular building permit plan checking process accountable for the length of time the bureaus and divisions take to review and approve plans.
- The building permit plan check cycle time metrics should be published to the Department's web page, and the Department should utilize *BuildLA* to report how well each bureau, division, and department is meeting these metrics on a monthly basis, publishing the results to its web page.

The attainment of these metrics is dependent upon streamlining a number of the existing processes, the effective use of *BuildLA*.

Recommendation #158: The Building and Safety Department should set formal written building permit plan check cycle time metrics as a joint effort by each of the bureaus, divisions, and departments involved in building permit plan checking. Ultimately, however, the General Manager needs to review these metrics to determine whether processing targets are not unacceptably long.

Recommendation #159: The building permit plan check cycle time metrics should identify those bureaus, divisions, and departments that should be routed building permit plans by type of plan.

Recommendation #160: The building permit plan check cycle time metrics should be differentiated according to whether the plan check is the first review, or a recheck of a revised plan.

Recommendation #161: The building permit plan check cycle time metrics should be designed to enable the structural engineering associates in the Engineering Bureau of the Department of Building and Safety to hold the bureaus, divisions, and departments involved in the building permit plan checking process accountable for the length of time the bureaus, divisions, and departments take to review and approve plans.

Recommendation #162: The building permit plan check cycle time metrics should be published to the Department of Building and Safety's web page, and the Department should utilize *BuildLA* to report the progress of all of the bureaus, divisions, and departments in meeting these metrics on a monthly

basis, including the Department of Building and Safety, publishing the results to its web page.

4. THE CITY SHOULD TAKE STEPS TO REDUCE THE EXTENT OF TIME WAITING FOR SERVICE AT THE CONSTRUCTION SERVICE CENTERS.

The exhibit following this page presents customer “wait time” data for the Metro-4th floor, Valley, and West Los Angeles construction services centers for fiscal year 2012-13. Important points to note regarding the exhibit are presented following the exhibit.

- The exhibit presents data generated by Q-matic, the software used by the Department of Building and Safety to issue numbered tickets to customers indicating their place in line.
- The Department does not report the total time to complete the permit processing from the time the service begins. The data may not be available given the limitations of the software.
- The data represents customer wait time for fiscal year 2012-13 and all of the departments with staff assigned to the Metro construction service center 4th floor and 3rd floor that serve the counter plan check process, the Valley construction services center, and the West Los Angeles construction services center.
- Important points to note about the levels of service provided at the Metro construction services center, 4th floor, are presented below.
 - 9,376 customers (or 5.4% of the total) waited hour or more for service at the Metro construction services center, 4th floor.
 - 35,426 customers (or 20.3%) waited a half-hour or more for service at the Metro construction services center, 4th floor.
 - The average waiting time for building check-in (screened) was 31 minutes. The average wait time for City Planning was 29 minutes. The average wait time for Transportation was 23 minutes. The average wait time for Mechanical plan check was 21 minutes.
- Important points to note about the levels of service provided at the Van Nuys construction services center are presented below.
 - 3,227 customers waited an hour or more for service or 1.8% of the total.

- 31,772 customers (or 17.5% of the total) waited a half-hour or more for service at the Van Nuys construction services center
- The average waiting time for Building check-in was 33 minutes. The average wait time for Zoning was 22 minutes. The average wait time for Building plan submittal was 21 minutes. The average wait time for Building check-in was 19 minutes. The average wait time for Fire was 18 minutes.
- Important points to note about the levels of service provided at the West Los Angeles construction services center are presented below.
 - 64 customers waited an hour or more for service or 0.2% of the total.
 - 1,105 customers (or 4% of the total) waited a half-hour or more for service at the West Los Angeles construction services center;
 - The average waiting time for Building plan check was 15 minutes.

No customers should have to wait an hour or more for service. The City should serve its customers in not more than 30 minutes and should set a goal of serving 85% of its customers at the construction service centers within 15 minutes (although that will likely require more staff at Metro and Van Nuys construction services centers).

The Matrix Consulting Group recommends that the City take a number of steps to address the level of service or wait time in the construction service centers.

- **First, the City should evaluate opportunities to reduce the average transaction time in the construction service centers.** In some instances, the transaction time seems lengthy. For example, the transaction time in 2012-13 for building check-in at the Metro construction services center was 14 minutes, for building plan submittal was 13 minutes, etc. Early screening should require less time, and focus on quantity (is the applicant submitting the right items for plan check) and less on quality.

Exhibit 15 (1)

Customer Wait Time at the Metro Construction
Services Center, 4th Floor For Fiscal Year 2012-13

4 th Floor Counters	# Of Cust Trans ¹	% Cust Who Waited 15 Mins Or Less For Service	% Cust Who Waited 30 Mins Or Less For Service	% Cust Who Waited 60 Mins Or Less For Service	% Of Cust Who Waited Over An Hour For Service	Avg. Waiting Time (Min)	Avg. Trans Time (Min)
Zoning Check-In	15,066	71.78%	86.65%	98.06%	1.94%	12.0	7.0
Bldg Plan Submittal ³	10,464	68.84%	85.78%	97.66%	2.34%	13.0	14.0
Building Check-In ³	41,125	61.41%	82.66%	98.30%	1.70%	14.0	6.0
Building Plan Check (Screened) ³	14,617	36.83%	57.99%	86.15%	13.85%	31.0	31.0
Grading	10,168	80.06%	94.20%	99.51%	0.49%	8.0	12.0
Mech. Plan Check/Sub	10,563	57.35%	71.62%	89.96%	10.04%	21.0	30.0
Elec. Plan Check/Sub	9,777	70.98%	85.11%	95.78%	4.22%	13.0	27.0
Building And Safety	111,780	62.44%	80.48%	95.72%	4.28%	15.9	14.8
CRA	4,529	72.64%	87.26%	96.40%	3.60%	13.0	16.0
City Planning	22,822	47.39%	62.79%	83.97%	16.03%	29.0	18.9
7 - Planning	21,630					28.0	17.0
8 - Planning Case	1,192					48.0	53.0
Fire	12,507	67.16%	84.60%	96.76%	3.24%	14.0	10.0
Public Works	21,540	74.42%	89.25%	98.28%	1.72%	10.6	19.8
19- BOE/Excavation	1,130					9.0	45.0
20- BOE/Revocable Permits	1,662					11.0	38.0
21- BOE/Address	4,065					6.0	19.0
23- BOE / Sewers	14,683					12.0	16.0
Transportation	1,425	67.58%	78.67%	87.72%	12.28%	23.0	21.0
Overall Total	174,603	62.60%	79.71%	94.53%	5.37%	16.8	15.7

Exhibit 15 (2)

Customer Wait Time at the Valley Construction
Services Center For Fiscal Year 2012-13

Counters	# Of Cust Trans ¹	% Cust Who Waited 15 Mins Or Less For Service	% Cust Who Waited 30 Mins Or Less For Service	% Cust Who Waited 60 Mins Or Less For Service	% Of Cust Who Waited Over An Hour For Service	Avg Waiting Time ²	Avg Trans Time ²
Building Check-In	21,600	44.92%	80.40%	99.32%	0.68%	19.0	4.0
Building Plan Check ³	13,419	26.66%	48.95%	90.54%	9.46%	33.0	34.0
Bldg. Plan Submittal ³	8,281	39.83%	63.23%	99.70%	0.30%	21.0	14.0
Zoning	23,295	40.46%	72.32%	98.23%	1.77%	22.0	8.0
Grading	3,129	91.02%	97.64%	99.23%	0.77%	7.0	10.0
Express Permits	29,705	73.21%	96.28%	99.95%	0.05%	10.0	9.0
Records Screening	19,420	57.18%	90.09%	99.73%	0.27%	15.0	6.0
Records Research	9,242	63.47%	86.22%	97.97%	2.03%	15.0	18.0
Elec. Plan Check/Sub	5,576	67.09%	87.50%	98.08%	1.92%	14.0	34.0
Mech. Plan Check/Sub	5,991	60.89%	82.46%	96.73%	3.27%	16.0	36.0
Building And Safety	139,658	53.67%	80.88%	98.26%	1.74%	17.6	13.1
City Planning	16,575	61.45%	84.90%	98.11%	1.89%		
Fire	6,117	59.83%	80.10%	94.26%	5.74%	15.0	27.0
Public Works	18,994	75.69%	92.89%	99.32%	0.68%	18.0	16.0
Transportation	4	25.00%	25.00%	25.00%	75.00%	10.0	20.0
Overall Total	181,348	56.90%	82.48%	98.22%	1.78%	194.0	15.0

Exhibit 15 (3)

**Customer Wait Time at the West Los Angeles
Construction Services Center For Fiscal Year 2012-13**

Counters	# Of Cust Trans ¹	% Cust Who Waited 15 Mins Or Less For Service	% Cust Who Waited 30 Mins Or Less For Service	% Cust Who Waited 60 Mins Or Less For Service	% Of Cust Who Waited Over An Hour For Service	Avg Waiting Time ²	Avg Trans Time ²
Building Check-In	10,895	79.61%	96.97%	99.98%	0.02%	9	14
Building Plan Check ³	3,419	61.54%	82.60%	98.22%	1.78%	15	31
Bldg Plan Submittal ³	5,139	89.63%	98.31%	100.00%	0.00%	6	11
Express Permits & Insp	6,283	88.09%	99.14%	100.00%	0.00%	7	7
Zoning	2,103	85.50%	98.24%	100.00%	0.00%	6	10
Building And Safety	27,839	81.60%	96.04%	99.77%	0.23%	9	14
Fire	1	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	77	2
Overall Total	27,840	81.59%	96.03%	99.77%	0.23%	9	14

- **Second, the Department of Building and Safety should take the lead in reducing the number of customer transactions by simplifying the processes used in the construction service centers and reducing the number of different counter stations that a customer must visit.** Some of the processes require the applicant to leave the Express Permit Center on the 1st floor, go to the 4th floor to obtain a Q-matic ticket, go to the 3rd floor to obtain Fire Department clearance, return to the 4th floor to obtain zoning clearance from the Zoning Counter, and then return to the Express Permit Center on the 1st floor. Simplifying the process, enabling the customer to conduct all of his or her business in the same permit center on the same floor, would reduce the number of customer transactions.
- **Third, staffing adjustments will likely be required to provide an improved level of service.** It would not be difficult to identify the amount of staff required since data regarding the average transaction time and the number of customers is readily available.
- **Fourth, the number of clearances required for a building permit should be reduced.** There are a number of clearances that are duplicative or can be fulfilled at one counter station rather than multiple counter stations. Examples have been presented previously.
- **Fifth, the City should designate a “Permit Center Manager” for each construction services center.** That “Permit Center Manager” should be a manager within the Engineering Bureau, Department of Building and Safety. At Metro 4th floor, the Valley construction services center, and the West Los Angeles construction services center, the “Permit Center Manager” should be responsible for managing counter plan check for all of the involved bureaus, divisions, and departments within the construction service centers (Building and Safety, City Planning, Engineering, Fire, etc.) in terms of the customer experience including the “wait” time. The responsibilities should include assuring timely service to all customers and assisting these customers experiencing excessive “wait” time by working with managers from other bureaus, divisions, and departments to bring “backup” staff to the counter. Most cities with permit centers have full-time Permit Center Managers with responsibility for managing the customer experience in these centers. San Jose, for example, assigns a division-manager to the management of their Permit Center with responsibility for supervising Planners, Permit Technicians, Building Inspectors, etc. assigned to the Permit Center. The responsibilities of the “Permit Center Manager” should be clarified in a Memorandum of Agreement developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer with all of the bureaus, divisions, and departments assigned to the construction service centers.

The speed and timeliness of service delivery are an important measure of customer service. This includes the speed of the service and the ability of the service

provider to respond promptly to customer requests, with minimal waiting and queuing time measuring and improving wait times for your customers is a crucial aspect of customer satisfaction. The City of Anaheim publishes the maximum counter wait time for its construction services center to its web site, and updates the information throughout the business day. The City of Los Angeles should take the same step.

The Department of Building and Safety reports the average counter wait time and transaction time for the various counters in the construction service centers. It should publish this information to its web site on a monthly basis.

Recommendation #163: The Department of Building and Safety should evaluate opportunities to reduce the average transaction time for building permits in the construction service centers.

Recommendation #164: The Department of Building and Safety should take the lead in reducing the number of customer transactions by simplifying the processes used in the construction service centers.

Recommendation #165: The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the City departments that assign staff to the construction service centers to evaluate the level of staffing necessary to meet the goal of serving 85% of the customers at the construction service centers within 15 minutes.

Recommendation #166: The Department of Building and Safety should report the total time for a customer to complete the process; in other words, the Department should report the total time required from start to finish for all of the transactions required to issue an express or counter plan check permit, not just the time per transaction.

Recommendation #167: The Department of Building and Safety should continuously stream the counter wait times at its construction service centers to its web site.

Recommendation #168: The Department of Building and Safety should report the average counter wait time and transaction time for the various counters in the construction service center to its web site on a monthly basis.

Recommendation #169: The City should designate a “Permit Center Manager” for each construction services center. This “Permit Center Manager” should be responsible for managing all of the service delivery by all of the disciplines in the

construction services center (Building and Safety, City Planning, Engineering, Fire, etc.) in terms of the customer experience including the “wait” time. The responsibilities should include assuring timely service to all customers and assisting those customers experiencing excessive “wait” time by working with managers from other bureaus / departments to bring “backup” staff to the counter. That “Permit Center Manager” should be a manager(s) with the Engineering Bureau, Department of Building and Safety.

Recommendation #170: The responsibilities of the “Permit Center Manager” should be clarified in a Memorandum of Agreement developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer with all of the bureaus, divisions, and departments assigned to the construction service centers.

Exhibit 16 (1)

**Department of Building and Safety
Express Permit Process**

Express Permit Process	Steps Involved
Express Permit Process	<p>1.1 To obtain an Express Permit at the Metro Office, the applicant goes to the Express Permit Center located at 201 North Figueroa, 1st floor. Other offices follow similar procedures as described below.</p> <p>1.2 The applicant obtains a ticket from the Q-Matic System to enter the applicant queue and takes a seat in the waiting area until the Q-Number is called (Section 98.0109 (a) of the Los Angeles Municipal Code offers a money back guarantee if a customer waits more than 30 minutes in the queue or more than 60 minutes to complete the permit processing from the time the service begins).</p> <p>1.3 The applicant completes a building permit application for an express building permit (the applicant can either complete the application at their residence or business on their own personal computer, print the application and bring it to the Express Permit Center, or complete the application by hand at the Express Permit Center).</p> <p>1.4 When the applicant's Q-Matic System ticket number is called, the applicant goes to one of the five workstations at the Express Permit Center.</p> <p>1.5 The DBS Counter Clerk at one of the five workstations reviews the Express Permit application for completeness and queries the applicant to verify that the proposed work qualifies for an Express Permit.</p> <p>1.6 The DBS Counter Clerk verifies the applicant's identity and confirms that the applicant is the owner of record, authorized agent for the owner, or contractor for which the permit is being issued.</p> <p>1.7 If a contractor is pulling the permit, the DBS Counter Clerk verifies that the contractor has a valid contractor's license. If someone other than the property owner is pulling the permit, a notarized letter authorizing an agent to act on behalf of the owner is required by California Labor Code Section 3800 and LADBS Information Bulletin P/GI 2011-011.</p> <p>1.8 After the initial questions and verifications are complete, the DBS Counter Clerk completes the Express Permit application in the Plan Check and Inspection System (PCIS), which is the Department's existing automated permit information. The scope of work must be clearly defined in the permit application so the appropriate Inspection Group can identify the work for which the permit was issued. To enter the permit work description, the Counter Clerk uses a template with standard work descriptions to complete the application. The Counter Clerk copies the information directly from the template to the application.</p> <p>1.9 At this time, the Counter Clerk checks if any clearances are required. If no clearances are required, the applicant can complete the permit process (Starting with Step 1.10). If clearances are required, the applicant needs obtain the clearances before completing the application process.</p>

Exhibit 16 (2)

Express Permit Process	Steps Involved
Express Permit Process (Cont'd)	<p>1.10 After the Counter Clerk has entered all of the application information, the contractor/applicant is required to affirm each of the following declarations by clicking the appropriate response in PCIS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The contractor's license is in full force. (b) The Workers Compensation insurance, if applicable, will be properly maintained. (c) Asbestos and lead removal is either not applicable or has been submitted to the appropriate agencies. (d) For the final declaration, the contractor affirms that all of the above declarations are correct and further declares to comply with the applicable City and County ordinances and State Laws, and acknowledges that City representatives will be allowed to enter the property for inspection purposes. <p>1.11 After the declarations are completed, the contractor signs with an electronic signature pad acknowledging all the declarations are accepted and the permit is being obtained with the consent of the legal owner.</p> <p>1.12 The DBS Counter Clerk prints out the building permit and a one-page document with the amount of the fee and provides it to the applicant.</p> <p>1.13 The applicant goes to the 4th floor at 201 North Figueroa Street to pay the Express Permit fee to a DBS cashier.</p> <p>1.14 The Cashier collects the fees from the applicant, and issues a receipt.</p>
Express Permit Clearances	<p>2.1 If clearances are required for an Express Permit, the application process cannot be completed until the applicant obtains the required clearances. Currently, the most common clearances for Express Permits are electrical permits for a solar photovoltaic for a single-family residence or duplex or properties located either within an Historical Preservation Overlay Zone or a Redevelopment Area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) If the obtaining an electrical permit for a solar photovoltaic for a single-family residence or a duplex, the applicant must obtain at least two clearances, one from the Fire Department's Construction Services and one from DBS's zoning counter. To obtain the clearance from the Fire Department's Construction Services, the applicant goes to 4th floor to obtain a Q-Matic ticket and then goes to the 3rd floor and waits for the Q-number is called. When called, the Fire Department enters an application in the Fire Department's database and prints out an application. The Fire Department then reviews sketch of the proposed placement of the solar panels. To approve the clearance, Technical Services stamps the applicant's permit application to provide evidence that the Fire Department has approved the clearance. The Fire Department keeps the Fire Department application until the applicant returns. All solar photovoltaic permits also require a zoning clearance from the DBS's Zoning Counter on the 4th floor. To obtain this clearance, the applicant goes to the 4th floor and obtains a Q-Matic ticket to get into the queue for the Zoning Counter. The applicant proceeds to Zoning Counter when called. The Zoning Counter's staff reviews the clearance and signs off in PCIS.

Exhibit 16 (3)

Express Permit process	Steps Involved
Express Permit Clearances (Cont'd)	<p>After the two clearances are resolved, the applicant returns to Express Permit Center on the 1st floor and obtains a Q-Matic ticket to get into the queue. When called, the applicant would complete Steps 1.10-1.12 above. Prior to proceeding to the cashier, the applicant would pick the Fire Department's application on the 3rd floor. The Fire Department stamps the Fire Department application and directs the applicant to the 4th floor to pay the Fire Department's fee of \$176. The applicant would complete Steps 1.13 and 1.14 by going to the Cashier on the 4th floor.</p> <p>(b) If the property for which the permit is issued is located in the Community Redevelopment Area, the applicant must obtain a clearance from the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). The applicant goes to the 4th floor and obtains a Q-Matic ticket and waits in the queue for the Q-number to be called. When the Q-number is called, the applicant proceeds to the CRA Counter to resolve the clearance. The CRA Counter staff review and approve the clearance in PCIS. When the clearance is obtained, the applicant returns to the Express Permit Counter located on the 1st floor to complete the application process. The applicant obtains a Q-Matic ticket and waits for the Q-number to be called. When called, the applicant proceeds to the counter and follows Steps 1.10-1.12 at Express Permits and then Steps 1.13 and 1.14 at the 4th floor cashier.</p> <p>(c) If the property is located in an Historical Preservation Overlay Zone, a clearance is required from City Planning's Historic Preservation Overlay Unit located at City Hall. The applicant goes to City Hall and meets with one of the Unit Staff. The Unit Staff reviews the clearance and approves it in PCIS. The applicant returns to Express Permit at 201 North Figueroa, 1st floor, to complete the application process. The applicant obtains a Q-Matic ticket and waits for the Q-number to be called. When called, the applicant proceeds to the counter and follows Steps 1.10-1.12 at Express Permits and then Steps 1.13 and 1.14 at the 4th cashier.</p>

Exhibit 17 (1)

**Over-the-Counter Building Permit Plan
Check for Single-Family Residential Addition
Located in a Specific Plan Area**

Over-The-Counter Plan Check	Steps Involved
Application Intake	<p>1.1 To obtain an over-the-counter permit for an over the counter plan check at the LADBS Metro Office, the entry point for the applicant is the Over-the-Counter Permit section located at the Construction Services Center on the 4th floor of the building at 201 North Figueroa. This is the same process followed at all of the Construction Service Centers.</p> <p>1.2 The applicant obtains a ticket from Q-Matic System to enter the queue for Window 14. The target is to limit the wait to 30 minutes and over-the-counter plans checks should be completed within 60 minutes. Applicants can complete an application at home and print it or they can complete a Permit Application Worksheet while waiting in the queue. DBS clerical staff is available to assist applicants in completing the application.</p> <p>1.3 Once the applicant's Q-number is called, the applicant goes to Window 14. At Window 14, the Metro Office usually has at least two Counter Plan Check Engineers available to screen the plans for completeness and to determine whether the plans can be checked over the counter.</p> <p>(a) If the Plan Check Engineer determines the plans are incomplete, the applicant is notified that the plans need to be completed before returning for over-the-counter plan check.</p> <p>(b) If the Plan Check Engineer determines that the plans do not qualify for over-the-counter plan check, the Plan Check Engineer notifies the applicant that the plans need to be routed to Regular Plan Check on the 8th floor. The applicant does not need to go to Regular Plan Check as the over-the-counter staff will route the plans to Regular Plan Check after the plan check application is prepared and the applicant pays the plan check fee. However, if Green Code plans are required and the applicant did not bring in additional set of plans, the applicant needs to obtain additional copies for Green Code plan check. The process for routing the plans to Regular Plan Check is as follows. The applicant is transferred to Window 13. The Plan Check Engineer calculates the plan check fee based on the valuation of the work. Clerical staff initiate permit applications and input project information into PCIS and provide a copy of the application to the applicant. The applicant is referred to the cashier on the 4th floor, adjacent to Window 14. The applicant goes to the cashier and pays the plan check fee. The cashier enters the payment information into PCIS. The applicant returns to Window 13 and provides proof of payment to the Plan Check Engineer. The Plan Check Engineer rolls up the plans and attaches the PCAM and PCIS routing slips to the plans and places the plans in a bin behind Window 13. Every morning an Engineering Tech picks up the plans and delivers the bin room on the 8th floor.</p>

Exhibit 17 (2)

Over-The-Counter Plan Check	Steps Involved
Application Intake (Cont'd)	<p>(c) If a Grading Pre-Inspection (GPI) report is required and the applicant has not ordered one, the applicant can order one at Window 13. The GPI report is sent to the applicant within 5-7 business days. The applicant can opt to have the plans checked without the GPI report, but the report will be needed before the permit can be issued. The applicant may also request a waiver from the Grading Division on the 3rd floor if the addition is less than 500 square feet. Again, the applicant can opt to go through the plan check process, but the waiver needs to be obtained before the permit is issued.</p> <p>1.4 If the Counter Plan Check Engineers determine that the plans are complete and can be checked over-the-counter, the applicant is directed to Windows 9-12 to submit the plans for checking. The Counter Plan Check Engineer pushes a button on the Q-Matic system to transfer the applicant to the queue at Windows 9-12. At the same time, the Plan Check Engineer hands the application to the clerical staff. While the applicant is in this queue, clerical staff access PCIS and completes the plan check application. When the applicant's Q-number is called at Windows 9-12, the plan check application should be completed. Clerical staff completes the application and then puts it into a bin behind Windows 9-12 so the Plan Check Engineers can pick it up. The Plan Check Engineers at Windows 9-12 access the application and calculate the plan check fees based on the valuation of the work. The Plan Check Engineer types in the valuation information to calculate the fees and print out an application with fees on it. The applicant is directed to the pay the cashier adjacent to Window 14. While the applicant is paying the plan check fees, the Plan Check Engineer begins reviewing the plans.</p> <p>1.5 The applicant goes to Window 14 and waits in line to pay the over-the-counter plan check fees. Upon paying, the cashier prints out the payment information with the machine that prints the receipt onto the application.</p>
Plan Check	<p>2.1 When the applicant returns to Windows 9-12 with proof of payment, the plan check engineer has already started reviewing the plans: The Over-the-counter Plan Checker reviews for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Building Code. b) Zoning Code-Typically, for a single-family home addition, the Plan Check Engineer will review the front and side yard set-back requirements. The Plan Check Engineer should also determine whether the property is within a specific plan area. If so, the Plan Check Engineer would issue a clearance for the Planning Department c) Green Code. d) Disabled Access Requirements. e) Energy Requirements. <p>2.2 In reviewing the plans, the Plan Check Engineers print out a prepared standard correction list. The Plan Check Engineer circles any items on the correction list that refer to items on the plans that need correcting and also marks on the plans the items that need correcting. The Plan Check Engineer provides the original correction list to the applicant and also maintains a copy for the files.</p>

Exhibit 17 (3)

Over-The-Counter Plan Check	Steps Involved
Plan Check (Cont'd)	<p>2.3 The Plan Checker also determines whether any clearances are required. Based on the type of project (a simple addition for single-family residence), the Plan Check Engineer uses the applicability matrices to determine the clearances required from each department. The Plan Check Engineer uses a drop down menu that identifies possible clearances and the Plan Check Engineer clicks on the clearances that are required. An minor addition for a single-family residence would not typically require a significant number of clearances.</p> <p>2.4 The applicant is responsible for correcting the plans and obtaining the required clearances. Depending on the required clearances, the applicant may need to go various locations to resolve the clearances. A common clearance for a simple addition for a single-family residence is for change in the drainage conditions on the site. If the project requires a new drain or alters the existing drainage system, the Plan Check Engineer would issue a clearance for Public Works. To resolve the clearance, the applicant would need to go to the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering on the 3rd floor of the building. Other common clearances for an addition would be from the Planning Department if the project is located in a specific plan area. The applicant would need to go to the Planning Department located on the 4th floor to obtain the clearance.</p> <p>2.5 When the plans are corrected and clearances are resolved, the applicant returns to Window 14 and obtains a ticket to get into the queue. Once the number is called, the applicant goes to Window 14. The Plan Check Engineer at this window may screen the corrections and check in PCIS whether the clearances are resolved. Otherwise, the Plan Check Engineer pushes the Q-Matic button to transfer the applicant to Windows 9-12 for plan re-check and to verify that the corrections are made and clearances are resolved.</p> <p>2.6 If correction list is completed and the clearances are resolved, the applicant can either pull a permit at this time or defer pulling a permit at this time and obtain a ready to issue sheet.</p>
Permit Issuance	<p>3.1 If the applicant elects to pull a permit at this time, the Plan Check Engineer advances the status of the permit to be issued.</p> <p>3.2 If the property owner is pulling the permit, the Plan Check Engineer verifies the applicant's identity and confirms that the applicant is the owner of record for the property.</p> <p>3.3 If the contractor is pulling the permit, the Plan Check Engineer verifies that the contractor has a valid contractor's license.</p> <p>3.4 After the Plan Check Engineer has entered all of the over-the-counter building permit application information, the contractor is required to affirm each of the following declarations by clicking the appropriate response directly in PCIS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The contractor's license is in full force. (b) Workers Compensation insurance, if applicable, will be properly maintained. (c) Asbestos and lead removal is either not applicable or has been submitted to the appropriate agencies.

Exhibit 17 (4)

Over-The-Counter Plan Check	Steps Involved
Permit Issuance (Cont'd)	<p>(d) For the final declaration, the contractor affirms that all of the above declarations are correct and further declares to comply with all applicable City and County ordinances and State Laws, and acknowledges the City representatives will be allowed to enter the property for inspection purposes.</p> <p>3.5 Once all the declarations are completed, the contractor signs the permit application with an electronic signature pad, acknowledging that all declarations are accepted and that the permit is being obtained with the consent of the legal owner of the property.</p> <p>3.6 The Plan Check Engineer prints out a copy of the permit and refers the applicant to the Cashier adjacent to Window 14.</p> <p>3.7 The applicant goes to the Cashier and pays the permit fee. The cashier stamps the receipt information on the permit application. The cashier also provides the applicant the inspection card for when the building inspector inspects and approves different construction phases of the project.</p> <p>3.8 The applicant returns to Windows 9-12 and provides the proof of payment to the Plan Check Engineer.</p> <p>3.9 The Plan Check Engineer stamps and perforates the plans and provides the plans to the applicant.</p> <p>3.10 If the applicant elects to not pull the permit at this time, the Plan Check Engineer stamps the plans the plans with a Ready to Issue date-stamp on each page of the plans and provides a Ready to Issue Sheet with instructions for obtaining the permit. In addition, the Plan Check Engineer updates the status of the permit in PCAM to PC approved.</p> <p>3.11 When the applicant returns to pull the permit, the applicant goes to Window 13. At this time, the applicant follows Step 3.2-3.9 above except that the applicant returns to Window 13 to pull the permit.</p>

Exhibit 18 (1)

**Regular Building Permit Plan
Check for a New Single-Family Residence**

Regular Plan Check	Steps Involved
Application and Plan Intake	<p>1.1 To obtain a building permit for a new single-family residence at the Metro Office through the regular plan check process, the entry point for the applicant is the Construction Services Center on the 4th floor of the building at 201 North Figueroa. Applicants will essentially follow the same processes at the other Construction Services Centers located in Van Nuys, West LA, San Pedro, and South LA.</p> <p>1.2 The applicant obtains a ticket from the Q-Matic System to enter the queue for Window 14. The target is to limit the wait to 30 minutes. Applicants can complete an application at home and print it out or complete a Permit Application Worksheet while waiting in the queue. DBS clerical staff is available to assist applicants in completing the application.</p> <p>1.3 Once the applicant's Q-number is called, the applicant goes to Window 14. At Window 14, the Metro Office usually has at least two counter plan checkers available to screen plans for completeness and determine whether the plans can be checked over the counter. Since this application is for a new single-family residence, the plans will go through the Regular Plan Check process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The typical submittals required for a new single-family residential construction include architectural plans, structural plans, grading plans, calculations, plumbing, electrical and mechanical components, energy requirements, green plans, and soil reports. We are assuming that the project is not located in a geological hazard zone, so a geological hazards study will not be required. We are also assuming that a pool and spa are not being built and the project is not located in any Specific Plan area or special zone. If the plan checker determines the plans are incomplete, the applicant is notified that the plans need to be completed before returning. b) As noted above, the plans for this project will be sent to Regular Plan Check for review. The plan checker notifies the applicant that the plans need to be routed to Regular Plan Check on the 8th floor. The applicant does not need to go to the 8th floor, as the over-the-counter staff will route the plans to Regular Plan Check after the plan check application is prepared and the applicant pays the plan check fee. c) Once it is determined that the plans will be routed to Regular Plan Check, the counter plan checker hands the application to a clerical staff member to enter the information in PCIS. Also, the applicant is referred to Window 13 for plan submittal and joins the queue. Clerical staff enters application information into PCIS and provides the application to the Window 13 plan checker.

Exhibit 18 (2)

Regular Plan Check	Steps Involved
Application and Plan Intake (Cont'd)	<p>1.4 When the applicant's Q-number is called, the applicant goes to Window 13, where the plan checker calculates the plan check fee based on the valuation of the work. The plan checker prints out the application with the fee information and directs the applicant to pay the cashier adjacent to Window 14. The applicant can opt to pay a higher plan check fee to have the plans expedited. For Expedited Plan Checks, the plan checkers complete the expedited plans on overtime.</p> <p>1.5 The applicant goes to the cashier on the 4th floor and gets in line. When called, the applicant pays the plan check fee and the cashier uses a machine that prints on the application that the fee has been paid.</p> <p>1.6 The applicant returns to Window 13, where the plan checker is waiting with the plans. The plan checker verifies that the applicant has paid the plan check fee. The plan checker reviews the plans and estimates the number of hours needed for the plan check. To estimate the hours, the plan checker accesses a software program that estimates the hours needed for different types of construction. The plan checker enters the information from the plans and generates an estimate of the total hours needed for the plan check. This information is printed out and attached to the plans. The plans are rolled up and the appropriate colored routing forms are attached to each of the plans. The routing forms contain the PCAM# and the PCIS#. The following routing forms are used: Building (white), Expedited (green), Disabled Access (white) and Green (purple). The rolled-up plans with the routing information are placed in shelves behind Window 13. Each type of plan has its own cabinet section.</p> <p>1.7 At Window 13, the applicant must also complete a notification form, which is used to notify the applicant when the plans have been checked and are ready for pick-up. For building plans, a yellow notification form is used. The plan checker enters the PCAM # and the PCIS # on the notification form. The applicant checks the types of plans submitted, identifying information and the preferred method of notification. The notification form is attached to the plans. When the applicant returns to pick up the plans, the applicant must bring in a copy of the notification or the original application receipt.</p> <p>1.8 Every morning, an Engineering Technician picks up the plans behind Window 13 and delivers them to the appropriate bin room on the 8th floor. Each type of plan has a separate bin room. The Engineering Technicians place the plans on the shelves in the respective bin rooms. For instance, regular building and expedited building plans are placed in the same bin room. Green plans and Disabled Access plans have separate bin rooms where the plans are stored until assigned.</p>
Regular Plan Checks	<p>2.1 Every Thursday afternoon, supervisors assign plans stored in the bin rooms. The Bureau of Engineering has a backlog in assigning plans. The goal is to assign regular plan checks in 15 business days and expedited plan checks in 5 business days. The Metro's Office's current backlog is 16 business days for regular plan checks and 8 business days for expedited plan checks. All offices essentially perform the same weekly analysis to assign plans to plan checkers. The overall purpose of this analysis is to match the hours needed for new plan checks to the staff hours available to work on new plan checks. The analysis is also used to determine the overtime budget for the next week. For building plans at the Metro Office, three</p>

Exhibit 18 (3)

Regular Plan Check	Steps Involved
Regular Plan Check (Cont'd)	<p>plan check supervisors assign the plans each week. Prior to assigning plans, the supervisors determine the number of hours that plan checkers have available the following week to work on new plan checks. The available hours are reduced by any leave, such as vacation days, regular day off, holidays, and sick leave. Staff assigned to work in other offices, at LAX, or the Restaurant and Hospitality Express Program, also reduce the plan checkers' available hours. Additional responsibilities, such as working in the call-center or performing back-up duties, further deplete the plan checkers' available time to be assigned new plan checks. Finally, the plan checkers' available hours are also reduced due to assignments not completed from the previous week and time needed for verification conferences with applicants to review and discuss plans previously reviewed. After determining the plan checkers' available hours for the next week, the supervisors start the process of assigning new plan checks. The regular plans are handled separately from the expedited plans. In assigning regular plans, the supervisors place the plans in order so that the plans submitted first are assigned first. The supervisors consider the skills and experience of the plan checkers in assigning plans. Also, they assign plans that approximate the time that plan checkers have available to work on new plans for the following week. Plans not assigned for the week stay in the bin rooms for possible assignment the following week. Plan checkers work expedited plans on overtime. Prior to the assignment process, the plan checkers volunteer for overtime. This determines the hours available to work on expedited plans. Like the regular plans, expedited plans are placed in order so that the expedited plans submitted first are assigned first. The supervisors assign the expedited plans in the same manner as the regular plans. The process followed to assign building plan checks is essentially the same process used to assign Green Code, Disabled Access, Mechanical, and Electrical plan checks. Furthermore, the assignment process is followed at other offices.</p> <p>2.2 The building plan checkers review the plans for compliance with the Building Code, as well as the Zoning Code. In reviewing for Zoning Code issues, the plan checker uses ZIMAS to obtain a parcel profile to determine if the property is located in any special zones, such as a CRA area, a Specific Plan area, a Historical Preservation Overlay Zone, or any other areas that will require a clearance from the Planning Department or other agencies. The plan checker is also reviewing the parcel profile to determine the existence of City Planning documents that need to be reviewed. The plan checker will review existing planning documents to determine if a clearance from City Planning is needed. The plan checker will use the applicability matrix to determine whether clearances are required. If the planning documents refer to any requirements such as height, number of stories, and floor area, the plan checker reviews the building plans to ensure these quantifiable requirements are addressed. On the other hand, if the planning documents refer to more qualitative aspects, the plan checker will create a PCIS clearance for City Planning by clicking on the appropriate clearances shown in PCIS. In reviewing the Building Code, the plan checker prints out a standard correction list. The plan checker circles items on the correction list and also marks the corrections on the plans the items that need correcting.</p>

Exhibit 18 (4)

Regular Plan Check	Steps Involved
Regular Plan Check (cont'd)	<p>2.2.1 The Green Code plan checker reviews the plans for compliance with the Green Code. The plan checker prints out a standard correction list and circles items on the plans that need correcting and also marks on the plans the items that need correcting.</p> <p>2.3 The plan checker also determines whether any clearances are required. Based on the type of project, the plan checker uses the applicability matrices to determine the clearances required. The plan checker uses a drop-down menu that identifies possible clearances and clicks on the clearances that are required.</p> <p>2.4 After the plan checker completes the initial review, the plans, correction sheet, and list of clearances are forwarded to the appropriate supervisor for review. Once the supervisor has reviewed and approved the plan check, the applicant is notified that the plans, correction sheet, and list of clearances are available to be picked-up at the counter on the 8th floor.</p> <p>2.4.1 After the Green Code plan checker completes the initial review, the plans and the correction sheet are forwarded to a supervisor for review. Once the supervisor has reviewed and approved the plan check, the applicant is notified that the plans and correction sheet are available to be picked-up at the counter on the 8th floor.</p> <p>2.5 The applicant goes to the 8th floor counter to pick up the building plans, correction sheet, and list of clearances. To pick up the plans, the applicant needs to show the notification letter or provide the permit application to the counter clerk.</p> <p>2.5.1 The applicant goes to the 8th floor to pick up the Green Code plans, correction sheet, and list of clearances. To pick up the plans, the applicant needs to show the notification letter or provide the permit application to the counter. Instead of picking up the plans separately, the applicant could opt to pick up both sets of plans at the same time.</p> <p>2.6 The applicant is responsible for correcting the building plans.</p> <p>2.6.1 The applicant is responsible for correcting the Green Code plans.</p> <p>2.7 Also, the applicant obtains the required clearances. Depending on the required clearances, the applicant may need to go to various locations to resolve the clearances. Typically, for a new single-family residence, the applicant will be required to obtain clearances from the Fire Department, Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation, and Public Works, Bureau of Engineering. In addition, the plan checker will create a clearance that the Green Code plan check needs to be a completed.</p> <p>(a) A clearance from the Fire Department will be required to determine the required spacing for a fire hydrant and the access to the property in the event of a fire. To resolve this clearance, the applicant goes to the Fire Department's Hydrant and Access Unit at 221 North Figueroa, on the 15th floor. The applicant goes to the counter and completes an application and the counter staff enters the information into the Fire Department's database. Once the application is complete, the Unit's counter staff reviews the plans to determine where the structure will be located and whether the property has any access issues in the event of fire. They also check the Department of Public Works' website to determine where the nearest fire hydrant is located. Hydrants are marked in red within both 300 feet of the property and sufficient access to the structure. The counter staff then approves the clearance.</p> <p>Before</p>

Exhibit 18 (5)

Regular Plan Check	Steps Involved
Regular Plan Check (cont'd)	<p>approving the clearance, the applicant is required to pay a fee. The counter staff prints out the application information and the applicant goes to the cashier located at 201 North Figueroa, 4th floor, to pay the fee. The applicant waits in line at the cashier to pay the Fire Department's fee. Once called, the applicant pays the fee and the cashier provides the applicant with a receipt. Then, the applicant returns to 221 North Figueroa, 15th floor, to obtain the clearance. To approve the clearance, the counter staff accesses the PCIS system and the clearances are identified on screen. The counter staff uses the drop-down menu on the screen and clicks "Approve". If a fire hydrant is not located within 300 feet of the structure, counter staff will notify the applicant to contact the Department of Water and Power to obtain an additional hydrant. In this case, the clearance will be left pending.</p> <p>(b) New residential construction will also require a clearance from the Department of Public Works' Bureau of Sanitation to comply with the Low Impact Development Ordinance for stormwater runoff requirements. To obtain this clearance, the applicant pulls a ticket from the Q-Matic System on the 4th floor and gets into the queue for the Bureau of Sanitation, located at 201 North Figueroa, 3rd floor. Once called, the applicant goes to the Bureau of Sanitation and meets with the counter staff. The counter staff assists the applicant in completing an application. Once the application is completed, the counter staff prints out the application and the applicant pays the appropriate fees at the cashier's desk on the same floor. Two main requirements need to be addressed to obtain this clearance from the Bureau of Sanitation. First, the applicant needs to obtain approval for design plans for capturing and treating stormwater runoff, as well as an approved operations and maintenance plan to ensure that the approved measures are working properly. Second, the applicant files a covenant with the County Recorder's Office. Obtaining the approved plans may take several weeks, depending on the complexity of the project and the applicant's understanding of the requirements. The submittals are required for a residential project of less than four units. A full set of plans includes plot, elevation, plumbing, utility, mechanical, architectural, and landscape plans. The plans must include the location, size, and capacity of all of the Best Management Practices incorporated into the plans and all of the landscaping areas. Typically, the applicant may need several trips to the Bureau of Sanitation for review and approval of the plans. Once the plans are approved, the applicant is required to go to the County Recorder's Office to record the covenant for the property. The applicant goes to one of three locations to record the covenant: 12400 Imperial Highway, Norwalk CA 90650, 14340 Sylvan Street, Van Nuys CA 91401, and 11702 S. La Cienega Blvd., 6th floor. The County Recorder records the covenant form and the operations and maintenance plan, binding current and future owners to follow the operations and maintenance plan until terminated. The applicant obtains a certified copy of the recorded form and returns to 201 North Figueroa with four sets of plans.</p>

Exhibit 18 (6)

Regular Plan Check	Steps Involved
Regular Plan Check (cont'd)	<p>The applicant first goes to the Q-Matic System on the 4th floor, pulls a Q-number, and then goes to the 3rd floor to wait to be called to the Bureau of Sanitation window. Once the applicant is called, the counter staff verifies the certified copy of the recorded covenant and the applicant goes to the cashier to pay the fees. Once the fees are paid, the applicant returns with a receipt. The counter staff stamps the plans and approves the clearance. Bureau of Sanitation keeps one copy of the plans and the applicant keeps another, which are incorporated into the building plans.</p> <p>(c) Typically, a new single-family residence requires multiple clearances from the Bureau of Engineering. The more common clearances include address approval, sewer availability, and drainage to the street. In addition, any of the above clearances require the applicant to pay a processing fee, which is also identified as a clearance. We are assuming that this project is not in a hillside area, so it will not require a clearance for being located within the hillside area. To obtain the above clearances from BOE, the applicant goes to 201 North Figueroa, 4th floor, and obtains a ticket from the Q-Matic System. The applicant then goes to the 3rd floor, Window 22, to obtain a new address. The applicant waits in the queue until the Q-number is called. Once called, the applicant meets with the counter staff at Window 22. The counter staff reviews the plans and determines whether a number needs to be assigned. If so, the counter staff enters the information to obtain a new address. The system will generate a new address for the site. The counter staff also approves the clearance and sends the applicant to the queue for Window 23. When called, the applicant can address the other clearances at Window 23. For drainage to the street, the counter staff reviews the plans to estimate the amount of runoff to determine if the storm drains have the capacity to handle the runoff. Currently, the BOE staff is coordinating with the BOS staff, who are reviewing and approving plans to minimize runoff to the storm drains. For the sewer availability clearance, a sewer capacity availability review may be required. If the review is not required, the counter can approve the clearance by clicking "Approved" on the drop-down menu. If the review is needed, the Bureau of Sanitation will perform the test. The applicant does not need to go to the Bureau of Sanitation; the counter staff sends a referral to the Bureau.. However, the applicant pays a fee for the test at the cashier located on the same floor. The applicant will be notified, usually within two weeks, of the results of the review. If the flow is sufficient, the applicant can return to 201 North Figueroa, 4th floor to obtain a ticket from the Q-Matic System and then go to the 3rd floor, Window 23, and wait to be called. At this time, the counter staff can approve the sewer availability clearance. After the BOE clearances are resolved, the applicant goes to the cashier on the 3rd floor and pays the engineering processing fee, which is also identified as a clearance. Upon paying, the cashier approves the clearance in PCIS.</p> <p>2.8 When the building plans are corrected and clearances are resolved, the applicant calls the plan checker directly to schedule a verification conference. The verification conference is usually set for within five days of the applicant calling.</p>

Exhibit 18 (7)

Regular Plan Check	Steps Involved
Regular Plan Check (cont'd)	<p>2.8.1 When the Green Code plans are corrected, the applicant calls the Green Code plan checker to schedule a verification conference.</p> <p>2.9 The building plan checker verifies the corrections and the clearance sign-offs and either approves the plans and clearances or prepares an additional correction list. In this case, the applicant needs to go back to step 2.6. If clearances are not resolved, an additional clearance list is prepared and the applicant must go to Step 2.7. If the correction list is completed and the clearances are resolved, the applicant can either pull a permit at this time or defer pulling a permit and obtain a Ready to Issue Sheet.</p> <p>2.9.1 The Green Code plan checker verifies the corrections and either approves the corrections or issues an additional correction list. If the plans are approved, the plan checker approves the clearance for a Green Code plan check. If the plans are not approved, the plan checker prepares a new correction list and the applicant goes back to Step 2.6.1-2.8.1.</p>
Permit Issuance	<p>3.1 If the applicant elects to pull a permit at this time, the plan checker advances the status of the permit in the PCAM system to "PC Approved".</p> <p>3.2 If the property owner is pulling the permit, the plan checker verifies the applicant's identity and confirms that the applicant is the owner of record for the property.</p> <p>3.3 If the contractor is pulling the permit, the plan checker verifies that the contractor has a valid contractor's license.</p> <p>3.4 After the plan checker has entered all of the building permit application information, the contractor is required to affirm each of the following declarations by clicking the appropriate response directly into PCIS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The contractor's license is in full force. b) Workers' Compensation insurance, if applicable, will be properly maintained. c) Asbestos and lead removable is either not applicable or has been submitted to the appropriate agencies. d) For the final declaration, the contractor affirms that all of the above declarations are correct, further declares to comply with all applicable City and County ordinances and State laws, and acknowledges that City representatives will be allowed to enter the property for inspection purposes. <p>3.5 Once all the declarations are completed, the contractor signs the permit application with an electronic signature pad, acknowledging that all declarations are accepted and that the permit is being obtained with the consent of the legal owner of the property.</p> <p>3.6 The plan checker prints out a copy of the permit and refers the applicant to the cashier on the 4th floor.</p> <p>3.7 The applicant goes to the cashier and pays the permit fee. The cashier stamps the receipt information on the permit application. The cashier also provides the applicant the inspection card for when the building inspector inspects during different construction phases of the project.</p> <p>3.8 The applicant returns to the 8th floor counter to provide proof of payment to the plan checker.</p> <p>3.9 The plan checker stamps and perforates the plans and provides the plans to the applicant.</p>

Exhibit 18 (8)

Regular Plan Check	Steps Involved
Permit Issuance (Cont'd)	<p>3.10 If the applicant elects not to pull the permit at this time, the plan checker stamps a Ready-to-Issue date stamp on each page of the plans and provides a Ready-to-Issue Sheet with instructions for obtaining the permit. In addition, the plan checker updates the status of the permit in PCAM to "PC Approved".</p> <p>3.11 When the applicant returns to pull the permit, the applicant returns to the 8th floor. At this time, Steps 3.2-3.9 above are followed.</p>

Exhibit 19 (1)

**Fire Department Construction Services Unit
Plan Check Services For Title 19 / Title 24 Occupancies**

Fire Plan Check	Steps Involved
Fire Plan Check Application Process	<p>1.1 The LAFD Construction Services Unit is responsible for the review and approval of the fire and life safety aspect of construction plans, fire alarm, plans and Fire Department connection plans for occupancies that meet the criteria of California Administrative Code, Title 19 or Title 24. These occupancies include but are not limited to: hospitals, high-rise structures, institutions, educational facilities, public assemblies, and hazardous occupancies. Metro Construction Services is located at 201 North Figueroa, 3rd floor. Currently, the only other office providing these services is the Valley Office located at 6262 Van Nuys Blvd, in Van Nuys. The Fire Department does not have staff permanently assigned to the Valley Office. Rather, the Metro Office provides staffing for this office.</p> <p>1.2 When an applicant applies for a building permit, the DBS will either review plans over the counter or through the regular check process. After the initial plan check, the plan checker will determine whether the applicant needs LAFD approval. If not, the applicant goes to the next stage of the building permit approval process. If the plans require LAFD approval, the plan checker creates a Fire Clearance record in PCIS and provides the applicant the PCIS number and directs the applicant to the LAFD counter located at 201 North Figueroa, 3rd floor.</p> <p>1.2.1 In some instances, the applicant will go to Fire Department at the time the plans are submitted for DBS plan check. In these instances, the Fire Plan Check would occur concurrently with the DBS plan check. Otherwise, the DBS checks the building plans first.</p> <p>1.3 The applicant obtains a ticket from the Q-Matic System on the 4th floor and then goes to the Fire Department located on the 3rd floor and waits for the Q-Number to be called.</p> <p>1.4 Once the applicant's Q-Number is called, the applicant goes to the counter. The Fire Department requests the applicant to complete the Division 15 Application form. Using the application form, the counter then inputs the application information into the Fire Schedule System (Firelog).</p> <p>1.5 At this time, the counter staff determines whether the plans can be reviewed over the counter or need to go the back room for plan check. If the plans can be checked over the counter, the plan checker uses PCIS to determine the value for calculating the plan check. In making this determination, the counter staff assess whether the plans can be checked within 30 minutes. If so, the plans would be checked over the counter. If not, the plans would be assigned to the backroom. Typically, tenant improvements can be checked over the counter but new construction is reviewed in the backroom.</p>

Exhibit 19 (2)

Fire Plan Check	Steps Involved
Fire Department Application Process (Cont'd)	<p>1.5.1 If the plans are required to be checked in the backroom, the applicant can pay for an expedited plan check fee. The expedited fee is based on the time required to complete the plan check including LAFD staff working overtime to complete the plan check. The counter staff calculates the plan check fee using PCIS to determine the valuation of the property. If the applicant opts for the expedited fee, the additional fee is added to the fee calculation.</p> <p>1.6. The plan checker invoices the applicant for the fire plan check fees. The plan checker uses an Excel spreadsheet to calculate the fees. The plan checker provides the applicant with the invoice and directs the applicant to pay the fees on the 4th floor.</p> <p>1.7 The applicant goes to the 4th floor to pay the Fire Department's fees.</p> <p>1.8 After paying the appropriate plan check fees, the applicant returns to the Fire Department on the 3rd floor. The plan checker records that the plan checks have been paid in the Firelog system.</p>
Fire Department Plan Check Over the Counter	<p>2.1 The Fire Department plan checker reviews the plans for compliance with Fire and Life Safety requirements. The Fire Department has a standard checklist used for reviewing plans. The Fire Department plan checker reviews plans for issues such as the maximum occupant load for the occupancy, the ratings of fire-resistant items such as construction materials, doors, windows, and interior finishes; the adequacy of fire protection systems such as sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms; means of egress in the event of a fire or other emergencies, adequacy of exiting signs, and any special hazards that need to be addressed.</p> <p>2.2 If exceptions are noted, the plan checker writes on the plans the corrections that need to be addressed. For over the counter plans, the applicant could fix the plans immediately or fix the plans later and return to the Fire Department counter at another time.</p> <p>2.3 Once the plans are corrected to the plan checker's satisfaction, the plan checker stamps each page of the plans with the Fire Department stamp and approves the clearance in PCIS.</p>
Fire Department Plan Check Backroom	<p>3.1 If the plans need to be checked in the back room, the Captain II for the unit assigns one of the Fire Engineering Associate IV's to perform the plan check. Less complex plans typically can be completed in 1-3 hours; whereas, more complex projects such as a new high-rise buildings can take 16-20 hours to complete. The Metro Office has a backlog of backroom plan checks so the plans are currently being completed in 4-6 weeks.</p>

Exhibit 19 (3)

Fire Plan Check	Steps Involved
Fire Department Plan Check Backroom (Cont'd)	<p>3.2 The plan checker reviews the plans for compliance with Fire and Life Safety requirements. The Fire Department has a standard checklist that uses in reviewing plans. The Fire Department plan checker is reviewing plans for issues such as the maximum occupant load for this type of occupancy, the ratings of fire-resistant items such as construction materials, doors, windows, and interior finishes; the adequacy of fire protection systems such as sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms; means of egress in the event of a fire or other emergencies, adequacy of exiting signs, and special hazards that need to be addressed.</p> <p>3.3 If exceptions are noted, the plan checker writes on the plans the corrections that need to be addressed. When the initial plan check is completed, the plan checker notifies the applicant that the plan check is completed and corrections are needed.</p> <p>3.4 The applicant returns to 201 North Figueroa, 4th floor and obtains a Q-Matic ticket. Then, the applicant goes to the 3rd floor to get in the queue for the Fire Department counter.</p> <p>3.5 When the applicant's Q-Number is called, the applicant proceeds to the counter to pick up the plans.</p> <p>3.6 The applicant corrects the plans, schedules a meeting with the plan checker, and returns to 201 North Figueroa, 4th floor to obtain a Q-Matic ticket.</p> <p>3.7 If the plans are not corrected to the plan checker's satisfaction, the process returns to Step 3.6 above. If the plans are corrected to the Fire Department's satisfaction, the Fire Department stamps each page of the plans with the Fire Department stamp and approves the clearance in PCIS.</p> <p>3.8 The plan checker invoices the applicant for the fire plan check fees beyond the initial plan check fees. The plan checker uses an Excel spreadsheet to calculate the fees. The plan checker provides the applicant with the invoice and directs the applicant to pay the fees on the 4th floor.</p> <p>3.9 The applicant goes to the 4th floor to pay the Fire Department's fees.</p> <p>3.10 The plan checker updates the status of the project in the Firelog system.</p>
Fire Alarm Plan Check Application process	<p>4.1 The LAFD Construction Services Unit is responsible for the review and approval of the fire alarm systems. The Fire Department Fire Alarm plan check to ensure that fire alarm systems comply with the Los Angeles Municipal Code and the State Fire Code requirements for alarms systems.</p> <p>4.2 Typically, when applicant applies for an electrical permit, the DBS will either review plans over the counter or through the regular check process. After the initial plan check, the plan checker will determine whether the applicant needs LAFD approval for a fire alarm. If not, the applicant goes to the next stage of the building permit approval process. If the plans require LAFD approval, the plan checker creates a Fire Clearance record in PCIS and provides the applicant the PCIS number and directs the applicant to the LAFD counter located at 201 North Figueroa, 3rd floor.</p> <p>4.3 The applicant obtains a ticket from the Q-Matic System on the 4th floor and then goes to the Fire Department located on the 3rd floor and waits for the Q-Number to be called.</p>

Exhibit 19 (4)

Fire Plan Check	Steps Involved
Fire Alarm Plan Check Application process (Cont'd)	<p>4.4 Once the applicant's Q-Number is called, the applicant goes to the counter. The Fire Department requests the applicant to complete the Division 15 Application form. Using the application form, the counter then inputs the application information into the Fire Schedule System (Firelog).</p> <p>4.5 At this time, the counter staff determines whether the plans can be reviewed over the counter or need to go the back room for plan check. If the plans can be checked over the counter, the plan checker uses PCIS to determine the value for calculating the plan check. Typically, tenant improvements can be checked over the counter but new construction is reviewed in the back room.</p> <p>4.5.1 If the plans are required to be checked in the back room, the applicant can pay for an expedited plan check fee. The expedited fee is based on the time required to complete the plan check including LAFD staff working overtime to complete the plan check. The counter staff calculate the plan check fee using PCIS to determine the valuation of the property. If the applicant opts for the expedited fee, the additional fee is added to the fee calculation.</p> <p>4.6 The plan checker invoices the applicant for the Fire Alarm Plan Check Fees. The plan checker uses an Excel spreadsheet to calculate the fees. The plan checker provides the applicant with the invoice and directs the applicant to pay the fees on the 4th floor.</p> <p>4.7 The applicant goes to the 4th floor to pay the fees.</p> <p>4.8 After paying the appropriate plan check fees, the applicant returns to the 3rd floor and the plan checker records the payment information in the Firelog system.</p>
Fire Alarm Plan Check Over-the-Counter	<p>5.1 The Fire Department plan checker reviews the fire alarm plans for compliance with Fire and Life Safety requirements. The Fire Department has a standard checklist used for reviewing plans.</p> <p>5.2 If exceptions are noted, the plan checker writes on the plans the corrections that need to be addressed. For over the counter plans, the applicant could fix the plans immediately or fix the plans later and return to the Fire Department counter at another time.</p> <p>5.3 Once the plans are corrected to the plan checker's satisfaction, the plan checker stamps each page of the plans with the Fire Department stamp and approves the clearance in PCIS.</p>
Fire Alarm Plan Check Backroom	<p>6.1 If the plans need to be checked in the back room, the Captain II for the unit assigns one the Fire Engineering Associate IV's to perform the plan check.</p> <p>6.2 The plan checker reviews the fire alarm plans for compliance with Fire and Life Safety requirements.</p> <p>6.3 If exceptions are noted, the plan checker writes on the plans the corrections that need to be addressed. When the initial plan check is completed, the plan checker notifies the applicant that the plan check is completed and corrections are needed.</p> <p>6.4 The applicant returns to 201 North Figueroa, 4th floor and obtains a Q-Matic ticket. Then, the applicant goes to the 3rd floor to gets in the queue for the Fire Department counter.</p>

Exhibit 19 (5)

Fire Plan Check	Steps Involved
Fire Alarm Plan Check Backroom	<p>6.5 When the applicant's Q-Number is called, the applicant proceeds to the counter to pick up the plans.</p> <p>6.6 The applicant corrects the plans, schedules a meeting with the plan checker, and returns to 201 North Figueroa, 4th floor to obtain a Q-Matic ticket.</p> <p>6.7 If the fire alarm plans are not corrected to the plan checker's satisfaction, the process returns to Step 3.6 above. If the plans are corrected to the Fire Department's satisfaction, the Fire Department stamps each page of the plans with the Fire Department stamp and approves the clearance in PCIS.</p> <p>6.8 The plan checker invoices the applicant for the fire alarm plan check fees beyond the initial plan check fees. The plan checker uses an Excel spreadsheet to calculate the fees. The plan checker provides the applicant with the invoice and directs the applicant to pay the fees on the 4th floor.</p> <p>6.9 The applicant goes to the 4th floor to pay the Fire Department's fees.</p> <p>6.10 The plan checker updates the status of the project in the Firelog system.</p>
Fire Department Connector Plan Check Application Process	<p>7.1 The Construction Services Unit is responsible for reviewing the Connector systems. The Connector System supplements the amount of water for sprinkler systems, allowing the Fire Department to put more water in the sprinkler systems in the event of a fire.</p> <p>7.2 Typically, when applicant applies for a mechanical permit for a fire sprinkler system, DBS will either whether the applicant needs LAFD approval for a Fire Department connector. If not, the applicant goes to the next stage of the building permit approval process. If the plans require LAFD approval, the plan checker creates a Fire Clearance record in PCIS and provides the applicant the PCIS number and directs the applicant to the LAFD counter located at 201 North Figueroa, 3rd floor.</p> <p>7.3 The applicant obtains a ticket from the Q-Matic System on the 4th floor and then goes to the Fire Department located on the 3rd floor and waits for the Q-Number to be called.</p> <p>7.4 Once the applicant's Q-Number is called, the applicant goes to the counter. The Fire Department requests the applicant to complete the Division 15 Application form. Using the application form, the counter then inputs the application information into the Fire Schedule System (Firelog).</p> <p>7.5 The Connector Systems are generally checked over the counter so the fee will be based on the over-the-counter plan check. The counter staff calculate the Connector plan check fee using PCIS to determine the valuation of the property.</p> <p>7.6 The plan checker invoices the applicant for the fire plan check fees. The plan checker uses an Excel spreadsheet to calculate the fees. The plan checker provides the applicant with the invoice and directs the applicant to pay the fees on the 4th floor.</p> <p>7.7 The applicant goes to the 4th floor to pay the Fire Department's fees.</p> <p>7.8 After paying the appropriate plan check fees, the applicant returns to the Fire Department on the 3rd floor. The plan checker records that the plan checks have been paid in the Firelog system.</p> <p>7.9 After the fees are paid, the plan checker starts the over-the-counter plan check for the Connector system.</p>

Exhibit 19 (6)

Fire Plan Check	Steps Involved
Fire Department Connector Plan Check Over-the-Counter	<p>8.1 The Fire Department plan checker reviews the fire alarm plans for compliance with Fire and Life Safety requirements. The Fire Department has a standard checklist used for reviewing plans.</p> <p>8.2 If exceptions are noted, the plan checker writes on the plans the corrections that need to be addressed. For over-the-counter plans, the applicant could fix the plans immediately or fix the plans later and return to the Fire Department counter at another time.</p> <p>8.3 Once the Connector plans are corrected to the plan checker's satisfaction, the plan checker stamps each page of the plans with the Fire Department stamp and approves the clearance in PCIS.</p>

8. ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT / ENGINEERING FUNCTIONS AND PROCESSES

This chapter presents an analysis of the public improvement / engineering permitting functions and processes including the following:

- The common functions and business processes that require inter-departmental cooperation and coordination, paying particular attention to the management and organization of the work;
- Recommendations that modify functions and business processes to enhance customer service;
- The identification of business processes where the use of memorandums of agreement between departments will be necessary; and
- The identification of how the existing management and organization of these functions and business processes either support or detract from the goals, objectives, and mission of the City of Los Angeles.

A summary of the recommendations contained within this chapter is presented after this page.

1. THE CYCLE TIME FOR PROCESSING OF PERMITS BY THE BUREAU OF ENGINEERING DOES NOT MEET METRICS USED BY THE MATRIX CONSULTING GROUP.

The Bureau of Engineering is responsible for B-permits and plan checking of tentative parcel maps, tentative tract maps, and final maps. The cycle time for B-permits and plan checking of tentative parcel maps, tentative tract maps, and Planning Case referrals are presented on the page following the exhibit.

Exhibit 20 (1)

**Summary of Recommendations
Contained within Chapter 8**

Rec. #	Recommendation
171	The Bureau of Engineering should require the B-permit applicant to provide an <i>Engineer's Estimate of Probable Costs</i> for all public improvements and work in the public right-of-way at the time of submittal of the B-permit application using an on-line spreadsheet or a City-provided form that includes unit costs.
172	The Bureau of Engineering should utilize the <i>Engineer's Estimate of Probable Costs</i> provided by the B-permit applicant to determine and collect the plan check and inspection deposit at the time of submittal of the B-permit application. The Bureau of Engineering should then immediately begin plan checking of the B-permit.
173	If the fees paid by the B-permit applicant are under-estimated, the Bureau should require the applicant to pay additional fees for plan check and inspection before completion of plan check and inspection.
174	The Bureau of Engineering should route the B-permit to other bureaus and departments using electronic plan check software, and not the applicant. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.
175	The Bureau of Engineering should require the B-permits engineer of record to submit the B-permit plans electronically at initial submittal so that the Bureau can route these plans electronically using electronic plan check software. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.
176	The Bureau of Engineering should not scan B-permit plans.
177	Before the Bureau of Engineering makes this shift to electronic plan check software, it should develop standards for submittal of these plans that includes all aspects of affected infrastructure (e.g., paving, traffic signals, signing and striping, storm drains, sewer, etc.).
178	The tentative tract map or parcel map application fee should be collected by the Department of Building and Safety at the time of the submittal by the applicant, and remitted to the Bureau of Engineering.
179	The Bureau of Engineering should not calculate the necessary tentative tract map or parcel map application fees for the Division to conduct the plan check, should not prepare a tentative tract map or parcel map application fee letter for the applicant, and should not require the applicant to travel to the Division's offices at 201 North Figueroa Street to pay the tentative tract map or parcel map application fee.
180	The Department of City Planning should route the tentative tract map or parcel map application directly to the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, to the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, to the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division, and to Caltrans (if the development project is near a freeway or State highway). This should occur when <i>BuildLA</i> goes "live" so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, by the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, and by the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division.

Exhibit 20 (2)

Rec. #	Recommendation
181	The staff at the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, at the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, and at the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division should plan check the tentative tract map or parcel map applications and respond directly to the Department of City Planning with the recommended conditions of approval. This should occur when <i>BuildLA</i> goes "live" so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, by the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, and by the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division.
182	The two (2) Civil Engineering Associate II's in the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering assigned responsibility for routing the tentative tract map or parcel map packets to the District offices and collating these documents and submitting them to the Department of City Planning should be reallocated to the District offices, as workload warrants, for the plan checking of tentative parcel and tract maps. This should occur when <i>BuildLA</i> goes "live" so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, by the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, and by the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division.
183	The responsibility for plan checking City Planning Department referrals, preparing reports to the Department of City Planning regarding conditions of approval / engineering recommendations, and preparing clearance memos to the Department of City Planning based upon a memo from the appropriate District Office and the Real Estate Group should be shifted to the District offices of the Bureau of Engineering. This should occur when <i>BuildLA</i> goes "live" so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering's District offices.
184	The Civil Engineering Associate II in the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering assigned responsibility for these tasks should be reassigned to the District offices of the Bureau of Engineering, as workload warrants, for the plan checking of City Planning Department referrals. This should occur when <i>BuildLA</i> goes "live".
185	With the transfer of the responsibility for processing of the Department of City Planning Referrals and the processing of final tract and parcel maps to District Offices of the Bureau of Engineering and the staff that are responsible for the processing of these permit applications – the Civil Engineering Associates – the Civil Engineer should also be transferred to the District offices, as workload requires. This should occur when <i>BuildLA</i> goes "live".
186	The Bureau of Engineering should clear the final map conditions by routing the final map to the departments and bureaus using the electronic plan check software. The applicant should not be required to clear the map. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.
187	The Bureau should require the final map engineer of record submit final map plans to the Bureau electronically so that the Bureau can route these plans electronically. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.
188	However, before the Bureau of Engineering makes this shift, it should develop standards for submittal of these plans that includes all aspects of affected infrastructure (e.g., paving, traffic signals, signing and striping, storm drains, sewer, etc.). This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.

Exhibit 20 (3)

Rec. #	Recommendation
189	Before the Bureau of Engineering begins to route these final maps and the documents necessary for clearances, it should work with these departments and bureaus to determine which clearances the Bureau of Engineering could provide itself without routing to other departments or bureaus, which clearances should be included as required submittals for the B-permit, which clearances should be required as part of the submittal for the final map, which clearances can be eliminated altogether, etc. This will require the roll-out of <i>BuildLA</i> to accomplish.
190	The Bureau of Engineering should accept the B-Permit plans on behalf of the Department of Transportation, and route the set of plans to the Department of Transportation. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.
191	The B-permit applicant should not be required to submit another set of B-Permit plans to the Department of Transportation B-permit Section located at 900 North Main Street on the 9 th floor.
192	The Department of Transportation should obtain the services of a consulting traffic engineer with expertise in traffic signal plan checking to provide backup and relief, and utilize the consultant when their staff is on vacation or otherwise unavailable.
193	The Bureau of Engineering should adopt cycle time metrics for B – permits: 30 calendar days for 1 st plan check from the date of submittal, 20 calendar days for 2 nd plan check from the date of re-submittal, and 10 days for 3 rd plan check from the date of re-submittal.
194	The Bureau of Engineering should utilize its existing automated permit information system to track and manage actual cycle times for B – permits by 1 st check, 2 nd check, 3 rd check, etc.
195	The cycle time objectives for B-permits should be applied on a citywide basis for all of the bureaus and departments involved in plan checking B – permits.
196	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the Bureau of Engineering to determine the amount of fee-based staffing required for B-permits to deliver this level of service and the impact on user fees.
197	The roles and responsibilities of the Bureau of Engineering for the case management of the B – permit process should be clearly identified in a citywide policy and procedure developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.
198	The Bureau of Engineering should assign a Civil Engineering Associate in the Private Development / Plan Check Group at the appropriate District Office of the Bureau of Engineering as a case manager for each B-permit application.
199	The Bureau of Engineering Private Development / Plan Check Group at the Van Nuys office should be authorized two additional Office Engineering Technician III positions for “bond control” or the responsibility for the processing of B-permit bond paperwork. Over time, the responsibility for the processing of B-permit bond paperwork should be shifted to each of the four Bureau of Engineering District offices; this will require an adjustment in position allocations among the District offices and in the allocation of responsibilities at the four District offices.
200	The professional-level engineers in the Bureau of Engineering’s Van Nuys office should not process the B-permit bond paperwork.

- The cycle time for the processing of B-permits exceeds metrics used by the Matrix Consulting Group.** Cycle times for B-permits plan checks are presented in the table below. This is based upon B-permits issued from July 2010 to August 2013. The table breaks down the plan check time for the Bureau of Engineering and for “others”. Others are either the applicant or the other bureaus or departments that review the plans such as the Bureau of Street Lighting, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Street Services - Urban Forestry, and the Bureau of Sanitation. The amount of calendar days for 1st plan check, 2nd plan check, etc., is not included. The data is available, but a “query” has not been developed within the Bureau of Engineering permit information system to identify the total time for the Bureau of Engineering to complete their plan check versus the total time for “others”. The cycle time required to plan check improvement plans for each bureau or department is not identified separately; the data is available, but a “query” has not been developed within the Bureau of Engineering permit information system.

Type of Plan Check	No. of Records	Average Time with BOE	Average Time with Others	Average Total Plan Check Time
Bond Estimate	554	25	N / A	25
Street	223	138	333	471
Sewer	103	87	348	435
Street Lighting	44	18	49	67
Traffic Signal(s)	40	152	28	180
Striping Plans	31	120	56	176

The metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group for the plan checking and issuance of a B-Permit by all involved divisions, bureaus, and departments is the completion of first plan check in 30 calendar days from submittal, the second plan check in 20 calendar days, and third plan check in 10 calendar days. This does not include the time required by applicants to make corrections and re-submit their B-Permit application, but does include the all of the time required by other City departments and bureaus such as the Bureau of Street Lighting, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Street Services / Urban Forestry, and Bureau of Sanitation.

- The cycle time for responding to Department of City Planning referrals for tentative parcel and tract maps exceeds metrics used by the Matrix Consulting Group.** Cycle times for the plan check of referrals from the Department of City Planning for tentative parcel maps and tentative tract maps exceeds metrics utilized by the Matrix Consulting Group. These cycle times for the past two years are presented in the two tables below: one for tentative tract maps and the other for tentative parcel maps.

Tentative Tract Map Cycle Time

Fiscal Year	No. of Referrals	Less than 39 Calendar Days		More than 39 Calendar Days, But Less than 49		More than 49 Calendar Days, But Less than 49	
		#	≤39%	40 - 49	40 - 49%	50 - 59	50 - 59%
2011/12	41	37	90.24%	2	5%	2	4.88%
2012/13	45	42	93.33%	3	6.67%	0	0%

Tentative Parcel Map Cycle Time

Fiscal Year	No. of Referrals	Less than 39 Calendar Days		More than 39 Calendar Days, But Less than 49		More than 49 Calendar Days, But Less than 49	
		#	≤39%	40 - 49	40 - 49%	50 - 59	50 - 59%
2011/12	25	23	92.00%	2	8.00%	0	0.00%
2012/13	44	43	97.73%	0	0.00%	1	2.27%

The cycle time metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group is 21 calendar days for the 1st plan check of these referrals, 14 calendar days for the 2nd plan check, and 7 calendar days for the 3rd plan check. The Bureau of Engineering does not meet these metrics. However, the Bureau of Engineering has developed its own metrics - completing the plan check of the tentative map within 39 calendar days – and mostly meets these metrics. However, the set of metrics that it does utilize could present problems for compliance with the *Permit Streamlining Act*. It is also important to note that the performance by the Bureau of Engineering has dramatically improved beginning in fiscal year 2009-10.

- **The cycle time for Planning Case Referrals exceeds metrics used by the Matrix Consulting Group.** The cycle times for the plan check of Planning Case referrals from the Department of City Planning for discretionary review cases exceeds metrics utilized by the Matrix Consulting Group. These cycle times for the past two years are presented in the table below.

Fiscal Year	No. of Referrals	< 39 Calendar Days		More than 39 Calendar Days, But Less than 49		More than 49 Calendar Days, But Less than 49		More than 60 Calendar Day	
		#	≤39%	40 - 49	40 - 49%	50 - 59	50 - 59%	>60	>60%
2011/12	52	50	96.15%	0	0.00%	1	1.92%	1	1.92%
2012/13	67	66	98.51%	1	1.49%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

The cycle time used by the Matrix Consulting Group is 21 calendar days for the 1st plan check of these referrals, 14 calendar days for the 2nd plan check, and 7 calendar days for the 3rd plan check. The Bureau of Engineering does not meet these metrics. However, the Bureau of Engineering has developed its own metrics - completing the plan check of the referral within 39 calendar days – and mostly meets these metrics. However, the set of metrics that it does utilize could present problems for compliance with the *Permit Streamlining Act*. It is also

important to note that the performance by the Bureau of Engineering has dramatically improved beginning in fiscal year 2009-10.

The Bureau of Engineering largely meets its own metrics for processing of tentative parcel maps and tract maps, and for Planning Case referrals; it is completing the plan check within 39 calendar days.

2. THE BUREAU OF ENGINEERING SHOULD STREAMLINE ITS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PROCESSES.

A Class “B” Permit (B-permit) is required for larger, more complex construction projects and new improvements in the public right-of-way. This includes projects such as widening of streets, changing street grade, installation of sewers, storm drains, streetlights and traffic control signals, or the installation of large quantities of curb, gutter, and sidewalk. Licensed engineers, retained by the B-permit applicant, prepare the B-permit plans. These plans are plan checked by City staff; the lead bureau for plan checking is the Bureau of Engineering.

The City’s existing B-permit process is presented in the first exhibit at the end of this chapter (exhibit 21). This process description was developed based upon interviews conducted by the Matrix Consulting Group with employees of the Bureau of Engineering. This process description was developed for a project involving a street widening, requiring expansion of the sanitary sewer system and the addition of street trees. This process description was reviewed with Bureau of Engineering employees, and modifications made to the process description based upon that feedback.

There are a number of positive aspects to this process. For example, the Bureau of Engineering scans the final B-permit plans (after other bureaus and divisions have plan checked them and corrections have been made by the applicant) and routes them electronically to other bureaus and divisions for the final plan check.

However, there still remain a number of opportunities to streamline the B-Permit process, and the other development services processes used by the Bureau. Recommendations regarding streamlining of the processes are presented below.

- (1) The Bureau Of Engineering Should Require the B-Permit Applicant to Provide an *Engineer's Estimate of Probable Costs* For All Public Improvements and Work in the Public Right-Of-Way at the Time of Submittal of the B-Permit, and Use that Estimate to Determine and Collect the Plan Check and Inspection Deposit at the Time of Submittal of the B-Permit.**

At the present time, the B-permit bond and fee estimating process occurs before plan checking of the B-permit. The Bureau of Engineering requires an average of 25 calendar days to process and complete the B-permit bond and fee estimate process, based upon information from the Bureau of Engineering's B-permit information system. Typically, most bond and fee estimate processes are completed in one check.

In this process, the Bureau of Engineering estimates the value of the applicant's public improvements for purposes of a surety or cash bond and estimates the plan check and inspection fee deposits associated with the B-permit. This is a significant workload for the permit processing staff of the Bureau of Engineering. In the Valley Office, for example, a total of 1.8 full-time equivalent engineers are allocated to "bond estimates and other functions."

Other cities and counties use an altogether different process than does the City of Los Angeles. The cities of San Diego and San Jose, and the counties of San Diego and Orange plan check the B-permit before completing the bond estimate. These cities and counties do not assign responsibility to their own staff to develop estimates of the value of the applicant's public improvements for purposes of a surety or cash bond and the plan check and inspection deposits. Rather, these local governments require

applicants to submit engineered estimates based on detailed cost schedules for different types of construction, prepared by a licensed engineer. The estimates are utilized to estimate the fees (or deposit) to be paid by the applicant at submittal, not the bond, while the applicant is at the counter.

The City of San Jose, for example, requires the applicant's licensed engineer to use the City's Excel spreadsheet template (provided in the City's web site), and prepare an engineer's estimate showing unit prices, quantity and extensions for all construction items, and to also calculate the fee by applying the cost of construction from the engineer's estimate to the current fee schedule. In addition, San Jose does not require the issuance of surety or cash bond before initiating the plan check of their B-permits. The City collects the plan check fees (or deposit) and then initiates plan checking of B-permits immediately. Only at the final submittal, after corrections have been made, will the City require the surety or cash bond. This enables the City to initiate plan check, and not delay the start of that process pending determination of the appropriate value of the bond and the associated plan check and inspection fees.

The Bureau of Engineering already has an on-line project cost estimator, built into the B-permit automated information system that provides item unit costs. This unit cost has been calculated based upon cost information analyzed from public works projects built over the last five years. For each cost item on the project, the Bureau of Engineering enters the unit of measure and the estimated quantities and the system provides the unit cost and the total cost for each line item. In addition, the Bureau of Engineering includes a 15% contingency and rounds up to the nearest thousand. The

B-permit application also estimates the plan check and inspection fees and deposits based upon the valuation of the construction.

The Bureau of Engineering already has developed the requisite automated approach to determine the bond and associated fees. It should shift the responsibility from its own staff to the B-permit applicant, and verify the estimate during the plan check process. Since the Bureau uses a time and materials approach to its fees for the B-permit, it can require the applicant to pay additional fees for plan check and inspection should the initial estimate be less than actual costs.

It is a prevailing practice to require the B-permit applicant in other cities and counties to require applicants to provide an *Engineer's Estimate of Probable Costs* for all public improvements and work in the public right-of-way at the time of submittal of the B-permit using an on-line spreadsheet or a City-provided form that includes unit costs. It is a prevailing practice to immediately begin the plan check after submittal based upon the applicant's *Engineer's Estimate of Probable Costs*, with the Bureau of Engineering in these other cities verifying the costs during plan check.

The Bureau of Engineering should utilize the *Engineer's Estimate of Probable Costs* prepared by the B-permit applicant to accept the fees at submittal of the B-permit, and then immediately begin plan checking the B-permit. If these fees are underestimated, the Bureau can require the applicant to pay additional fees for plan check and inspection.

Recommendation #171: The Bureau of Engineering should require the B-permit applicant to provide an *Engineer's Estimate of Probable Costs* for all public improvements and work in the public right-of-way at the time of submittal of the B-permit application using an on-line spreadsheet or a City-provided form that includes unit costs.

Recommendation #172: The Bureau of Engineering should utilize the *Engineer's Estimate of Probable Costs* provided by the B-permit applicant to determine and collect the plan check and inspection deposit at the time of submittal of the B-permit application. The Bureau of Engineering should then immediately begin plan checking of the B-permit.

Recommendation #173: If the fees paid by the B-permit applicant are underestimated, the Bureau should require the applicant to pay additional fees for plan check and inspection before completion of plan check and inspection.

(2) The Bureau Of Engineering Should Route the B-Permit Application and Plans to other City Bureaus and Departments, Not the Applicant, Using Electronic Plan Check Submittal Software

At the present time, the applicants deliver the B-permit plans to other Bureaus and Divisions for plan checking as noted below.

- If the project involves street lighting work, the applicant delivers a set of the B-Permit application and plans to the Bureau of Street Lighting at 1149 S. Broadway, 4th floor.
- If the project involves traffic signal work, the applicant delivers a set of plans to the Department of Transportation, 100 North Main Street, 9th floor.

Currently, applicants have assumed the responsibility for obtaining plan check and approval of B-permit plans from the bureaus and departments.

The other local governments contacted by the Matrix Consulting Group assumed that responsibility themselves.

The Bureau of Engineering should assume responsibility for the coordination of the plan checking of the B-permit plans by all of the other bureaus and departments using the electronic plan check software. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety. This should include (1) routing the plans and submittals to other bureaus and departments, and (2) receipt of corrections from the other bureaus and departments and (3) forwarding of these corrections to the applicant.

Recommendation #174: The Bureau of Engineering should route the B-permit to other bureaus and departments using electronic plan check software, and not the applicant. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.

(3) The Bureau of Engineering Should Require the Engineer of Record for the B-Permit Applicant to Submit an Electronic Copy of the B-Permit Plans and Construction Drawings at Submittal.

At the present time, after the Bureau of Engineering and the other bureaus have completed their plan checking of the B-permit plans, the Bureau of Engineering scans the plans and electronically routes the corrected plans to other bureaus (e.g., Bureau of Street Lighting, if the project involves streetlights, and the Department of Transportation, if the project involves street striping, pavement legends, and traffic signals) for final plan check.

The Bureau should not scan these plans. It should require the B-permit engineer of record to submit these plans electronically so that the Bureau can route these plans electronically at initial submittal. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.

However, before the Bureau of Engineering makes this shift, it should develop standards for submittal of these plans that includes all aspects of affected infrastructure (e.g., paving, traffic signals, signing and striping, storm drains, sewer, etc.).

Los Angeles County already appears to enable electronic submittal by applicants. A number of other organizational also utilize this technology.

Recommendation #175: The Bureau of Engineering should require the B-permits engineer of record to submit the B-permit plans electronically at initial submittal so that the Bureau can route these plans electronically using electronic plan check software. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.

Recommendation #176: The Bureau of Engineering should not scan B-permit plans.

Recommendation #177: Before the Bureau of Engineering makes this shift to electronic plan check software, it should develop standards for submittal of these plans that includes all aspects of affected infrastructure (e.g., paving, traffic signals, signing and striping, storm drains, sewer, etc.).

(4) The Department of Building and Safety Should Collect the Tract or Parcel Map Fees on Behalf of the Bureau of Engineering.

At the present time, the Department of City Planning routes a tentative tract map or parcel map to the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering, for plan checking. The Bureau of Engineering is just one of many departments that the Department of City Planning routes these discretionary review applications; the other departments potentially include the Transportation, Fire, Recreation and Parks, and Water and Power, and the Bureau of Street Lighting.

The Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering, upon receipt of the referral, will calculate the necessary fees for the Division to conduct the plan check, prepare a fee letter for the applicant, and require the applicant to travel to the Division's offices at 201 North Figueroa Street to pay the fee.

The tentative tract map or parcel map application fee should be collected by the Department of Building and Safety at each construction service center at the time of the submittal by the applicant, with the fees being remitted to the Bureau of Engineering. This will require co-location of Subdivisions staff of the Department of City Planning to the Metro construction services center and to the West Los Angeles construction services center, as recommended in a subsequent chapter.

The Bureau of Engineering should not calculate the necessary fees for the Division to conduct the plan check, should not prepare a fee letter for the applicant, and

should not require the applicant to travel to the Division's offices at 201 North Figueroa Street to pay the fee.

Recommendation #178: The tentative tract map or parcel map application fee should be collected by the Department of Building and Safety at the time of the submittal by the applicant, and remitted to the Bureau of Engineering.

Recommendation #179: The Bureau of Engineering should not calculate the necessary tentative tract map or parcel map application fees for the Division to conduct the plan check, should not prepare a tentative tract map or parcel map application fee letter for the applicant, and should not require the applicant to travel to the Division's offices at 201 North Figueroa Street to pay the tentative tract map or parcel map application fee.

(5) The Department of City Planning Should Distribute the Tentative Tract Map or Parcel Map Directly to the District Offices of the Bureau of Engineering Upon "Go Live" of *BuildLA*.

At the present time, the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering routes the tentative tract map or parcel map packet for plan checking to the Bureau of Engineering's District Offices, to the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, to the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division, and to Caltrans (if the development project is near a freeway or State highway). After each of these division's completes their plan checking of the tentative tract map or parcel map packet, these Division's submit a written document to the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering regarding recommended conditions of approval for the tentative tract map or parcel map application.

Two staff at the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering are assigned this responsibility: two Civil Engineering Associate II's. These two Civil Engineering Associate II's of the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering do not actually plan check the tentative tract map or parcel map application themselves. These two

staff also represent the Bureau of Engineering at public hearings on Bureau of Engineering issues.

The Department of City Planning should route the tentative tract map or parcel map application directly to the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, to the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, to the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division, and to Caltrans (if the development project is near a freeway or State highway). The staff at the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, at the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, and at the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division should plan check the tentative tract map or parcel map applications and respond directly to the Department of City Planning with the recommended conditions of approval.

The two (2) Civil Engineering Associate II's in the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering assigned responsibility for routing the tentative tract map or parcel map packets to the District offices and collating these documents and submitting them to the Department of City Planning should be reallocated to the District offices as workload warrants for the plan checking of tentative parcel and tract maps.

This should occur when *BuildLA* goes "live" so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, to the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, to the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division.

Recommendation #180: The Department of City Planning should route the tentative tract map or parcel map application directly to the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, to the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, to the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division, and to Caltrans (if the development project is near a freeway or State highway). This should occur when *BuildLA* goes "live" so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering's District

offices, by the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, and by the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division.

Recommendation #181: The staff at the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, at the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, and at the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division should plan check the tentative tract map or parcel map applications and respond directly to the Department of City Planning with the recommended conditions of approval. This should occur when *BuildLA* goes "live" so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, by the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, and by the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division.

Recommendation #182: The two (2) Civil Engineering Associate II's in the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering assigned responsibility for routing the tentative tract map or parcel map packets to the District offices and collating these documents and submitting them to the Department of City Planning should be reallocated to the District offices, as workload warrants, for the plan checking of tentative parcel and tract maps. This should occur when *BuildLA* goes "live" so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering's District offices, by the Bureau of Engineering's Geotechnical Division, and by the Bureau of Engineering's Survey Division.

(6) Other Department of City Planning Referrals to the Bureau of Engineering Should Also Be Plan Checked by the District Offices of the Bureau of Engineering.

At the present time, a Civil Engineering Associate in the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering is responsible for plan checking City Planning Department referrals including zoning administration cases involving new construction or additional dwelling units or floor area, zone changes, conditional use permits, zone variances, site plan reviews, etc. This responsibility includes preparation of a report to the Department of City Planning regarding conditions of approval / engineering recommendations regarding street dedications and public improvements including realignments, storm drains, sewers, and street trees, and preparation of clearance

memos to the Department of City Planning based upon a memo from the appropriate District Office and the Real Estate Group.

The responsibility for plan checking City Planning Department referrals, preparing reports to the Department of City Planning regarding conditions of approval / engineering recommendations, and preparing clearance memos to the Department of City Planning based upon a memo from the appropriate District office and the Real Estate Group should be shifted to the District offices of the Bureau of Engineering. This will be more convenient for applicants, and fulfill the meaning of construction services centers.

This should occur when *BuildLA* goes “live” so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering’s District offices.

The Civil Engineering Associate II in the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering assigned responsibility for these tasks should be reassigned to the District offices of the Bureau of Engineering as workload warrants for the plan checking of City Planning Department referrals.

Recommendation #183: The responsibility for plan checking City Planning Department referrals, preparing reports to the Department of City Planning regarding conditions of approval / engineering recommendations, and preparing clearance memos to the Department of City Planning based upon a memo from the appropriate District Office and the Real Estate Group should be shifted to the District offices of the Bureau of Engineering. This should occur when *BuildLA* goes “live” so that the Department of City Planning can effectively monitor the timeliness of the responses by the Bureau of Engineering’s District offices.

Recommendation #184: The Civil Engineering Associate II in the Land Development Division, Bureau of Engineering assigned responsibility for these tasks should be reassigned to the District offices of the Bureau of Engineering, as workload warrants, for the plan checking of City Planning Department referrals. This should occur when *BuildLA* goes “live”.

(7) The Civil Engineer Assigned to the Processing of Department of City Planning Department Referrals, the Operation of the Land Development Group Public Counter and the Processing of Final Tract and Parcel Maps Should Be Reassigned to the District Offices.

There is a Civil Engineer that is responsible for the supervises a Civil Engineering Associate III, three Civil Engineering Associates II and one Principal Clerk in the review of tentative tract and parcel maps, City Planning Department applications, the operation of the Land Development Group public counter and the processing of final tract and parcel maps.

With the transfer of the responsibility for processing of the Department of City Planning Referrals and the processing of final tract and parcel maps to District offices of the Bureau of Engineering and the staff that are responsible for the processing of these permit applications – the Civil Engineering Associates – the Civil Engineer should also be transferred to the District offices, as workload requires.

This should occur when *BuildLA* goes “live”.

Recommendation #185: With the transfer of the responsibility for processing of the Department of City Planning Referrals and the processing of final tract and parcel maps to District Offices of the Bureau of Engineering and the staff that are responsible for the processing of these permit applications – the Civil Engineering Associates – the Civil Engineer should also be transferred to the District offices, as workload requires. This should occur when *BuildLA* goes “live”.

(8) The Bureau of Engineering Should Provide the Clearances for Final Maps From Other Departments and Not Require the Applicant to Obtain the Clearances from Other Departments.

At the present time, the Bureau of Engineering requires the final map applicant to obtain clearances from other departments. Typically, the applicant for a large condominium project would be required to meet with numerous departments or bureaus

to clear the nineteen (19) conditions specified in the Advisory Agency's decision letter. This would range from meeting with the Department of Building and Safety Grading Division to provide evidence of compliance with the grading requirements established in the Soils Approval Letter; with the Department of Transportation to provide evidence of compliance with parking, driveway, security gate spacing requirements, and specific Transportation Improvement and Mitigation Specific Plan requirements; with the Fire Department to include certification from the Department of Building and Safety that no building or zoning code violations exist, there is adequate hydrant access, there are fully operational hydrants, there is adequate access for fire apparatus, fire sprinkler systems have been installed, stairwell access is adequate, location of the fire annunciator panels is identified in the plans, rescue windows meet accessibility standards, fire lanes and location of the lobby are identified; etc.

The Bureau should take two steps to streamline this process.

First, the Bureau of Engineering should clear the conditions, not the applicant. It should route the final map to these departments and bureaus, with all of the other documents necessary to provide these clearances. The Bureau presently routes a hard copy of the final map packet through the inter-departmental mail to the appropriate District Office, Department of Water and Power, Urban Forestry, Bureau of Streetlights, Recreation and Parks, Mapping, and the County Engineer. The Bureau should require the final map engineer of record to submit final map plans to the Bureau electronically so that the Bureau can route these plans electronically. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.

However, before the Bureau of Engineering makes this shift, it should develop standards for submittal of these plans that includes all aspects of affected infrastructure (e.g., paving, traffic signals, signing and striping, storm drains, sewer, etc.). Los Angeles County already appears to enable electronic submittal by applicants. A number of other organizational also utilize this technology.

Second, before the Bureau begins to route these final maps and the documents necessary for clearances, it should work with these departments and bureaus to determine which clearances the Bureau could provide itself without routing to other departments of bureaus or which clearances can be eliminated altogether. For example:

- Receiving the payment of the Quimby fee on behalf of the Recreation and Parks Department should be a clearance that the Bureau should be able to provide itself (with the roll-out of *BuildLA*).
- Other clearances should be included as required submittals for the B-permit (e.g., compliance with the conditions and requirements of the Bureau of Sanitation, Wastewater Collection Systems Division) or included as standard conditions (e.g., the Information Technology Agency requirement that the applicant ensure that cable television facilities be installed in the same manner as other public improvements, the requirement that the applicant shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City). These changes would require policy and ordinance changes.
- Other clearances should be required as part of the submittal for the final map (e.g., the requirement by the Department of City Planning regarding construction mitigation measures that the applicant prepare and execute a covenant and agreement binding the applicant and all successors to all of the construction mitigation conditions specified in the decision letter). This would likely impact the staffing required by the Bureau of Engineering for processing of B-permits.

The clearance process for final maps is much more complicated than necessary. The Bureau of Engineering should take a leadership position in simplifying and streamlining the clearance process for final maps.

Recommendation #186: The Bureau of Engineering should clear the final map conditions by routing the final map to the departments and bureaus using the

electronic plan check software. The applicant should not be required to clear the map. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.

Recommendation #187: The Bureau should require the final map engineer of record submit final map plans to the Bureau electronically so that the Bureau can route these plans electronically. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.

Recommendation #188: However, before the Bureau of Engineering makes this shift, it should develop standards for submittal of these plans that includes all aspects of affected infrastructure (e.g., paving, traffic signals, signing and striping, storm drains, sewer, etc.). This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.

Recommendation #189: Before the Bureau of Engineering begins to route these final maps and the documents necessary for clearances, it should work with these departments and bureaus to determine which clearances the Bureau of Engineering could provide itself without routing to other departments or bureaus, which clearances should be included as required submittals for the B-permit, which clearances should be required as part of the submittal for the final map, which clearances can be eliminated altogether, etc. This will require the roll-out of *BuildLA* to accomplish.

(9) Some Minor Modifications Should Be Made In The Department Of Transportation B-Permit Plan Check Process.

The Department of Transportation's existing B-permit plan check process is presented in the second exhibit at the end of this chapter (exhibit 22). This process description was developed based upon interviews conducted by the Matrix Consulting Group with employees of the Department of Transportation. The process description was reviewed with Department of Transportation employees, and modifications made to the process description based upon that feedback.

After the B-permit applicant has submitted their B-permit application to the Bureau of Engineering, the applicant is also required to submit another set of plans to

the Department of Transportation B-permit Section located at 900 North Main Street on the 9th floor.

The Bureau of Engineering should accept the B-permit plans on behalf of the Department of Transportation, and route the set of plans to the Department of Transportation. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.

The B-permit applicant should not be required to submit another set of B-permit plans to the Department of Transportation B-permit Section located at 900 North Main Street on the 9th floor.

In addition, only one staff with expertise in plan checking traffic signal plans is normally available; when this staff is on vacation, traffic signal plans can back up. The Department of Transportation should obtain the services of a consulting traffic engineer with expertise in traffic signal plan checking to provide backup and relief, and utilize the consultant when their staff is on vacation or otherwise unavailable.

Recommendation #190: The Bureau of Engineering should accept the B-Permit plans on behalf of the Department of Transportation, and route the set of plans to the Department of Transportation. This should be based upon the implementation of electronic plan submittal and plan check by the Department of Building and Safety.

Recommendation #191: The B-permit applicant should not be required to submit another set of B-Permit plans to the Department of Transportation B-permit Section located at 900 North Main Street on the 9th floor.

Recommendation #192: The Department of Transportation should obtain the services of a consulting traffic engineer with expertise in traffic signal plan checking to provide backup and relief, and utilize the consultant when their staff is on vacation or otherwise unavailable.

3. THE BUREAU OF ENGINEERING SHOULD IMPROVE THE MANAGEMENT OF ITS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PROCESSES.

At the same time that the Bureau of Engineering is streamlining its development services process, it should also enhance the management of that process. Opportunities to enhance the management of the process are presented below.

(1) The Bureau of Engineering Should Adopt Cycle Time Metrics for the Plan Checking of B – Permits.

The Bureau of Engineering should develop and publish cycle time goals for plan checking of B – permits that includes all of the bureaus and departments that will be involved in plan checking B – permits, not just the Bureau of Engineering. These cycle time goals should be communicated to applicants at the B – permit counter and also via the Bureau of Engineering’s website.

The Matrix Consulting Group recommends that the City adopt the cycle time metrics for B-permits contained in the following table. The cycle time metric is expressed in calendar days, and only represents the amount of time required for the City (all bureaus, divisions, and departments collectively), not the applicant.

Type of Permit	1 st Check	2 nd Check	3 rd Check
B - Permit	30 calendar days from the date of submittal	20 calendar days from the date of resubmittal	10 calendar days from the date of resubmittal

The Bureau of Engineering, overall, does not meet these cycle time metrics for B-Permits.

The Bureau of Engineering should adopt these cycle time metrics and, when implemented, should monitor actual performance against these cycle time metrics. This would provide the following benefits:

- Clear communication by the Bureau of Engineering to its customers of expected cycle time metrics before a project begins;

- Reinforcement of the need for complete application submittals to expedite B-permit plan check processes; and
- Continuous process improvement for the Bureau of Engineering as a result of tracking performance against established objectives. The Bureau of Engineering staff should plan how to meet cycle time expectations, perform the work accordingly, measure their performance, and act on findings to improve the process. This would include the need for additional staff.

The Bureau of Engineering should track and manage actual cycle times for B – permits by 1st check, 2nd check, 3rd check, etc., and for all reviewing bureaus and departments (Department of Transportation, Bureau of Street Lighting, Bureau of Sanitation, etc.).

The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the Bureau of Engineering to determine the amount of fee-based staffing required for B-permits to deliver this level of service and the impact on user fees.

Recommendation #193: The Bureau of Engineering should adopt cycle time metrics for B – permits: 30 calendar days for 1st plan check from the date of submittal, 20 calendar days for 2nd plan check from the date of re-submittal, and 10 days for 3rd plan check from the date of re-submittal.

Recommendation #194: The Bureau of Engineering should track and manage actual cycle times for B – permits by 1st check, 2nd check, 3rd check, etc.

Recommendation #195: The cycle time objectives for B-permits should be applied on a citywide basis for all of the bureaus and departments involved in plan checking B – permits.

Recommendation #196: The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the Bureau of Engineering to determine the amount of fee-based staffing required for B-permits to deliver this level of service and the impact on user fees.

(2) The Bureau of Engineering Should Provide Case Management Services for B-Permits on a Citywide Basis.

The provision of case management services – a single point of contact that manages the process on behalf of the applicant – is a prevailing practice in cities, including large cities like San Diego, San Jose, and Portland.

The Bureau of Engineering should be assigned responsibility to function as the case manager in the review of B – permits on a citywide basis, to assure the review by all disciplines (Building and Safety, Transportation, Bureau of Street Services, etc.) is timely, predictable, coordinated, and that the application gets to a decision according to adopted cycle time goals. The Bureau of Engineering, empowered as a team leader of a multi-discipline review team, should be a critical feature of the Bureau of Engineering's B - permit process. The Bureau of Engineering should make the B - permit review process seamless to the applicant.

More specifics regarding the role of the Bureau of Engineering are presented in the paragraphs below.

- The Bureau of Engineering is there to make sure reviews of B - permit applications are timely, that the review process is predictable, and that the application gets to a decision point in a timely manner. The Bureau of Engineering should accomplish this by monitoring a schedule for the plan checking of B-permits for its own staff and those of other staff in other bureaus, divisions, and departments that are also plan checking these same B-permits.
- The Bureau of Engineering would serve as the applicant's single point of contact. The applicant should be able to call a Civil Engineering Associate assigned to the Private Development / Plan Check Group at the appropriate District Office in the Bureau of Engineering at any time. The applicant should still be able to call any member of the B - permit review team directly -- they'll still have to answer questions concerning plan review on specific items such as traffic signal or streetlight requirements -- but a Civil Engineering Associate assigned to the Private Development / Plan Check Group at the appropriate District Office in the Bureau of Engineering should be responsible for managing the reviews and always be there to handle complex issues and pulling these comments from the

team together. That Civil Engineering Associate should act as the case manager for the B-permit application.

- A Civil Engineering Associate assigned to the Private Development / Plan Check Group at the appropriate District Office in the Bureau of Engineering is not an advocate for a B - permit application, but he or she will make sure the applicant gets to a clear decision point in a timely basis. That Civil Engineering Associate is not an advocate for an application, and cannot design it for the applicant. A Civil Engineering Associate, however, will make sure the applicant fully understands the City's requirements. That Civil Engineering Associate should also ensure that issues are identified early in the process, so the Bureau of Engineering can suggest ways to modify the applicant's project to achieve a complete application.
- If an issue arises with the review of the B - permit application with which the applicant doesn't agree, the Civil Engineering Associate assigned to the Private Development / Plan Check Group at the appropriate District Office in the Bureau of Engineering is the applicant's contact to get the issue resolved.
- A Civil Engineering Associate assigned to the Private Development / Plan Check Group at the appropriate District Office in the Bureau of Engineering is there to ensure the B - permit application review proceeds in a timely and predictable fashion. This would include providing deadlines to other bureaus and departments to complete their plan check of B-Permit applications.
- A Civil Engineering Associate assigned to the Private Development / Plan Check Group at the appropriate District Office in the Bureau of Engineering should be responsible for complete and timely communication among the multi-disciplinary team. That Civil Engineering Associate makes sure communications occurs within the multi-disciplinary team, the schedule required by the cycle time objectives is met and complex issues are resolved, such as when conditions of approval conflict. That Civil Engineering Associate should lead any discussions that focus on resolving conflicting conditions of approval or competing code requirements. His or her job is to keep the review of the B- permit application coordinated and predictable.
- The role of the Bureau of Engineering in the case management of B - permits should be clarified in a written policy by the Office of the City Administrative Officer. The responsibility and authority, in addition to that previously identified, should include:
 - Providing deadlines to other bureaus and departments to complete their plan check of B-permit applications;
 - Collecting and integrating comments from other bureaus and departments;

- Resolving problems between bureaus and departments such as conflicting conditions;
- Assuring that the conditions of approval suggested by other bureaus and departments are reasonable;
- Analyzing the B-permit application;
- Working with the B-permit applicant to resolve problems and revise the project as appropriate;
- Changing from a regulator and collector of other's opinions to a problem solver who is focused on how to get the B-permit job done and build a better community;
- Functioning as an advocate for the B-permit process (maintaining timelines and seeing that the schedule required by the cycle time objectives are met by all participating bureaus and departments); and
- Promptly reviewing and issuing notifications of omissions or problems with the project.

In summary, a Civil Engineering Associate assigned to the Private Development / Plan Check Group at the appropriate District Office in the Bureau of Engineering should be a team leader and case manager for a multi-disciplinary team from other participating bureaus and departments, keeping the review of a B - permit application on track, making sure issues involving conflicting conditions of approval or standard specifications are resolved (conflicts between participating bureaus and departments), charting a clear course for the B-permit applicant through the review process, and making sure issues regarding the application are identified early in the review process. That Civil Engineering Associate is not an advocate for a planning permit application, nor is he / she responsible for the design or redesign of an application

Recommendation #197: The roles and responsibilities of the Bureau of Engineering for the case management of the B – permit process should be clearly identified in a citywide policy and procedure developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.

Recommendation #198: The Bureau of Engineering should assign a Civil Engineering Associate in the Private Development / Plan Check Group at the appropriate District Office of the Bureau of Engineering as a case manager for each B-permit application.

(3) The Bureau of Engineering Should Assign an Employee in Each of its Offices as the “Bond Control”.

With the exception of subdivisions, there are two Bureau of Engineering employees that process the “paperwork” for B – permit bonds: two professional-level engineers. Previously, the Bureau used paraprofessionals to provide this service: Improvement Bond Coordinators. These positions were recently eliminated as the City downsized.

The two professional-level engineers assigned to process the “paperwork” for B – permit bonds are located at the Van Nuys office. The professional-level engineers process the B-Permit bond paperwork in the Van Nuys office as noted below:

The applicant needs to submit a bond application package with corresponding bond preparation fee to “Bond Control”. The bond application package consists of a copy of the bond estimate, provided by the B-permit plan check / bond estimate engineer, the application for Bond Preparation (completed by the applicant), and the appropriate title report for the property. The applicant submits the bond application package to “Bond Control”, which is located only at the Valley District Office. (Subdivision bonds can be submitted to the Land Development Group downtown).

In essence, any applicant, except subdivisions, is required to submit the bond application package with corresponding bond preparation fee to the Van Nuys office.

The applicant should be able to submit the bond application package with corresponding bond preparation fee to any of the four Bureau of Engineering District offices.

The Bureau processes approximately 40 bond estimates a month. The Bureau has four offices involved in the processing of B-Permits.

The Bureau of Engineering should assign Office Engineering Technician III position in each of its four offices the responsibility for the processing of B-Permit bond paperwork. A paraprofessional position should be responsible in the Bureau of Engineering for processing the paperwork associated with bonds; a professional engineer should not be used to provide this service in the Bureau of Engineering's Van Nuys office or any of its other offices.

The Office Engineering Technician classification description allows for the performance of "routine, moderately difficult, or difficult office engineering work of a sub-professional character in making computations, preparing plans, specifications and samples, and compiling or assisting in compiling data required for the preparation of engineering reports, estimates, designs, specifications, schedules plans and the coordination of engineering projects; may supervise such work; and does related work." The classification description also states that "some Office Engineering Technician positions require familiarity with engineering techniques and the ability to make engineering calculations. Employees assigned to these positions usually work without close supervision, however, most of the sub-professional office engineering work is repetitive or follows standard procedures."

The addition of this responsibility to the four District offices should not require the addition of four full-time positions (or one at each office), but the Office of the City Administrative Officer should discuss the workload impacts with the Bureau of Engineering and how best to mitigate these workload impacts.

As it stands at the present time, the Van Nuys office is using two professional-level engineers for “Bond Control”; this workload should be reassigned to paraprofessional positions, which would require the addition of two Office Engineering Technician III positions given current work processes. This workload includes review of legal documents for specific signature authorities and legal ownership of property; tracking permits being routed to and from the applicant; correspondence with permit applicants regarding deposit account balances and insurance requirements; opening new permits; ensuring proper documentation for the construction phase of permit, tracking “as built” drawing status; closing out of completed permits; etc. None of this work requires a professional – level engineer.

Recommendation #199: The Bureau of Engineering Private Development / Plan Check Group at the Van Nuys office should be authorized two additional Office Engineering Technician III positions for “bond control” or the responsibility for the processing of B-permit bond paperwork. Over time, the responsibility for the processing of B-permit bond paperwork should be shifted to each of the four Bureau of Engineering District offices; this will require an adjustment in position allocations among the District offices and in the allocation of responsibilities at the four District offices.

Recommendation #200: The professional-level engineers in the Bureau of Engineering’s Van Nuys office should not process the B-permit bond paperwork.

Exhibit 21 (1)

**B-Permit Project Involving Street Widening,
Expansion Of The Existing Sewer System,
Adding Street Lighting And Adding Trees**

B-Permit Processes	Steps Involved
Application	<p>1.1 To apply for a B-Permit, the applicant must go in person to one of four District offices. The District Office locations are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Central (Downtown LA) located at the 201 North Figueroa (b) Valley (Van Nuys) located at 6262 Van Nuys Blvd (c) Harbor (San Pedro) located at 638 S. Beacon Street (d) West LA located at 1828 Sawtelle Blvd., 3rd floor <p>1.2 The applicant applies initially for or a design phase B permit. For a design phase B permit, the bond and insurance are not required for the permit issuance. However, if a building permit clearance is needed, the applicant must pay the plan check and inspection deposit and secure the bond and liability insurance to guarantee the public improvement construction before the building permit clearance is issued.</p>
B-Permit Bond and Fee Estimate	<p>2.1 Prior to submitting for a plan check, the application submits an application for a "B" Permit Bond and Fee Estimate. This is first step in the B Permit application process. At this point, the initial request for opening a B Permit is started. Upon submittal of the application package and payment of the estimate deposit (\$2,000), BOE prepares a "Permit Bond and Fee Deposit Estimate". This document is used to estimate the value of the applicant's improvements and to estimate the plan check and inspection fee deposits associated with the project. The applicant is required to obtain a bond, either cash or surety, to protect the City in the event the applicant defaults on the project. Also, the estimate of plan check and inspection fee deposit is determined to establish the amount of the applicant's deposit. At the end of the project, any excess monies on deposit will be returned to the applicant and the bond exonerated. On the other hand, if accrued charges exceed the deposit, the applicant will be billed for the deficit. The applicant's submittal package for "Permit Bond and Fee Deposit Estimate" includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Deposit of \$2,000 (b) Required conditions of approval for the project (c) B-Permit application (d) Engineer's quantity take-off (On the private engineer's letterhead or stamped by the private engineer), which is also used in determining the value of the improvements to be installed.

Exhibit 21 (2)

B-Permit Processes	Steps Involved
B-Permit Bond and Fee Estimate (Cont'd)	<p>(e) The applicant is also required to create an online account to allow the applicant to monitor the progress of the B-Permit on-line and have access to documents made available by plan checkers.</p> <p>(f) If the project involves traffic signal work, the applicant must also submit a set of plans to the Department of Transportation (DOT) in Downtown Los Angeles at 900 North Main Street, 9th floor</p> <p>2.2 The District's Office counter staff review the application to determine if it is complete. If application is not complete, the application is rejected. If it is complete, the counter staff/ B permit coordinator creates a new entry in the B Permit application system. The permit is assigned a number and work order is opened in the system. The B permit coordinator/counter staff also create a hard copy folder that will be used to file permit and plan information.</p> <p>2.3 The B permit coordinator/counter staff routes the plans to a supervising engineer who assigns it to bond estimate / plan check engineer to prepare the estimate. For this project, Urban Forestry and Street Lighting would need to be notified to provide quantity information for adding trees and streetlights.</p> <p>2.4 The bond estimate / plan check engineer prepares the estimate of the cost of the improvements to be installed, as well as the plan check and inspection fees deposits for the project. The estimates usually take approximately one to two weeks to complete but the District Office has a backlog of work so the estimates are usually completed within four weeks of submittal. To determine the estimated cost of the project, the engineer uses a project cost estimator, built into the B permit application that provides item unit costs. This unit cost has been calculated based upon cost information analyzed from public works projects built over the last five years. For each cost item on the project, the engineer enters the unit of measure and the estimated quantities and the system provides the unit cost and the total cost for each line item. In addition, the engineer includes a 15% contingency and rounds up to the nearest thousand. The B permit application also estimates the plan check and inspection fees deposits based upon the valuation of the construction. As noted above, the Urban Forestry Division and the Bureau of Street Lighting need to provide cost information on this project. Urban Forestry staff may drive to the site and determine the number of trees needed and cost them out accordingly. Street Lighting needs to determine the number of new streetlights that would be needed. These items would be included in the bond estimate.</p>

Exhibit 21 (3)

B-Permit Processes	Steps Involved
B-Permit Bond Preparation	<p>2.5 After the bond estimate, plan check engineer has completed the estimate, the supervising engineer reviews the estimate and either approves it or sends back for additional work.</p> <p>2.6 Once the estimate is complete, the official Permit Bond and Fee Estimate sheet is prepared and the applicant is notified that the estimate is complete. Typically, the estimate is provided to the applicant via email or email. Information is also provided on information needed for the bond.</p> <p>3.1 When the applicant receives the estimate, the applicant has an option to obtain the bond at this time or delay obtaining it until construction. We are assuming that the applicant needs the bond for building permit clearance and the bond will be obtained at this time. We are also assuming that the applicant will be obtaining a surety bond, not a cash bond.</p> <p>3.2 To obtain the bond, the applicant needs to submit a bond application package with corresponding bond preparation fee to Bond Control. The bond application package consists of a copy of the bond estimate provided by the B permit plan check/bond estimate engineer; the Application for Bond Preparation (completed by the applicant) the appropriate title report for the property. The applicant submits the bond application package to Bond Control, which is located only at the Valley District Office. Subdivision bonds can be submitted to the Land Development Group downtown and are then uploaded to the Bond Tracking System.</p> <p>3.3 The Bond Control clerk reviews the application and compares the information on the application to the information on the permit, and to the information on the title report. The property owner must be both the B permit permittee and the Principal on the bond. The individual or company listed as owner on all these documents must all agree. The Bond Control Clerk creates a bond tracking record in the Bond Tracking System, inputs the appropriate information and prepares the bond paperwork, usually while the applicant waits. When bond forms are prepared, the applicant picks up the bond paperwork and delivers it to a surety company. Bond execution instructions are provided to the applicant with the bond forms.</p> <p>3.4 The surety company and principals on the bond sign and notarize the bond and return it to Bond Control. The Bond Control clerk verifies that the surety bond is complete, accurate, properly signed, and notarized. If the bond is acceptable, the Bond Clerk uploads the bond the Bond Tracking System and electronically forwards it to the City Risk Management Office.</p> <p>3.5 Risk Management performs the final review on the bond. When Risk Management approves the bond, Bond Control and the B permit coordinators are electronically notified of the approval.</p>

Exhibit 21 (4)

B-Permit Processes	Steps Involved
B-Permit Bond Preparation	<p>3.6 When Bond Control receives notification of approval from Risk Management, the Bond Control Clerk enters the bond expiration information in the Bond Tracking System. Bond information is visible in the B permit system application.</p>
Class B permit plan check submittal (Cont'd)	<p>4.1 To submit for plan check, the applicant must deliver the following documents to the District Office counter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Class B application/permit (b) Deposit for the plan check fees (c) Checklists and supporting documents for the plans being submitted. The Applicant Engineer must sign and stamp these checklists. (d) 3 sets of applicable street plans for BOE. (e) After paying the fees and obtaining a receipt, the applicant delivers the plans for Urban Forestry to downtown at 1149 S. Broadway, 4th floor e) After paying the fees and obtaining a receipt, the applicant delivers the plans Bureau of Street Lighting marked for review and delivered to 1149 Broadway, 2nd floor <p>4.2 The counter staff accepts and reviews the application and required documents for completeness. If not complete, the submittal is returned to the applicant. If complete, the package is routed to the B permit Plan check Supervisor.</p> <p>4.3 The Plan Check Supervisor assigns the plan check to one of the Plan Check Engineers-</p> <p>4.4 The assigned plans are routed to the appropriate Plan Check Engineer.</p> <p>4.5 The Plan Check Engineer reviews the plans for completeness and for compliance with City standards. BOE estimates that the plan check process will take 4-12 weeks depending on the backlog of plans, the completeness of plans, and complexity of the project. Rechecks will increase the time to complete the plans. The Plan Checker uses checklists to ensure that all components of the plan are properly addressed. If corrections are needed, the Valley District Office uploads the plans with the corrections marked directly on the plans to the B permit application and notifies the applicant that the plans need correction. The applicant downloads the checkprints from the B permit application At the other District offices, the applicant may be able to pick up the marked up plans at the counter.</p> <p>4.6 The applicant corrects the plans according to the direction provided by the Plan Checker. The applicant must return the corrected plans to the corresponding District offices.</p>

Exhibit 21 (5)

B-Permit Processes	Steps Involved
Class B permit plan check submittal (Cont'd)	<p>4.7 Once the applicant submits corrections, the Plan Checker rechecks the plans. If still not complete, the Plan Checker follows the process described in Step 4.5 and the applicant follows Step 4.6. Multiple rechecks occur regularly on B-Permit plans checks. Once the Plan Checker determines that plans are complete, the Plan Checker signs the plans and routes them to the B permit Plan Check Supervisor for review.</p> <p>4.8 The B permit Plan Check Supervisor reviews the Plan Checker's work. The supervisory review is to ensure that the plan is complete and accurate. If additional work is needed, the plans are routed back to the Plan Checker for revisions. If the plans are approved, they are routed to the counter for scanning.</p> <p>4.9 The B permit coordinator/counter staff scans the plans and electronically routes them to the reviewing agencies. Typically, the plans are sent to Street Lighting, DOT, Urban Forestry, and Sanitation for sewer and storm drains. Depending on the complexity of the project, these reviews may take several weeks or several months. In some cases, the reviewing agencies will identify issues that require the plans to be revised. In these instances, the applicant will be required to correct the plans. In these cases, the process will go back to Step 4.6.</p> <p>4.10 Once the other reviews are completed, each of the reviewing agencies approves the plans with an electronic signature and the plans are routed to the District Engineer for final review.</p> <p>4.11 The District Engineer reviews all plans including the plans submitted by the other agencies. The District Engineer is typically providing a cursory review for significant issues prior to signing the plans. When the District Engineer's review is complete, the District signs the plans and the plans are forwarded to the B permit coordinator/counter for preparation for indexing.</p> <p>4.12 The counter staff prepare the paperwork to submit the plans for indexing and route the plans to Central Indexing.</p> <p>4.13 Indexing of plans allows the City to have a record of all City plans. Not only are B-Permit plans indexed, but all of the City's public works project plans are indexed so the plans can be referenced in the future. The Central Index staff assign numbers to the plans so they referenced in the future. Once indexed, the B-Permit plans are available on-line to the applicant.</p>

Exhibit 21 (6)

B-Permit Processes	Steps Involved
B-Permit Construction	<p>5.1 Prior to the start of construction, the applicant contacts the B permit coordinator/B-Permit counter staff to request changing the permit to construction phase. The B-Permit Counter staff verify that the name on the bond agrees with the permit and the name on the liability insurance also agrees if the name on the permit. If all agree, the Counter staff update the status on B-Permit application system from design to construction and the applicant is able to start construction.</p> <p>5.2 During construction, the applicant schedules inspections with the Bureau of Contract Administration. When scheduled, the inspector reviews construction to ensure that it is consistent with the approved plans. The inspector prepares inspection reports and issues corrections when necessary.</p> <p>5.3 If a deviation occurs, an Interim Change Authorization (essentially a change order) may be required. To obtain authorization for the change, the applicant's engineer submits an Interim Change Authorization (ICA) Form to the District Office. The document includes, the Interim Change Authorization form, and sketch of the proposed change.</p> <p>5.4 The Plan Checker that reviewed the plans also reviews and determines whether to approve the change. Once approved, the Plan Checker uploads the ICA to the B permit application. At project completion, the change needs to be reflected in the as-built drawings.</p> <p>5.5 At the end of construction, the applicant will schedule a final inspection with the Bureau of Contract Administration. For the final inspection, Contract Administration will send a Final Inspector that has not previously been assigned to the project. The inspector will walk the construction site with the applicant and develop a punch list of items that need to be addressed. The inspector provides the applicant with the punch list.</p> <p>5.6 The applicant needs to complete the punch list items</p> <p>5.7 Near the end of the construction, Urban Forestry and Street Lighting are contacted. Street Lighting powers up the streetlights and checks them for three nights to make sure that they are working properly. At this time, Urban Forestry is also checking on the placement of trees.</p> <p>5.8 Once the applicant has completed the punch list, the applicant schedules a full final inspection. The Final Inspector performs the final inspection and determines whether the applicant has satisfied all aspects of the plans. If everything is complete, the Final Inspector issues as a Final Inspection notice indicating the improvements are complete.</p>

Exhibit 21 (7)

B-Permit Processes	Steps Involved
B-Permit Closeout Process	<p>6.1 At the conclusion of the project, several actions need to be taken. These actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Class B application/permit. (b) As- built drawings need to be completed and submitted. (c) All project costs need to be submitted by all the agencies involved. (d) The permit work order needs to be closed out. (e) A final accounting of the permit needs to be completed by Public Works Accounting. (f) Bureau of Contract Administration has to issue a Completion Notice for the permit. (g) City Engineer has to issue a Certificate of Acceptance and authorize bond exoneration. <p>6.2 For as-built drawings, BOE will prepare the as-built drawings if less than five change orders were issued during the construction. If more than five change orders, the applicant engineer is responsible for preparing the as-built drawings.</p> <p>6.3 The other agencies involved also have to submit as-built drawings for the project, if applicable.</p> <p>6.4 The completed as-built drawings are submitted to Central Indexing for numbering and routing to the Plan Vault and are available on-line</p> <p>6.5 All the departments need to submit requests for all of the costs incurred on the project. This is done electronically through the B permit computer application</p> <p>6.6 Bureau of Contract Administration has to review all the plans, specifications and issue a Completion notice indicating the improvements meet the requirements of the B permit as specified. This is done electronically through the B permit computer application</p> <p>6.7 Once all cost requests have been submitted, As built-drawings are completed and a Completion Notice is uploaded to the B permit application. BOE district office initiates closing of the permit or work order and electronically forwards the request to Bond Control, Work Order Unit and Accounting. Accounting prepares a final accounting of the permit. If the permit account has surplus monies after the final accounting is completed, the applicant is refunded the difference. If the project has a deficit, the applicant needs to cover the deficit, otherwise, the release of the bond will be delayed as that is a condition of the bond.</p>

Exhibit 21 (8)

B-Permit Processes	Steps Involved
B-Permit Closeout Process	<p>6.5 All the departments need to submit requests for all of the costs incurred on the project. This is done electronically through the B permit computer application</p> <p>6.6 Bureau of Contract Administration has to review all the plans, specifications and issue a Completion notice indicating the improvements meet the requirements of the B permit as specified. This is done electronically through the B permit computer application</p> <p>6.7 Once all cost requests have been submitted, As built-drawings are completed and a Completion Notice is uploaded to the B permit application. BOE district office initiates closing of the permit or work order and electronically forwards the request to Bond Control, Work Order Unit and Accounting. Accounting prepares a final accounting of the permit If the permit account has surplus monies after the final accounting is completed, the applicant is refunded the difference. If the project has a deficit, the applicant needs to cover the deficit, otherwise, the release of the bond will be delayed as that is a condition of the bond.</p> <p>6.7 To release the bond, within the B permit application, Accounting electronically notifies Bond Control that the bond can be released. To release the bond, as the City Engineer, Bond control issues a Certificate of Acceptance and bond exoneration letter to both the surety company and applicant that the applicant has met the obligations of the permit and that the bond can be released.</p>

Exhibit 22 (1)

**Department Of Transportation
B-Permit-Signal And Striping Plans**

B-Permit-LADOT Process for Signals and Striping Plans	Steps Involved
BOE B-Permit Application Process	<p>1.3 To apply for a B-Permit, the applicant must go in person to one of four District offices. The District Office locations are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Central (Downtown LA) located at the 201 North Figueroa (b) Valley (Van Nuys) located at 6262 Van Nuys Blvd (c) Harbor (San Pedro) located at 638 S. Beacon Street (d) West LA located at 1828 Sawtelle Blvd., 3rd floor <p>1.4 The applicant applies initially for or a design phase B permit. For a design phase B permit, the bond and insurance are not required for the permit issuance. However, if a building permit clearance is needed, the applicant must pay the plan check and inspection fee deposits, and secure the bond and liability insurance to guarantee the public improvement construction before the building permit clearance is issued.</p>
BOE B-Permit Bond and Fee Estimate	<p>2.1 Prior to submitting for a plan check, the applicant submits an application for a "B" Permit Bond and Fee Estimate. This is first step in the B Permit application process. At this point, the initial request for opening a B-Permit is started. Upon submittal of the application package and payment of the estimate deposit (\$2,000), BOE prepares a "Permit Bond and Fee Deposit Estimate". This document is used to estimate the value of the applicant's improvements and to estimate the plan check and inspection fee deposits associated with the project. The applicant is required to obtain a bond, either cash or surety, to protect the City in the event the applicant defaults on the project. Also, the estimate of plan check and inspection fee deposit is determined to establish the amount of the applicant's deposit. At the end of the project, any excess monies on deposit will be returned to the applicant and the bond exonerated. On the other hand, if accrued charges exceed the deposit, the applicant will be billed for the deficit. The applicant's submittal package for "Permit Bond and Fee Deposit Estimate" includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Two sets of plans, which BOE will use in determining the value of the improvements. The Valley Office allows the applicant to bring in plans that are 80-90 complete. The other offices may require the drawings to be ready for plan check. (b) Deposit of \$2,000 (c) Required conditions of approval for the project (d) B-Permit application

Exhibit 22 (2)

B-Permit-LADOT Process for Signals and Striping Plans	Steps Involved
B-Permit Bond and Fee Estimate (Cont'd)	<p>(e) Engineer's quantity take-off (On the private engineer's letterhead or stamped by the private engineer), which is also used in determining the value of the improvements to be installed.</p> <p>(f) The applicant is also required to create an online account to allow the applicant to monitor the progress of the B-Permit on-line and have access to documents made available by plan checkers.</p> <p>2.2 The District's Office counter staff review the application to determine if it is complete. If application is not complete, the application is rejected. If it is complete, the counter staff/ B permit coordinator creates a new entry in the B-Permit application system. The permit is assigned a number and work order is opened in the system. The B-Permit coordinator/counter staff also creates a hard copy folder that will be used to file permit and plan information.</p> <p>2.3 If the project involves traffic signals or striping work, the applicant must also deliver plans to the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) B-Permit Section in Downtown Los Angeles at 900 North Main Street, 9th floor to prepare an estimate of the costs of the signal and/or striping work.</p> <p>2.4 LADOT is responsible for submitting a cost estimate back to the BOE District Office so that the estimate of the signal plans can be incorporated into the BOE's estimate. LADOT B-Permit Section has two Transportation Engineering Associate III positions that work primarily on signal plans and on striping plans. One of the Engineering Associate III's provides an estimate of the cost of the improvements for bond purposes. In developing an estimate of the cost of the signal plans, the Transportation Engineering Associate III uses an Excel Spreadsheet that includes the unit cost for the equipment items to be considered in developing the estimate, as well as the labor costs. The bond estimates for the signal and striping work can typically completed within two weeks.</p> <p>2.5 When the bond estimate is complete, the Transportation Engineering Associate III emails the bond estimate for the signal plans to the BOE District Office.</p> <p>2.6 The BOE District Office incorporates LADOT's bond estimate for the signal plans into its bond estimate for all public improvements required for the project requiring a B-Permit.</p> <p>2.7 To obtain a bond for the public improvements, the applicant would follow Steps 3.1-3.6 on the Bond Preparation process described on the BOE B-Permit Process Description.</p>
LADOT Plan Check for Signal and Striping Plans	<p>3.1 To initiate the B-Permit Plan Check process, the applicant must submit a complete application package to the BOE District Office. The applicant would follow Steps 4.1 and 4.2 on the BOE B-Permit Process Description.</p>

Exhibit 22 (3)

B-Permit-LADOT Process for Signals and Striping Plans	Steps Involved
LADOT Plan Check for Signal and Striping Plans (Cont'd)	<p>3.2 Once the above steps are completed, the applicant delivers another set of plans to the LADOT B-Section located at 900 North Main Street on the 9th floor. LADOT B-Section has the following submittal requirements for the signal and striping plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Copy of the Los Angeles Business Tax Registration Receipt. (b) Copy of the B-Permit application showing the name and address of the Owner/Applicant with the fees paid. (c) Copy of mitigation requirements. (d) Three sets of prints of the striping plan and/or signal plan, prepared under direction of a Civil or Traffic Engineer registered in the State of California. (e) Copy of the preliminary street improvement plan, street lighting plan, and other improvements, which may influence the design. (f) Labeled 4" x 6" color photographs of field conditions. (g) Dated field notes of current signs, striping, markings, roadway dimensions, adjacent land uses, access ramps, driveways, and signal equipment. (h) A copy of the substructure map for reference if there is foundation work on traffic signal plans. (i) Line types, symbols, pen sizes, layout, etc. (j) Project Title & B-Permit number shall be placed above the Title Block. (k) Title Block references correctly filled out (References, District, Thomas Guide page/grid, etc. (l) The North arrow must be shown on the plan(s) must be drawn to the appropriate scale. (m) Right-of-way dimensions, parkway width, roadway width, existing and proposed driveway locations must be shown. (n) Completed schedules, construction notes, Engineer's signature block including name, signature date, registration number, address and phone number. <p>3.3 The Transportation Engineering Associate III reviews the preliminary plan submittals for completeness. If the plans are incomplete, the Transportation Engineer Associate III does not accept the plans. If the plans are complete, the plans are accepted for plan check.</p>

Exhibit 22 (4)

B-Permit-DOT Signal and Striping Plans	Steps Involved
B-Permit-DOT Signal and Striping Plans (Cont'd)	<p>3.4 When the plan submittal is accepted, the Senior Engineer assigns the plans to the Transportation Engineering Associate III to perform the plan check. Currently, the assigned Transportation Engineering Associate III will not get to the plans for three to four weeks. The LADOT B-Permit Group also routes plans to the LADOT District Office through intra-office routing. In addition, the plans are also routed to the LADOT's Signal Timing Division for review. The LADOT District Office reviews the plans for operational issues such as parking, signage, and traffic. The LADOT District Office provides written comments to the Transportation Engineer Associate III. The Signal Timing Division reviews the plans for safety requirements and for opportunities to improving signal efficiency. The Signal Timing Division also provides written comments to the Transportation Engineer Associate III.</p> <p>3.5 The Transportation Engineering Associate III's performs the respective plan check of the signal and striping plans. Generally, one of Transportation Engineering Associate III's reviews the signal plans and the other Transportation Engineering Associate III's review the striping plans. The Transportation Engineering Associate III uses a Signal Review Checklist in reviewing the signal plans. The Transportation Engineering Associate III reviews the signal plan to ensure that the traffic plan, the civil plan, and the planning conditions all match. Also, the engineer is also reviewing to ensure that a number of general requirements are met, including but not limited to checking whether the street dimensions sidewalks and curbs match the civil drawings and planning conditions, the substructure plan matches the signal plan, and crosswalk standards are addressed. In addition, the Transportation Engineering Associate III is reviewing technical aspects of the signal plans including but not limited to the vehicle heads, pedestrian heads and push buttons, actuation and advanced loops, pull boxes, conduits, cable, and conductors.</p> <p>3.6 If the Transportation Engineering Associate III identifies any items on the plans that need to be corrected, the required corrections are noted directly on the plans. The Transportation Engineering III typically takes several weeks to complete the plans because the engineer's work is not limited to other plans. When the Transportation Engineering III completes the first review of the signal plans, the Transportation Engineering III submits the corrected plans to the Senior Engineer. After the Senior Engineer's review, the plans are returned to the Transportation Engineering III, who notifies the applicant by email that plans are ready to be picked up.</p>

Exhibit 22 (5)

B-Permit-DOT Signal and Striping Plans	Steps Involved
B-Permit-DOT Signal and Striping Plans (Cont'd)	<p>3.7 The applicant picks up the plans at the LADOT B-Section office at 900 North Main Street on the 9th floor.</p> <p>3.8 The applicant is responsible for correcting the plans and then resubmitting the corrected plans to the LADOT B-Section office at 900 North Main Street on the 9th floor.</p> <p>3.9 The corrected plans are assigned to Transportation Engineering III. Depending on the Transportation Engineering III's workload, the corrected plans may sit for several weeks before the engineer is able to review them to ensure that the corrections have been properly addressed. Typically, the plans go through several revisions. A simple project may go through 3 or 4 resubmittals and more complex projects may undergo 4-5 resubmittals. In some instances, the LADOT B-Section needs to bring in the private engineer to discuss what the private engineer needs to do to get the plans approved. After each recheck of the plans, the Transportation Engineering III reviews the plans, enters the corrections on the plans, and submits the rechecked plans to the Senior Engineer. After reviewing the plans, the Senior Engineer returns the plans to the Transportation Engineering III, who notifies the applicant by email that the plans are ready to be picked up.</p> <p>3.10 Once the Transportation Engineering Associate III is satisfied with the signal plans, the plans are submitted to the Senior Engineer for review. After reviewing the plans, the Senior Engineer returns the plans to the Transportation Engineering Associate III, who notifies the applicant that the plans are complete and to bring in two Mylar copies of the plans for signing and an AutoCAD file.</p> <p>3.11 The applicant goes to LADOT B-Permit Section and delivers the Mylar plans and the AutoCAD file to the Transportation Engineering Associate III.</p> <p>3.12 The Senior Transportation Engineer signs both sets of plans. LADOT keeps one of the sets of plans and the applicant is given the other set of plans to deliver to the BOE District Office.</p> <p>3.13 The Transportation Engineering Associate III forwards the Mylars and AutoCAD file to the Signal and Geometric Design Section for filing and uploading the file to the NavigateLA website.</p> <p>3.14 Applicant delivers the other set of plans to the BOE District Office.</p>
BOE District Office Final Plan Review	<p>4.1 Once all the plans for the B-Permit are completed, the BOE District Office incorporates all of the various plans into a final submittal to each of the reviewing agencies. The B permit coordinator/counter staff scans the plans and electronically routes them to all the reviewing agencies, including the LADOT B-Permit Section.</p>

Exhibit 22 (6)

B-Permit-DOT Signal and Striping Plans	Steps Involved	
BOE District Office Final Plan Review	4.2	LADOT reviews the final plans submitted by the BOE District Office. Typically, the Transportation Engineering Associate III not only reviews the signal and striping plan sheets, but the street plans as well. The final review is to make sure that nothing is omitted. The street plans are reviewed to ensure that the traffic control plan is adequately addressed in the street plans. Once LADOT B-Permit Section has completed their review and everything is ok, Transportation Engineering Associate III approves the plans with an electronic signature and the plans are routed to the District Engineer for final review.

9. ANALYSIS OF CODE ENFORCEMENT

Effective code enforcement is essential to revitalizing a distressed neighborhood. Problem properties can “deter investors, frustrate existing residents and generally contribute to an environment of fear, disorder, and crime” in a neighborhood.¹⁸

Code enforcement, or the effective enforcement of zoning and property maintenance regulations, is the one theme that the Matrix Consulting Group heard consistently in its meetings with Neighborhood Councils. This chapter presents an analysis of the Code Enforcement Bureau, Department of Building and Safety, and opportunities to enhance enforcement.

A summary of the recommendations is presented in the exhibit following this page.

1. THE CODE ENFORCEMENT BUREAU ADHERES TO A NUMBER OF BEST PRACTICES AND CAN IMPROVE IN A NUMBER OF OTHERS

The Matrix Consulting Group evaluated the Code Enforcement Bureau in terms of best practices. The strengths of the Bureau, based upon that assessment, are presented below.

- The Code Enforcement Bureau uses a commercial-off-the shelf information system to log, assign, track, and provide management reports on performance.
- The Code Enforcement Bureau has established a ranking system for complaints. The complaints ranked as high involve hazardous conditions, which are responded to within one (1) business day. Complaints ranked as medium involve issues such as illegal buildings. These complaints are responded to in five (5) business days. Code Enforcement’s goal for responding to complaints ranked as low is twenty (20) business days.
- The Code Enforcement Bureau has in place an effective process for prosecuting for failure to comply to encourage a timely change in behavior.

¹⁸ LISC & MetLife Foundation, “Leveraging Code Enforcement for Neighborhood Safety Initiatives: Insights from Community Developers”, June 2007

Exhibit 23 (1)

**Summary of Recommendations
Contained within Chapter 9**

Rec. #	Recommendation
201	The Code Enforcement Bureau should adopt a metric of closing an average of 85% of its cases in 45 calendar days, reporting the data separately for zoning, nuisance, dangerous building, and other, for those cases that are closed voluntarily. Cases that require forced compliance should be reported separately.
202	The Code Enforcement Bureau should adopt a metric of making the first site visit to determine the validity of the complaint in 7 calendar days from the date the complaint was received by the Bureau.
203	The City of Los Angeles should restore the number of authorized positions to the Code Enforcement Bureau that existed in fiscal year 2009. This would require an increase of 60 code enforcement officers (Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors).
204	The City should continue to monitor the service levels and the productivity of the Bureau and continue to adjust staffing until adequate service levels are provided.
205	The span of control for supervisors in the Code Enforcement Bureau should be broadened, through attrition. The span of control should be brought within a range of one supervisor for every six to twelve code enforcement officers (Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors).
206	Any reduction in supervisors - Senior Building Inspectors and Senior Building Mechanical Inspectors – should be offset by equivalent increases in the number of Building Inspectors and Building Mechanical Inspectors. Any reduction should occur through attrition.
207	The management layer of two Chief Inspectors should be eliminated through attrition.
208	The two Chief Inspector positions should be replaced by equivalent increases in the number of Building Inspectors and Building Mechanical Inspectors in the Code Enforcement Bureau.
209	The Code Enforcement Bureau should develop a two (2) to three (3) page monthly performance measurement report that effectively communicates results generated by the Bureau to management and to the public.
210	The Code Enforcement Bureau manager and supervisors should develop a number of monthly management information reports to track performance against objectives for first site visits after a case has been opened, for closure of cases, and to monitor the case workload and performance Code Enforcement Officers.
211	The managers and supervisors of the Code Enforcement Bureau should be held accountable for using the monthly management information reports to manage the workload and performance of the Bureau.
212	The supervisory and management staff of the Code Enforcement Bureau should be required to possess the <i>California Association of Code Enforcement Officers</i> (CACEO) Advanced Course Certification Program within 24 months of hire / appointment.
213	The code enforcement officers within the Code Enforcement Bureau should be encouraged to possess the <i>California Association of Code Enforcement Officers</i> (CACEO) Basic Course Certification Program within 24 months of hire / appointment.
214	The Code Enforcement Bureau should budget funds for the costs of the testing required for its employees to take the <i>California Association of Code Enforcement Officers</i> Course Certification examinations and the costs of ongoing training required to maintain such certification.

Exhibit 23 (2)

Rec. #	Recommendation
215	The code enforcement officers (the Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors assigned to the Code Enforcement Bureau and their supervisors and managers) should obtain a 24- hour P.O.S.T. module, PC 832 Arrest, Search and Seizure certification.
216	The Code Enforcement Bureau should budget funds for the costs of the training required for its employees to obtain a 24-hour P.O.S.T. module, PC 832 Arrest, Search and Seizure certification and the costs of ongoing training required to maintain such certification.
217	The partnership between the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety in enforcement of the zoning code should be memorialized in a memorandum of understanding developed by the two departments in a process facilitated by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.
218	The division of responsibility for enforcement of the zoning code between the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety should be based upon the certificate of occupancy or approval of the discretionary review permit. Until the certificate of occupancy is issued or the discretionary review application is approved, the Department of City Planning should enforce conditions of approval in the field. That involvement should involve inspection in the field by these case planners for compliance with conditions of approval for discretionary review applications, and compliance with mitigation measures for the mitigated negative declaration or environmental impact review. However, once the certificate of occupancy has been issued or the discretionary review application has been approved, the enforcement roles and responsibilities should be assigned to the Code Enforcement Bureau; enforcement becomes a maintenance responsibility.
219	The four positions allocated to the Code Compliance Unit in the Department of City Planning for Nuisance Abatement should be eliminated through attrition, and the incumbents reallocated to other vacant positions.
220	The City should address enforcement of Department of City Planning conditions of approval for all of the City's Conditional Use Permits. Compliance should be monitored through site inspections conducted by the staff of the Code Enforcement Bureau for a one-year period after the permit was approved.
221	The City should adopt a fee, paid for at the time of submittal of the application for the conditional use permit, to recover the costs associated with the monitoring of compliance of the Conditional Use permit.
222	The Code Enforcement Bureau should accept anonymous complaints and, based upon the reliability and specificity of the complaint, investigate the complaint.
223	The Code Enforcement Bureau should notify the complainant of the name of the code enforcement officer assigned their case no later than five business days after the submittal of their complaint including the name, e-mail address, and phone number of the code enforcement officer.
224	The Department of Building and Safety should provide a direct link to the Code Enforcement Bureau on the Department's home page in addition to the links for Customer Feedback, Online Permit, Inspection Request, Codes and Standards, and Zoning.
225	The Department of Building and Safety should enhance the web page of the Code Enforcement Bureau.
226	The Code Enforcement Bureau should evaluate the geographic distribution of its workload, and reallocate its staff to reflect that geographical distribution.
227	The Code Enforcement Bureau should collect data at the Council District-level to identify the neighborhoods in the City with the greatest need for public sector intervention.

Exhibit 23 (3)

Rec. #	Recommendation
228	The Code Enforcement Bureau should develop neighborhood revitalization plans for those neighborhoods in the City that are in the greatest need of public sector intervention.
229	The development of the neighborhood revitalization plans should be based upon a collaborative effort including the Code Enforcement Bureau, Department of Building and Safety; Department of City Planning; Police Department; Fire Department; Office of the City Attorney; Recreation and Parks Department; and the Public Works Department.

- The Code Enforcement Bureau utilizes an administrative enforcement process as a first response to violations. This includes citations and an administrative or independent hearing officer before criminal prosecution is utilized. This includes a range of tools to encourage voluntary compliance to accelerate processing time with a range of sanctions (fines, costs, and penalties) tailored to the case, designed to reduce the reliance on judicial processes, and provide stronger penalties for violators, particularly repeat offenders, etc.
- The Code Enforcement Bureau utilizes administrative citations including a Code Violation Inspection Fee, a Non-Compliance Fee, and Investigation Fee as tools to prompt correction action.
- The Code Enforcement Bureau will issue a written order if the offender does not correct the violation in the required timeframe. With the order, the Code Enforcement Bureau will levy a code violation inspection fee and a non-compliance fee on the offender. For repeat violations, the Code Enforcement Bureau will reduce the time allowed to correct the violation and will issue an additional code violation fee and non-compliance fee.

There are also a number of opportunities for improvement. These opportunities are presented below.

- The Building Mechanical Inspectors assigned to the Code Enforcement Bureau are not required to possess a California Association of Code Enforcement Officers Basic Certificate required within twelve (12) months of employment.
- The Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors assigned to the Code Enforcement Bureau are not required to complete a 24- hour P.O.S.T. module, PC 832 Arrest, Search and Seizure certification within 12 months of employment (for purposes of training officers on how to gather evidence that is legally admissible; obtaining warrants, conducting abandoned building abatements, coordinating receivership actions, and demolishing hazardous structures; etc.)
- The Code Enforcement Bureau does not publish comprehensive information on its website; the extent of information published to its website it is limited.
- The Code Enforcement Bureau does not perform regular risk assessments to target inspections and allocate resources by area and need (e.g., routine neighborhood assessments).
- With the exception of the PACE program in Community Development Block Grant areas, the Code Enforcement Bureau does not conduct proactive enforcement.

- The Code Enforcement Bureau does not provide financial assistance (e.g., grants, low-interest loans or deferred payment schedules) to properties that were cited for violations in targeted, high-risk neighborhoods, using Community Development Block Grant or local funds to offset improvement costs (e.g., repair services and supplies).
- At the end of fiscal year 2012-13, the North, Central, and South sections of the Bureau had a six-month backlog of cases. The backlog started the year at 8,344 cases, and ended the year at 9,715 cases, an increase of 16.4%. The metric utilized by the Matrix Consulting Group is that the backlog should approximate one-month. In four years, if nothing changes, the code enforcement backlog will approximate one year's workload (given current staffing).
- In fiscal year 2012-2013, the Code Enforcement Bureau responded to an average of 69% of the complaints within 20 business days of receipt of the complaint. The metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group is a response within 5 business days, for 85% of the cases.
- The goal of the Code Enforcement Bureau is to close 60% of its complaints within 60 business days. In fiscal year 2012-2013, the Bureau closed an average of 80% of its complaints within 60 business days. The metric used by the Matrix Consulting Group is to close cases that can be closed voluntarily within 20 business days of receipt, for 85% of the cases.

While the Bureau has a number of strengths, its level of service clearly necessitates improvement.

2. THE CODE ENFORCEMENT BUREAU IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE ZONING CODE.

The responsibility of the Code Enforcement Bureau includes the enforcement of the Zoning Code, as provided in the Zoning Code.

This includes, for example, the entirety of the Annual Inspection Monitoring program, a fee-supported program that requires an annual inspection of all auto repair facilities, auto dismantling yards, junk yards, scrap metal processing plants, used car lots, cargo containers, storage yards, and recycling centers for violations of both building and zoning codes. The sites monitored in this program are subject to fines and

revocation of their Certificates of Occupancy if compliance with the ordinance is not maintained.

This includes, for example, violations of Historical Preservation Overlay Zones or conditional use permits in which the occupant does not comply with conditions of approval. For example, in fiscal year 2012-13, this included over height fences. It included conditional use permits that had expired. This included signs that were constructed without a conditional use permit. This includes, responding to service requests from the Department of City Planning (e.g., stores with excessive window signs).

This is not to suggest that the level of service is adequate; it is not. But the Code Enforcement Bureau's mission clearly includes the enforcement of the Zoning Code.

3. THE CODE ENFORCEMENT IS UNDERSTAFFED GIVEN ITS WORKLOAD.

An analysis of the workload and the resulting service levels of the Code Enforcement Bureau indicate that the Bureau is understaffed.

(1) The Code Enforcement Bureau is Authorized 116 Positions.

The Code Enforcement Bureau is tasked with the maintenance of the City's building stock through the enforcement of building, electrical, mechanical, plumbing and zoning codes. The method used by the Bureau to achieve compliance is the issuance of an *Order to Comply* to the property owner and any other person in control of a property who violates any provision or requirement of the codes. The *Order to Comply* is a warning letter with a time frame for voluntary compliance. Violation of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is a misdemeanor, and cases may need to be resolved in Los Angeles Superior Court.

(2) Over the Past Six Fiscal Years Since 2009, the Number of Authorized Positions Within the Code Enforcement Bureau Has Been Reduced by 34%.

The exhibit following this page presents a trend in authorized positions for the Code Enforcement Bureau for the past six fiscal years: fiscal year 2009 through 2014.

Important points to note concerning the exhibit are presented below.

- **Overall, the number of authorized positions has decreased by 34% over the six fiscal years since 2009.** The number of authorized positions has decreased from 176 positions in fiscal year 2009 to 116 positions in 2014. However, the staffing for the Local Enforcement Agency was transferred to the Bureau in fiscal year 2011. Excluding the transfer of those positions, the number of authorized positions for the Bureau has actually decreased by 67 positions or 38%.
- **The number of positions allocated to Complaint and Response has decreased from 100 authorized positions to 50 authorized positions or 50%.** These represent the positions assigned to the Council Districts to respond to complaints.
- **The number of positions allocated to specialty programs decreased by 16% from 50 positions to 42 positions.** These programs are funded by dedicated sources of funding that cannot be used for other purposes. This includes:
 - The PACE program (funded by Community Development Block grants and allocated to specific code enforcement problems in limited geographic regions of the City);
 - The Off-Site Sign Periodic Inspection Program (inspection of off-site signs in the City, including an evaluation of the sign's safety and legal status and compliance to the codes, on an ongoing 3-year cycle);
 - The Vacant Building Abatement Program (abatement of open, vacant, abandoned, and vandalized buildings); and
 - The Annual Inspection Monitoring program that requires an annual inspection of all auto repair facilities, auto dismantling yards, junk yards, scrap metal processing plants, used car lots, cargo containers, storage yards, and recycling centers for violations of both building and land use ordinances; etc.

Exhibit 24

**Trends in Code Enforcement
Bureau Staffing: 2009 - 2014**

Program	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	% Change
Administration							
Administration	10	10	8	7	6	6	
Clerical	14	10	7	7	8	8	
Sub-Total	24	20	15	14	14	14	-42%
Complaint and Response							
General Commercial / Residential Complaint	59	54	41	40	36	38	
Abandoned Building Task Force	8	6	3	0	0	0	
Contract Nuisance Abatement	9	8	2	0	0	0	
Problem Property Resolution Team	9	8	3	0	0	0	
Nuisance Abatement Revocation	2	1	1	0	0	0	
Signs	8	7	4	4	4	3	
Citations	5	5	4	3	3	2	
Sub-Total	100	89	58	54	50	50	-50%
Specialty							
AIM	19	14	12	12	16	16	
CDBG PACE	19	18	18	18	16	16	
CRA PACE	5	3	0	0	0	0	
Signs - OSSPIP	5	5	5	3	3	3	
Signs - New Construction	2	2	1	1	1	1	
Vacant Building Abatement	0	0	0	7	7	7	
Foreclosure Registry	0	0	0	0	0	6	
Sub-Total	50	42	36	34	36	42	-16%
TOTAL	174	151	109	102	100	106	-39%
Non-Code Enforcement Staff Allocations							
Loan to DBS IT	2	2	3	3	3	3	
Local Enforcement Agency	0	0	8	8	7	7	
Sub-Total	2	2	11	11	10	10	
TOTAL	176	153	120	113	110	116	-34%

Altogether, the Code Enforcement Bureau is allocating 50 positions to reactive code enforcement complaints. Other than the PACE program and fee-based programs such as AIM, the Bureau does not provide proactive code enforcement services; it only responds to complaints.

(3) As of July 2, 2013, the Code Enforcement Bureau Had A Little Less Than 12,000 Open Cases.

The cases on hand, as of July 2, 2013, are presented in the table below.

Program	Enforcement	Appeal	Entitlement	Permit Inspection	Criminal Filing	Total	% of Total
North	2,538	57	18	398	85	3,096	25.8%
Central	2,411	207	28	395	117	3,158	26.4%
South	2,813	83	15	361	245	3,517	29.4%
Centralized Specialty	1,200	146	1	28	159	1,534	12.8%
Vacant Building	544	13	1	92	23	673	5.6%
TOTAL	9,506	506	63	1,274	629	11,978	100.0%

Important points to note regarding the table are presented below.

- The North, South and Central programs consist of reactive code enforcement in which Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors assigned to the Bureau respond to citizen complaints on code violations; identify violations of City ordinances pertaining to abandoned autos, high weeds, refuse, debris, and illegal dumping; notify property owners and / or agents of violations that must be corrected within the timeframes prescribed by City ordinance; and issue *Orders to Comply* to property owners and/or agents.
- The Centralized Specialty programs consist of:
 - Sign enforcement (responses to complaints regarding illegal signs, inspection of newly constructed signs, and on-going inspection of all off-site signs in the City including an evaluation of the sign's safety and legal status and compliance to the codes);
 - Proactive code enforcement (funded by Community Development Block Grant revenues, the program focuses on specific code enforcement problems in limited geographic regions of the City conducting proactive

inspections of neighborhoods to identify violations, issue courtesy notices and orders to comply, etc.); and

- Annual Inspection Monitoring, a fee-supported program that requires an annual inspection of all auto repair facilities, auto dismantling yards, junk yards, scrap metal processing plants, used car lots, cargo containers, storage yards, and recycling centers for violations of both building and land use ordinances. The sites monitored in this program are subject to fines and revocation of their Certificates of Occupancy if compliance with the ordinance is not maintained.
- The Vacant Building program responds to complaints regarding open, vacant, and vandalized buildings, and ongoing monitoring of vacant and boarded-up buildings. In addition, the program manages work by private contractors (through City-awarded contracts) to clean, secure, and if necessary demolish buildings when owners are non-compliant.
- Of the 11,978 cases, 9,506 were in enforcement status. Other cases were being appealed, the property owner was seeking an entitlement permit to resolve the complaint, the case was being prosecuted criminally, or the property owner had obtained a building permit and was in the process of having the building inspected for code compliance.
- The median caseload for each the code enforcement officer (the Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors assigned to the Bureau) that provided reactive code enforcement services (the 39 code enforcement officers) amounted to 337 cases and the average to 323 cases. The Matrix Consulting Group uses a metric that no more than 60 active cases should be open per code enforcement officer.
- In the 12-month period from July 2012 to June 2013, the number of open cases increased from 10,884 to 12,002, or an increase of 10.3%.
- For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, the Bureau responded to 69% of the code enforcement complaints in 20 business days of receipt of the complaint.

The increase in open caseload, and the median caseload for each code enforcement officer that provide reactive code enforcement services, clearly indicate problems with the balance of workload and staffing.

(4) The City of Los Angeles Has Fewer Code Enforcement Cases Opened Annually Per 100,000 Population Than Other Cities.

The International City-County *Center for Performance Measurement* was created to help municipalities and counties obtain accurate, fair, and comparable data about the quality and efficiency of service delivery to their citizens. Through the program, the Center collects, analyzes, and reports comparative performance data from local governments in fourteen service areas including code enforcement. The most recent report was released in August 2012 for fiscal year 2011.

The data indicates that the City of Los Angeles has fewer code enforcement cases than other cities as the table below indicates.

City	Population	Total Cases	Cases / 100,000 Population
Dallas, TX	1,200,530	146,634	12,214.1
Scottsdale	217,385	15,467	7,115.0
Aurora	335,105	23,445	6,996.3
Phoenix, AZ	1,446,000	52,334	3,619.2
Mesa, AZ	439,041	14,351	3,268.7
Portland, OR	585,845	13,233	2,258.8
Louisville Metro, KY	741,096	14,736	1,988.4
Los Angeles	3,858,000	39,117*	1,356.1
Chula Vista	246,496	1,247	505.9

• The 39,117 cases reflected as "opened" for the City of Los Angeles differs from the data in the previous table. The previous table reflected the cases "open" on a specific date: July 2, 2013. This table reflects cases opened during a fiscal year.

Overall, these eight cities opened a median of a little more than 3,400 cases per 100,000 population, while the Code Enforcement Bureau for the City of Los Angeles opened 1,356 cases per 100,000 population or 39% of the median of these other cities. The number of code enforcement cases opened in Phoenix, Arizona and Dallas, Texas, for example, far exceeded that of Los Angeles

Unlike other cities, the code enforcement programs in Los Angeles, with the exception of PACE and AIM, are reactive. The metric utilized by the Matrix Consulting

Group is that a code enforcement officer should be generating 40% of their caseload through proactive case identification.

The impact of proactive enforcement programs can clearly be seen in the City's own PACE program; in fiscal year 2012-13, the sixteen staff assigned to the PACE program opened 10,874 cases. This is 45% more cases opened per code enforcement officer than the complaint-based code enforcement officers assigned to Council Districts.

(5) The City of Los Angeles Has Less Code Enforcement Staff Than Other Cities.

The report issued by the International City-County *Center for Performance Measurement* also contained the total code enforcement staffing data from participating local governments. The data indicates that the City of Los Angeles has less total code enforcement staff than other cities as the table below indicates (the table only presents data for cities with a population of 200,000 and above that reported their data).

City	Population	# of FTE's	FTE / 100,000 Population
Los Angeles	3,858,000	116	3.01
Phoenix	1,446,000	56	3.87
Dallas	1,200,530	254	21.17
Louisville Metro	741,096	114	15.44
Portland	585,845	10	1.74
Mesa	439,041	10	2.31
Aurora	335,105	20	6.06
Chula Vista	246,496	23	9.48
Scottsdale	217,385	18	8.35
Median			7.21
25th Percentile			3.48
75th Percentile			10.97

Overall, the number of total staff in the Code Enforcement Bureau authorized by the City of Los Angeles, per 100,000 population, falls at the 25th percentile. In other words, 75% of the other cities had a higher level of code enforcement staffing per 100,000

population. If the City of Los Angeles provided a level of code enforcement staffing at the median of these other cities, the City would have 278 authorized positions, not 116 authorized positions.

In fact, the City Auditor for the City of San Jose, California recently completed a performance audit of that City's Code Enforcement Division (located within the City's Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement Department) that provides further indication that the Los Angeles Code Enforcement Bureau is understaffed. The performance audit "found that improvements are possible, but resources are significantly strained."¹⁹ This City has 41 code enforcement officers, whose responsibility includes the multi-housing program. The population of San Jose approximates 970,000. San Jose has the equivalent to one code enforcement officer for every 23,650 residents. Los Angeles has 69 code enforcement officers (Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors assigned to the Bureau). The population of Los Angeles approximates 3,827,000. Los Angeles has the equivalent of one code enforcement officer for every 55,465 residents or 43% that of San Jose, California, a city in which the City Auditor for San Jose indicated that the San Jose Code Enforcement Division was understaffed.

(5) The Levels of Service Provided by the Code Enforcement Bureau Should Be Considered Unacceptable, But Are the Result of Inadequate Staffing.

The report issued by the International City-County *Center for Performance Measurement* also contained service level data. One of the service levels that the International City-County *Center for Performance Measurement* included for code enforcement was the average number of calendar days from case initiation to voluntary compliance and forced compliance. The results reported for cities over 100,000

¹⁹ Office of the City Auditor, San Jose California, Code Enforcement: Improvements Are Possible, But Resources Are Significantly Constrained, November 2013

population – for voluntary compliance - are presented below (71% of all cases initiated by these cities in the fiscal year were brought into compliance voluntarily).

Calendar Days – Case Initiation to Voluntary Compliance

	Housing	Zoning	Nuisance	Dangerous Building	Other
Average	48.5	40.6	34.4	158.6	45.5
Median	40.0	23.6	23.8	68.8	23.0

The Code Enforcement Bureau, for fiscal year 2013, closed an average of 79% of its cases in 90 calendar days. With the exception of dangerous buildings, this is twice as long as that reported by cities in the International City-County *Center for Performance Measurement* report. The metric adopted by the Bureau is to close an average of 60% of the cases within 90 calendar days.

In addition, the Bureau has adopted a metric of responding to 100% of the code enforcement complaints – the initial site visit – within 30 calendar days. In fiscal year 2012-13, the Bureau met that metric at an average of 69% of its cases. The metric utilized by the Matrix Consulting Group, and a level of service the firm has observed in many other cities, is to conduct a first site visit within 7 calendar days after receipt of the complaint.

The Bureau should modify its service level metrics. It should adopt a metric of closing an average of 85% of its cases in 45 calendar days, reporting the data separately for zoning, nuisance, dangerous building, and other, for those cases that are closed voluntarily. Cases that require forced compliance should be reported separately. In addition, the Bureau should adopt a metric of making the first site visit to determine the validity of the complaint in 7 calendar days from the date the complaint was received by the Bureau.

Recommendation #201: The Code Enforcement Bureau should adopt a metric of closing an average of 85% of its cases in 45 calendar days, reporting the data separately for zoning, nuisance, dangerous building, and other, for those cases that are closed voluntarily. Cases that require forced compliance should be reported separately.

Recommendation #202: The Code Enforcement Bureau should adopt a metric of making the first site visit to determine the validity of the complaint in 7 calendar days from the date the complaint was received by the Bureau.

(6) The City Should Restore the Number of Positions Authorized for Code Enforcement.

The Code Enforcement Bureau is understaffed. This is indicated by the growth in backlog, by the extent of cases opened in Los Angeles versus other cities, by the lack of proactive enforcement, and by the comparisons of staffing to other cities.

The City of Los Angeles should restore the number of authorized positions to the Code Enforcement Bureau that existed in fiscal year 2009. This would be an increase of 60 code enforcement officers.

This may still be an insufficient number of staff. The City should continue to monitor the service levels and the productivity of the Bureau and continue to adjust staffing until adequate service levels are provided.

Recommendation #203: The City of Los Angeles should restore the number of authorized positions to the Code Enforcement Bureau that existed in fiscal year 2009. This would require an increase of 60 code enforcement officers (Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors).

Recommendation #204: The City should continue to monitor the service levels and the productivity of the Bureau and continue to adjust staffing until adequate service levels are provided.

(7) The Number of Senior Building Inspectors and Senior Building Mechanical Inspectors Should Be Reduced through Attrition to Broaden Spans of Control, and the Management Layer of Chief Inspector Eliminated Through Attrition.

The table below presents the number of staff within the Bureau by classification title, excluding the staff assigned to the Local Enforcement Agency.

Class Title	Number of Authorized Positions
Clerk Typist	7
Principal Clerk	1
Senior Clerk Typist	7
Deputy Superintendent of Building I	1
Assistant Deputy Supt. Of Building II	1
Chief Inspector	2
Principal Inspector	3
Senior Building Inspector	4
Senior Building Mechanical Inspector	14
Building Inspector	5
Building Mechanical Inspector	64
Executive Administrative Assistant II	1
TOTAL	110

Important points to note concerning the table are presented below.

- Approximately 14% of the authorized positions are clerical staff – Clerk Typists, Senior Clerk Typists, and Principal Clerk Typists.
- Approximately 6% of the authorized positions are managers – the Deputy Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent, Chief Inspector, and Principal Inspector.
- Approximately 16% of the authorized positions are supervisors – Senior Building Inspectors and Senior Building Mechanical Inspectors.
- Approximately 63% of the authorized positions are code enforcement officers – Building Inspectors and Building Mechanical Inspectors.

Overall, excluding the staff assigned to the Local Enforcement Agency, a little more than 6 of every 10 staff in the Bureau are code enforcement officers. The proportion of supervisors and managers to code enforcement officers is inappropriate.

There is one supervisor (Senior Building Inspectors and Senior Building Mechanical Inspectors) for every four code enforcement officers (Building Inspectors and Building Mechanical Inspectors). This did not happen as a result of the intent of the Department of Building and Safety; it is the result of staffing reductions in which last hired was first laid off. It resulted in the lower levels of the Bureau – the Building Inspectors and the Building Mechanical Inspectors – being laid off. This resulted in an imbalance of supervisors and the staff that are supervised.

However, the ratio should be within a range of one supervisor for every six to twelve code enforcement officers.

In addition, the span of control of the middle managers in the Bureau is narrow. One of the two Chief Inspectors supervises one Principal Inspector; the other Chief Inspector supervises two Principal Inspectors. This span of control should be considered in light of the one over one executive managerial structure for the Bureau: a Deputy Superintendent of Building I supervises an Assistant Deputy Superintendent of Building II.

The span of control for supervisors should be broadened. The span of control should be brought within a range of one supervisor for every six to twelve code enforcement officers. If the span of control was one supervisor for every six code enforcement officers, six fewer Senior Building Inspectors and Senior Building Mechanical Inspectors would be required. If the span of control was one supervisor for every eight code enforcement officers, nine fewer Senior Building Inspectors and Senior Building Mechanical Inspectors would be required. Any reduction in supervisors - Senior Building Inspectors and Senior Building Mechanical Inspectors – should be offset by

equivalent increases in the number of Building Inspectors and Building Mechanical Inspectors. Any reduction in supervisors should occur through attrition.

In addition, the management layer of two Chief Inspectors should be eliminated through attrition. This would broaden the span of control for the Assistant Deputy Superintendent of Building II by one position - from five positions to six positions. The two Chief Inspector positions should be replaced by equivalent increases in the number of Building Inspectors and Building Mechanical Inspectors.

Recommendation #205: The span of control for supervisors in the Code Enforcement Bureau should be broadened, through attrition. The span of control should be brought within a range of one supervisor for every six to twelve code enforcement officers (Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors).

Recommendation #206: Any reduction in supervisors - Senior Building Inspectors and Senior Building Mechanical Inspectors – should be offset by equivalent increases in the number of Building Inspectors and Building Mechanical Inspectors. Any reduction should occur through attrition.

Recommendation #207: The management layer of two Chief Inspectors should be eliminated through attrition.

Recommendation #208: The two Chief Inspector positions should be replaced by equivalent increases in the number of Building Inspectors and Building Mechanical Inspectors in the Code Enforcement Bureau.

3. THE CODE ENFORCEMENT BUREAU SHOULD DEVELOP AN EFFECTIVE MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORTING SYSTEM.

One of the Bureau's strengths is its automated case management system (Hansen). This automated information system contains a substantive amount of information regarding each case opened by the Bureau.

The purpose of measurement is to improve performance. It is part of a continuous cycle of measurement-based program planning, resource allocation, program or policy execution, and evaluation that focuses on the use of performance

measurement information to identify what works and what does not.²⁰ This requires transparency.

An effective performance reporting system should consider the following:

- Limit the number of code enforcement measures that are developed and used to key high-level indicators or measuring what matters, and eliminate data that isn't regularly used to inform management decisions;
- Ensure that code enforcement performance measures, objectives, and goals have clear linkages – the measures should clearly indicate outcomes related to the goals and objectives;
- Define programs (i.e., AIM, OSSPIP, etc.) within the Bureau, and assigning measures to the major ones;
- Report the performance of the Bureau on a monthly basis to enable meaningful analysis to inform decision-making and intelligently allocate resources; and
- Track the performance measures over time, and don't change measures each year.²¹

The exhibit following this page presents possible performance measures the Bureau should utilize to report its performance on a regular basis and utilize to manage the workload and performance of the Bureau.

Recommendation #209: The Code Enforcement Bureau should develop a two (2) to three (3) page monthly performance measurement report that effectively communicates results generated by the Bureau to management and to the public.

²⁰ National Performance Management Advisory Commission, A Performance Management Framework for State and Local Government: From Measurement and Reporting to Management and Improving, 2010

²¹ Association of Government Accountants, State and Local Government's Use of Performance Measures to Improve Service Delivery.

Exhibit 25 (1)

Sample Performance Measures

Type of Measure	Sample Performance Measures
Workload / Output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active (open) case count by priority level and by type of case • Number of cases opened in the most recent month, fiscal year-to-date, and a comparison to same month last fiscal year and last fiscal year-to-date by priority level and by type of case • Distribution of active cases by priority status level and by type of case for each district and each officer • Distribution of active caseload by type of violation for each Council District and each officer • Closed case count in the most recent month, fiscal year-to-date, and a comparison to same month last fiscal year and last fiscal year-to-date • Distribution of closed cases by type of violation for each district and each officer • Number of notices of violation issued • Number of orders to comply issued • Number of contract abatements on personal property by type of case • Number of hearings
Service Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age of each case in the <u>active</u> caseload by priority status level and by type of case for each district and each officer in terms of calendar days • Average age and oldest / newest age of <u>active</u> caseload by priority status level and by type of case for each Council District and each officer in terms of calendar days • Age of each case at <u>closure</u> by priority status level and by type of case for each district and each officer in terms of calendar days • Average age and oldest / newest age of cases at <u>closure</u> by priority status level and by type of case for each Council District and each officer in terms of calendar days • Average calendar days and minimum / maximum calendar days from submittal of complaint to first site visit for each Council District and each officer • Number of cases opened by officers (not complaints received from citizens) in the most recent month, fiscal year-to-date, and a comparison to same month last fiscal year and last fiscal year-to-date by priority level, by type of case, by officer, and by Council District • Number of cases closed voluntarily by type of case as a percentage of all cases closed in the most recent month • Number of cases closed involuntarily by type of case as a percentage of all cases closed in the most recent month

Exhibit 25 (2)

Type of Measure	Sample Performance Measures
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Average new caseload per officer in the most recent month, fiscal year-to-date, and a comparison to same month last fiscal year and last fiscal year-to-date• Average open caseload per officer in the most recent month, fiscal year-to-date, and a comparison to same month last fiscal year and last fiscal year-to-date
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall case closure rate as a proportion of cases opened in the most recent month, fiscal year-to-date, and a comparison to same month last fiscal year and last fiscal year-to-date• Overall case closure rate as a proportion of cases opened in the most recent month for each district and each officer

4. THE CODE ENFORCEMENT BUREAU SHOULD TRACK PERFORMANCE AGAINST OBJECTIVES AND MONITOR ITS WORKLOAD AND PERFORMANCE ON AN ONGOING BASIS.

Management information reports generated by systems capture the detailed information about staff productivity and Bureau performance to monitor workload, balance assignments and evaluate internal operations. The Bureau should track and report the following information on a monthly basis:

- Bureau workload;
- Case tracking;
- Elapsed times for the initial site visit and closure of cases;
- Work in backlog; and
- Personnel productivity.

The exhibit following this page represents the corresponding management reports the Bureau should generate on a monthly basis to manage its workload and the performance of the Bureau.

Recommendation #210: The Code Enforcement Bureau manager and supervisors should develop a number of monthly management information reports to track performance against objectives for first site visits after a case has been opened, for closure of cases, and to monitor the case workload and performance Code Enforcement Officers.

Recommendation #211: The managers and supervisors of the Code Enforcement Bureau should be held accountable for using the monthly management information reports to manage the workload and performance of the Bureau.

Exhibit 26 (1)

**Recommended Management Reports
For the Code Enforcement Bureau**

Report Name	Frequency / Distribution	Report Data
Workload distribution	Monthly to Bureau managers and supervisors	Monthly volume counts of open cases by type for the entire Bureau
Workload Report – New Cases	Monthly to Bureau managers and supervisors	Information by Code Enforcement Officer and geographical area including date submitted, date assigned, and last milestone
Workload Report – Open Cases	Monthly to Bureau managers and supervisors	Information by Code Enforcement Officer and geographical area including date opened, date assigned, and last milestone or activity including the type of activity
Workload Report – Closed Cases	Monthly to Bureau managers and supervisors	Information by Code Enforcement Officer and geographical area including date opened and date the case was closed and the basis for closure i.e., voluntarily complied
Case Status Report	Monthly to Bureau managers and supervisors	Case information by case number, open date, Code Enforcement Officer assigned, and geographical area assigned, and last milestone or activity including the type of activity
Elapsed Processing Time Report – Open Cases	Monthly to Bureau managers and supervisors	Information by Code Enforcement Officer and geographical area including date the case was opened, cycle time objective for case closure, days case has been opened, and last milestone

Exhibit 26 (2)

Report Name	Frequency / Distribution	Report Data
Elapsed Processing Time Report – Closed Cases	Monthly to Bureau managers and supervisors	Information by Code Enforcement Officer and geographical area including date opened, cycle time objective, closure date, total days from open to close.
Elapsed Processing Time Report –Cases Overdue	Monthly to Bureau managers and supervisors	Information by Code Enforcement Officer and geographical area including date submitted, cycle time objective, days into process and last milestone
Caseload Assignment and Distribution Report	Monthly to Bureau managers and supervisors	All caseload information and Code Enforcement Officer and geographical area assigned and by case type
Code Enforcement Officer Performance Report	Monthly to Bureau managers and supervisors	Elapsed processing time by Code Enforcement Officer and geographical area assigned, including new cases assigned, open cases, closed cases, overdue cases, and % processed within cycle time objectives.

5. THE SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS OF THE CODE ENFORCEMENT BUREAU SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO POSSESS CACEO CERTIFICATION.

The *California Association of Code Enforcement Officers* (CACEO) conducts a biennial survey of the cities and counties in California regarding the code enforcement practices and policies of these local governments. The most recent survey was conducted in 2013. There were a total of 67 respondents including two respondents from cities / counties whose population was 750,000 to 1,000,000 and 9 respondents from a city / county whose population was between 200,000 and 750,000. The survey included questions regarding CACEO certification. The responses were as follows:

- 25% of the respondents required CACEO certification for all levels of code enforcement officers;
- 18% of the respondents required CACEO certification at entry level; and
- 68% of the respondents indicated that, even if required, all of the enforcement officials, senior officials and officers / inspectors were agency CACEO certified

The staff of the Code Enforcement Bureau is not required to possess a *California Association of Code Enforcement Officers* (CACEO) Basic certificate (e.g., required within twenty-four (24) months of employment).

The supervisory and management staff of the Code Enforcement Bureau should be required to possess the *California Association of Code Enforcement Officers* (CACEO) Advanced Course Certification Program within 24 months of hire / appointment. The code enforcement officers (Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors assigned to the Bureau) should be encouraged to possess the *California Association of Code Enforcement Officers* (CACEO) Basic Course Certification Program within 24 months of hire / appointment.

The requirement for professional certification will upgrade the training and qualifications of the employees of the Bureau and their ability to provide responsive and skilled services to the residents and businesses of Los Angeles.

The Code Enforcement Bureau should budget funds for the costs of the testing required for its employees to take the *California Association of Code Enforcement Officers* (CACEO) Course Certification examinations and the costs of ongoing training required to maintain such certification.

Recommendation #212: The supervisory and management staff of the Code Enforcement Bureau should be required to possess the *California Association of Code Enforcement Officers* (CACEO) Advanced Course Certification Program within 24 months of hire / appointment.

Recommendation #213: The code enforcement officers within the Code Enforcement Bureau should be encouraged to possess the *California Association of Code Enforcement Officers* (CACEO) Basic Course Certification Program within 24 months of hire / appointment.

Recommendation #214: The Code Enforcement Bureau should budget funds for the costs of the testing required for its employees to take the *California Association of Code Enforcement Officers* Course Certification examinations and the costs of ongoing training required to maintain such certification.

6. CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE PC 832 TRAINING.

A code enforcement officer (Building Mechanical Inspector and Building Inspector) does not absolutely have to have Penal Code 832 training. This is a prevailing practice for code enforcement in California. In the 2013 survey of cities and counties conducted by the California Association of Code Enforcement Officers, 90% of the respondents indicated that their local government required code enforcement officers, supervisors, and managers complete PC 832 training.

Penal Code 832 is more than just the laws of arrest. It's all about liability and how to protect one self and the City from litigation.

The Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution sets the standards for Search and Seizure. It prohibits police / government officials from searching people's homes, offices, vehicles without reasonable grounds to believe a legal violation has occurred. The presumption of the Courts is that unless code enforcement officers adhere to accepted case law, code enforcement officers have violated the 4th amendment. This requires that the search of a property for code enforcement purposes must be by knowing and voluntary consent. Looking over and through fences is reasonable, unless it is close to a house. Even looking can be considered a "search". Taking documents and samples is a "seizure".

It is a basic principle of the 4th amendment that search and seizure without a warrant are presumptively unreasonable.

Code enforcement officers (Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors assigned to the Bureau) should complete Penal Code 832 training to provide the legal knowledge necessary to determine whether the intrusion by the code enforcement officer in conducting inspections in the field are reasonable, to ensure that the information (evidence) the code enforcement officer gathers is admissible in any type of proceeding, to ensure that code enforcement officers respect the rights of the public, and to protect the City from liability and litigation.

Code enforcement officers (Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors assigned to the Bureau) should obtain a 24-hour P.O.S.T. module, Penal Code 832 Arrest, Search and Seizure certification to verify that the officers have been

trained regarding how to gather evidence that is legally admissible; obtain warrants; conduct abandoned building abatements; coordinate receivership actions; understand the legal procedures for demolishing hazardous structures; etc. The Code Enforcement Bureau should budget funds for the costs of the training required for its employees to obtain the 24-hour P.O.S.T. module, Penal Code 832 Arrest, Search and Seizure certification and the costs of ongoing training required to maintain such certification.

Recommendation #215: The code enforcement officers (the Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors assigned to the Code Enforcement Bureau and their supervisors and managers) should obtain a 24- hour P.O.S.T. module, PC 832 Arrest, Search and Seizure certification.

Recommendation #216: The Code Enforcement Bureau should budget funds for the costs of the training required for its employees to obtain a 24-hour P.O.S.T. module, PC 832 Arrest, Search and Seizure certification and the costs of ongoing training required to maintain such certification.

7. THE CITY SHOULD CLARIFY RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENFORCEMENT OF THE ZONING CODE IN A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING AND THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND SAFETY.

There is considerable debate between the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning regarding the appropriate roles and responsibilities for enforcement of the zoning code, and where those roles and responsibilities belong organizationally.

The Matrix Consulting Group views the relationship between the two departments as a partnership, with a clear division of roles and responsibilities between the two departments. In other words, each department has an appropriate role in the enforcement of the zoning code.

The division used by the Matrix Consulting Group, and observed elsewhere in other cities, is the issuance of the certificate of occupancy or the approval of the

discretionary review application (e.g., conditional use permit). Until the certificate of occupancy is issued or the discretionary review application is approved, the Department of City Planning should enforce conditions of approval in the field (e.g., enforcement of conditions of approval associated with the discretionary review to ensure that applicants adhere to those conditions). That involvement should involve the inspection in the field by case planners for compliance with conditions of approval for discretionary review applications, and compliance with mitigation measures for the mitigated negative declaration or environmental impact review.

However, once the certificate of occupancy has been issued or the discretionary review application has been approved, the enforcement roles and responsibilities should be assigned to the Code Enforcement Bureau; enforcement becomes a maintenance responsibility.

This division of roles and responsibilities is a prevailing practice. This division of roles and responsibilities should be used to provide clarity for both departments, and should be formalized in a memorandum of agreement developed by the by the Office of the City Administrative Officer and the two departments.

The current division of roles and responsibilities between the two departments lacks such clarity. Both are currently enforcing “compliance with conditions of approval regarding the physical structures of the businesses” and also ensuring operational compliance with Conditions of Approval.

The Department of City Planning has established its own Condition Compliance Unit in fiscal year 2013-14. The responsibility of this Unit includes Nuisance Abatement - working with the Department of Building and Safety, Police Department, and residents

to identify and address properties that have received entitlement permits from the Department of City Planning, but are violating conditions of the entitlement. The budget request for this Unit stated that the Unit would “evaluate compliance with conditions of approval regarding the physical structures of the businesses” and also ensure operational compliance with Conditions of Approval. The Unit has four staff allocated to this function: a City Planner, two City Planning Associates, and a Structural Engineering Associate III.

The Code Enforcement Bureau is also responsible for ensuring operational compliance with Conditions of Approval in such programs as (1) the Off-Site Sign Periodic Inspection Program (inspection of off-site signs in the City, including an evaluation of the sign's safety and legal status and compliance to the codes, on an ongoing 3-year cycle); and (2) the Annual Inspection Monitoring program that requires an annual inspection of all auto repair facilities, auto dismantling yards, junk yards, scrap metal processing plants, used car lots, cargo containers, storage yards, and recycling centers for violations of both building and land use ordinances; etc. This is in addition to the normal day-to-day zoning enforcement responsibilities of the Bureau.

Two departments should not be in the business of enforcing operational compliance with Conditions of Approval after the certificate of occupancy has been issued or the discretionary review application approved. It results in confusion regarding managerial accountability and is an inefficient use of resources that the City of Los Angeles can ill afford. In cities in which functional integration of development services in a new department has already occurred – cities like San Diego, San Jose, Portland, San Antonio, Glendale, etc. – this simply does not occur. There is one bureau in these

functionally integrated departments that is responsible for enforcement of operational compliance with Conditions of Approval – Code Enforcement.

This is not to suggest that the Department of City Planning has no role in enforcing operational compliance with Conditions of Approval after the certificate of occupancy has been issued or the discretionary review application approved. The Department is ultimately responsible for the City's zoning code and the conditions of approval for discretionary review. The Department should provide advice and counsel to the Code Enforcement Bureau regarding the zoning code and the conditions of approval for discretionary review so that the Code Enforcement Bureau can effectively enforce these requirements.

However, the Code Enforcement Bureau should be the “boots on the ground” for enforcement after the certificate of occupancy has been issued or the discretionary review application approved.

The Department of City Planning should not dedicate staff in a Condition Compliance Unit to ensuring operational compliance with Conditions of Approval after the certificate of occupancy has been issued or the discretionary review application approved. That should be the responsibility of the Code Enforcement Bureau.

Recommendation #217: The partnership between the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety in enforcement of the zoning code should be memorialized in a Memorandum of Agreement developed by the two departments in a process facilitated by the Office of the City Administrative Officer.

Recommendation #218: The division of responsibility for enforcement of the zoning code between the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety should be based upon the certificate of occupancy or approval of the discretionary review permit. Until the certificate of occupancy is issued or the discretionary review application is approved, the Department of City Planning should enforce the conditions of approval in the field. That involvement

should involve enforcement by the case planners for compliance with conditions of approval for discretionary review applications, and compliance with mitigation measures for the mitigated negative declaration or environmental impact review. However, once the certificate of occupancy has been issued or the discretionary review application has been approved, the enforcement roles and responsibilities should be assigned to the Code Enforcement Bureau; enforcement becomes a maintenance responsibility.

Recommendation #219: The four positions allocated to the Code Compliance Unit in the Department of City Planning for Nuisance Abatement should be eliminated through attrition, and the incumbents reallocated to other vacant positions.

8. THE CODE ENFORCEMENT BUREAU SHOULD ENFORCE CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS AFTER THE PERMIT HAS BEEN APPROVED.

The City should address enforcement of planning conditions of approval for all of the City's Conditional Use permits.

Conditional use permits require a supplemental enforcement opportunity to ensure compliance with representations made by an owner or applicant in connection with a Conditional Use permit after their approval. The purpose of field enforcement after approval of the Conditional Use permit is to assure compliance with the representations. The Code Enforcement Bureau – in its responsibility for enforcement after the discretionary review application has been approved – should conduct field inspections and enforcement in the field to ensure that conditions of approval for the Conditional Use permits are being adhered to for a one-year period after the permit was approved. This should include working with the Department of City Planning and the Police Department (e.g., Noise Enforcement Team, Vice for the bars and night clubs, etc.).

Subsequently, the enforcement should be based upon complaints, or by proactive observations by the staff of the Code Enforcement Bureau.

This enforcement will likely require the Code Enforcement Bureau to work with the Department of City Planning, on occasion, to institute revocation hearings for previously authorized Conditional Use permits where compliance with conditions is an issue. In other instances, the Code Enforcement Bureau will need to work with the Department of City Planning for illegal businesses that are operating without Conditional Use permits.

This will require a partnership between the Code Enforcement Bureau, Department of Building and Safety, and the Department of City Planning. This partnership should be clarified, as previously recommended, in a memorandum of agreement.

The City should adopt a one-time fee, paid for at the time of submittal of the application for the conditional use permit, to recover the costs associated with the monitoring of compliance of the Conditional Use permit for a one-year period after the permit was approved. This is not unusual; other cities use the same approach. The fees charged and collected from the permit applicant should be equal to the actual costs to the City of implementing the adopted monitoring program.

Recommendation #220: The City should address enforcement of Department of City Planning conditions of approval for all of the City's Conditional Use Permits. Compliance should be monitored through site inspections conducted by the staff of the Code Enforcement Bureau for a one-year period after the permit was approved.

Recommendation #221: The City should adopt a fee, paid for at the time of submittal of the application for the conditional use permit, to recover the costs associated with the monitoring of compliance of the Conditional Use permit.

9. THE CODE ENFORCEMENT BUREAU SHOULD ACCEPT ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS.

At the present time, the Code Enforcement Bureau will not accept complaints filed anonymously. Some other local governments have adopted similar policies, while others have chosen to accept anonymous complaints.

Not accepting complaints filed anonymously, however, will likely discourage complaints. If the name of a complainant is on a record, it is open to the public. The City does not have to tell the person about whom the complaint is being made, but will have to let that person look at the record if the request is made.

Perhaps a better policy than simply not investigating anonymous complaints would be to respond to them on a case-by-case basis depending on the indication of the reliability in the complaint. A complainant with very specific knowledge about a situation and the dangers posed is more believable than someone who complains in general terms. And a complainant with specific knowledge about a place where there have been similar problems in the past is probably even more reliable. Both these situations might warrant a response to the complaint even though it is anonymous.

The Code Enforcement Bureau should accept anonymous complaints and, based upon the reliability and specificity of the complaint, investigate the complaint.

Recommendation #222: The Code Enforcement Bureau should accept anonymous complaints and, based upon the reliability and specificity of the complaint, investigate the complaint.

10. THE CODE ENFORCEMENT BUREAU SHOULD FORMALLY NOTIFY THE COMPLAINANT OF THE NAME OF THE CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER ASSIGNED TO INVESTIGATE THEIR COMPLAINT IN WRITING OR BY E-MAIL.

The Code Enforcement Bureau should utilize a code enforcement officer (Building Mechanical Inspectors and Building Inspectors assigned to the Code Enforcement Bureau) as a single point of contact for the complainant.

The complainant should be informed of the name of their code enforcement officer in a letter from the Bureau within five (5) business days of assignment of the case to a code enforcement officer. This should include the name, e-mail address, and phone number of the code enforcement officer.

Recommendation #223: The Code Enforcement Bureau should notify the complainant of the name of the code enforcement officer assigned their case no later than five business days after the submittal of their complaint including the name, e-mail address, and phone number of the code enforcement officer.

11. THE CODE ENFORCEMENT BUREAU SHOULD ENHANCE ITS WEB PAGE.

The home page for the Department of Building and Safety lacks an obvious link to the Code Enforcement Bureau. There is a link with the pull-down menu for “LA DBS Services” that links to the Bureau and includes information about the Bureau (e.g., its mission), a description of its functions, the ability to report a violation on-line, a list of vacant buildings being abated by the Bureau, and information regarding the Local Enforcement Agency (City wide permitting, inspection and regulation of solid waste facilities and certain recycling facilities).

However, the web page lacks information regarding the names, City phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of the Code Enforcement Bureau manager, supervisors, and code enforcement officers; the specific codes enforced by the Bureau (rather than

links to the Municipal Code); descriptions of the how the Bureau responds to complaints (i.e., *Order to Comply*); property maintenance standards; code enforcement fees; a listing of open cases sortable by Council District and address; etc.

The Department of Building and Safety should provide a direct link to the Code Enforcement Bureau on the Department's home page in addition to the links for Customer Feedback, Online Permit, Inspection Request, Codes and Standards, and Zoning.

The Department should enhance the web page for the Code Enforcement Bureau to include additional information including such information as the following:

- Contact information for the Bureau manager, supervisors, code enforcement officers including names, landline and City cell phone numbers, and e-mail addresses;
- Links to the Director of Building and Safety to express concerns, if any, regarding the level of service delivered by the Bureau;
- Electronic brochures regarding City codes enforced by the Bureau, property maintenance standards, etc. with all of this information being bi-lingual;
- The top ten most frequent violations found by the Bureau;
- On-line status checks of a code enforcement complaint;
- A monthly performance report prepared by the Bureau that compares actual performance of the Bureau to metrics (e.g., the amount of business days required for the first site visit after receipt of a complaint); and
- The geographic assignments of the code enforcement officers portrayed on a map of the City.

Some of these features are already available, but most are not. The web page for the Bureau can provide powerful informational tools for the Bureau to help the residents and businesses of Los Angeles understand the services delivered by the Bureau and the ordinances that it enforces.

Recommendation #224: The Department of Building and Safety should provide a direct link to the Code Enforcement Bureau on the Department's home page in addition to the links for Customer Feedback, Online Permit, Inspection Request, Codes and Standards, and Zoning.

Recommendation #225: The Department of Building and Safety should enhance the web page of the Code Enforcement Bureau.

12. THE CODE ENFORCEMENT BUREAU SHOULD ENHANCE THE ALLOCATION OF ITS STAFF RESOURCES IN ACCORD WITH ITS WORKLOAD AND THE NEEDS OF THE CITY'S NEIGHBORHOODS.

At the present time, the code enforcement staff are assigned by Council District. Not all areas of the City have the same needs from the perspective of code enforcement. In addition, the code enforcement workload is NOT evenly distributed throughout each Council District in the City of Los Angeles. This is apparent in the allocation of open cases by Council District as presented in the table below.

Council District	Number of Open Cases in October 2013	Open Cases Per Code Enforcement Officer
1	404	404
2	524	349
3	743	371
4	695	347
5	540	270
6	656	328
7	594	237
8	869	434
9	725	362
10	603	301
11	728	364
12	448	224
13	491	245
14	731	369
15	365	182
Average	607.73	319
Median	603.00	347

This allocation of workload and code enforcement officers by Council District results in disproportionate workload distribution. The code enforcement officers in

Council District 15 each had an average open caseload of 183 cases each in October 2013; the code enforcement officers assigned to Council District 8 each had an average open caseload of 434 cases in October 2013 or a little more than twice that of Council District 15. While it is unrealistic to expect that each Council District would have the same number of open cases per code enforcement officer, it is clear that the open case workload should be better balanced among the Districts.

The Bureau should allocate its code enforcement staff to better reflect the workload in each Council District and the needs of each Council District. This may require that code enforcement officers be “shared” between Council Districts; the Bureau already “shares” a code enforcement officer between Council Districts 2 and 7.

This is not an issue unique to the City. Other cities are grappling with this same issue. An example may be found with the *National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership*. The *National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership* is a collaborative effort by the Urban Institute and local partners in 29 cities (including Oakland and Sacramento), to further the development and use of neighborhood information systems in local policy making and community building. All of these 29 cities have built (or are building) advanced information systems with recurrently updated data on various neighborhood conditions in their cities.

These 29 cities have found that the timeliness and geographic detail of local data sources are critical in accurately identifying and effectively addressing urban issues. This includes a range of data as noted in the table below.

Electric shutoffs	Building permits
Water shutoffs	Property tax assessments
Subsidized childcare	Foreclosures
Business licenses	Student absences
Student proficiency	Student free / reduced price lunch

Free / reduced price lunch	Extent of public assistance (TANF, food stamps, Medicaid etc.)
Property sales (volume and price)	Number of public housing units
Reported crime (Part I)	911 calls for service

These data sets will not be able to be readily collected by the Bureau, and some of these data sets are probably not worth the effort to obtain the data from other local or state governments. Other data, such as reported crime, 911 calls for service, foreclosures, water shutoffs, etc. can be readily collected.

The Bureau can collect this data, in addition to the volume of code enforcement violations, so that it can develop needs assessments for each Council District, as it pertains to code enforcement. However, the needs assessment is intended to not only determine which neighborhoods that the Bureau should focus its efforts on, but also the type and range of assistance that the Bureau should bring to those neighborhoods. After all, the Bureau cannot address the range of problems in these neighborhoods by itself. It needs the assistance of other Bureaus and departments in the City, County agencies, the school district, etc.

The Bureau should develop neighborhood revitalization plans that reflect the diversity of resources necessary to address the needs of these neighborhoods. The plans should consider a number of elements including the following:

- Boundaries – The boundaries of the designated neighborhood (this may simply be a Council District);
- Demographic criteria – The demographic characteristics of the area (statistics about the residents of the community) including zoning, total housing units, population, etc.;
- Consultation – The consultative approach to be utilized in working with the neighborhood stakeholders (input from the Neighborhood Councils, residents, business owners, non-profit organizations, and churches located in the designated neighborhood);

- Assessment – An assessment of the conditions of the neighborhood based upon data collected by the Bureau such as median family income, reported crime, 911 calls for service, foreclosures, vacant units, water shutoffs, owner-occupied units, etc.;
- Neighborhood revitalization – The plan to revitalize the neighborhood using a collaborative approach; and
- Performance measurements – How to identify progress that is readily measurable.

The plan should include focused housing rehabilitation investments by Community Development Block grants for housing rehabilitation; streetscape improvements; focused crime suppression and prevention; the use of cross-functional teams to target challenging properties; increased legal prosecution of violations of property; proactive enforcement of nuisance and building maintenance codes; the use of neighborhood cleanup days sponsored by the Bureau of Sanitation; etc.

The development of the neighborhood revitalization plans is designed to provide a collaborative structure to address neighborhood revitalization.

Recommendation #226: The Code Enforcement Bureau should evaluate the geographic distribution of its workload, and reallocate its staff to reflect that geographical distribution.

Recommendation #227: The Code Enforcement Bureau should collect data at the Council District-level to identify the neighborhoods in the City with the greatest need for public sector intervention.

Recommendation #228: The Code Enforcement Bureau should develop neighborhood revitalization plans for those neighborhoods in the City that are in the greatest need of public sector intervention.

Recommendation #229: The development of the neighborhood revitalization plans should be based upon a collaborative effort including the Code Enforcement Bureau, Department of Building and Safety; Department of City Planning; Police Department; Fire Department; Office of the City Attorney; Recreation and Parks Department; and the Public Works Department.

10. ANALYSIS OF REGULATIONS

This chapter presents an analysis of land use regulations that are the policies, and support documents that drive the review and construction process and should be understandable, objective, and reasonable.

The City is already updating the City's Zoning Code. This long overdue effort will require approximately five years and entail a significant investment.

The City is also updating several Community Plans including Granada Hills – Knollwood, Sylmar, Boyle Heights, Silver Lake-Echo Park-Elysian Valley, South Los Angeles, Southeast Los Angeles, West Adams-Baldwin Hills-Leimert, and San Pedro.

However, other challenges remain including the ability of the Department of City Planning to sustain its efforts in community planning, CEQA, and urban design, and the effectiveness of project management in the updating of Community Plans.

A summary of the recommendations contained within this chapter is presented in the exhibit following this page.

Exhibit 27 (1)

**Summary of Recommendations
Contained within Chapter 10**

Rec. #	Recommendation
230	The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should be involved in the update of the Community Plans, to provide advice and counsel to the planners assigned to updating the Community Plan regarding the urban design guidelines being developed for the Community Plan.
231	The Department of City Planning should conduct field inspections to verify compliance with the design review conditions of approval for discretionary review applications prior to the final building inspection and/or to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
232	The cost of the field inspection by the case planner from the Department of City Planning to verify compliance with the design review conditions of approval for discretionary review applications should be recovered in the discretionary fees.
233	The case planner should record the specific dates and purposes of the site visits to verify compliance with the design review conditions of approval for discretionary review applications in the <i>Planning Case Tracking System</i> .
234	The Policy Planning Bureau, as it updates the Community Plans, should include the development of street standards, comparable to the downtown street standards, the California Complete Streets Act, and the Los Angeles County Model Streets Manual.
235	The development of these standards should be a cooperative effort with the Department of Transportation, the Department of Public Works, and the Water and Power Department.
236	The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should be involved in the development of the design standards within re:code.LA, including participating in the development of these standards as part of the team from the Policy Planning Bureau.
237	The Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should develop a policy and procedure regarding the role of the City Planner assigned to the Urban Studio in the discretionary review process.
238	The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should provide classroom design review training to the staff of the Development Services Bureau on an ongoing and semi-annual basis. The attendance should be mandatory.
239	Additional planning staff will be necessary for the Citywide Policy and Planning Division, Department of City Planning to update the Community Plans on a ten-year cycle and to implement the recommendations contained in the Community Plans.
240	The Department of City Planning should work with the Office of the City Administrative Officer to assess "lessons learned" so far in the updating of the City's Community Plans and assess the allocation and adequacy of staff and consulting resources. The Department of City Planning and the Office of the City Administrative Officer should return with recommendations to the City Council so that the Department can meet the ten-year schedule for updating community plans established in January 2008.
241	A summarized twenty-four to thirty-six month bar chart schedule should be prepared for all projects that are or will be assigned to the Citywide and Community Planning Division. The bar chart schedule should be updated quarterly.

Exhibit 27 (2)

Rec. #	Recommendation
242	The Citywide and Community Planning Division should expand its annual work program. The annual work program should be presented to the City Planning Commission and the Planning Land Use Management Committee of the City Council. The City Planning Commission and the Planning Land Use Management Committee of the City Council should receive semi-annual updates regarding the status of the annual work program.
243	The Citywide and Community Planning Division should prepare more detailed work programs / plans for the updates of Community Plans.
244	The Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division should prepare a quarterly project status report regarding each project undertaken by the Division no later than the fifth working day after the conclusion of the quarter.
245	The Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division should publish these reports monthly, on-line on the Internet.
246	The Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division should utilize project accounting in the City's payroll system to charge and track the hours worked on updating the Community Plans, implementation of the Community Plans, or other long-range planning tasks.
247	The Department of City Planning should update the CEQA guidelines utilized by the Department.
248	The Department of City Planning should comply with the requirements of the State Public Resources Code that, thirty days after an application is accepted as complete or deemed complete, the City must complete its initial environmental study.
249	The Department of City Planning should institutionalize the requirement in a formal written policy and procedure that, thirty days after a discretionary review application is accepted as complete or deemed complete, the City must complete its initial environmental study, and hold its staff accountable for meeting this requirement.
250	The City should require that the applicant for discretionary review select a consultant of the applicant's choice, from a list of City-qualified consultants, to prepare an Environmental Impact Report or Traffic Mitigation Impact Study.
251	The Department of City Planning should utilize tiering of environmental impact reports to streamline environmental review, as occurred with the Hollywood Community Plan.
252	The Department should ensure that its Planners receive CEQA training on an annual basis. The attendance should be mandatory.
253	The Department of City Planning should implement a monitoring or reporting program for mitigation measures associated with mitigated negative declarations or an environmental impact reports.
254	The Department of City Planning should assign responsibility to its case planners in its Development Services Bureau for the implementation of this responsibility, including field inspection and monitoring.
255	The Department of City Planning establish and collect a fee to recover the costs incurred for procedures necessary to comply with CEQA on the project including the costs of mitigation monitoring or reporting programs.
256	The planners in the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should be required to utilize PCTS or CDMS for all aspects of the discretionary review process including environmental processing requirements, environmental conditions, outside agency environmental permits and mitigation monitoring.
257	The Department of City Planning should develop a formal written policy and procedure requiring the planners of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning to utilize PCTS or CDMS for all aspects of the discretionary review application process.

1. THE URBAN DESIGN STUDIO SHOULD BE MORE EXTENSIVELY UTILIZED.

The exhibit on the following page presents an evaluation of the design review practices of the Department of City Planning.

There are clearly a number of strengths in the City's design review program – the Urban Design Studio. There are also a number of opportunities for improvement.

(1) The City Planner Assigned to the Urban Design Studio Should Be Involved in the Development of Community Plans.

Design guidelines for Community Plans are designed to supplement the Citywide Design Principles. They offer more direction for proceeding with the design of a project. They illustrate options, solutions, and techniques to achieve the goal of excellence in design. That is exactly the intent stated in the Hollywood Community Plan. The Community Plan notes that the urban design guidelines in the Community Plan “don't replace standards adopted by the City Council for specific neighborhoods in Hollywood: Transit Oriented Districts, Station Area Neighborhood Plans, Community Design Overlay Districts, Historic Preservation Overlay Zones, and Specific Plans.”

The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should be involved in the update of these Community Plans, to provide advice and counsel to the planners assigned to updating the Community Plan regarding the urban design guidelines being developed for the Community Plan.

Exhibit 28 (1)

Design Review Best Practices

Best Practice	Strength	Opportunity for Improvement
Design Review guidelines have been developed to assure the quality of the development product and to provide guidance to the applicant and to staff.	The Department of City Planning has developed urban design guidelines including guidelines for residential, urban, and industrial uses, the downtown, downtown street standards, etc. In addition, the most recently adopted Community Plan – Hollywood – includes urban design guidelines specific to Hollywood including specific checklists e.g., building orientation checklist	The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio has not been involved in the development of the design guidelines for Community Plans.
Planners assigned to discretionary review projects receive specific, on-going training to enable them to support boards and applicants proactively.	Development Services Bureau staff were recently trained, for the first time, in the use and application of design guidelines in 2013. The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio is developing an urban design training manual for the staff of the Development Services Bureau.	
Systems are in place to ensure that design-related conditions of approval for discretionary review projects are incorporated into the final construction of the project.		Systems are not in place to ensure that the design conditions of approval are incorporated into the final construction of the project.
The discretionary review of applications by the Department of City Planning ensure the application of consistent standards for public improvements associated with these projects.	The Department of City Planning, in a cooperative venture with other City departments, developed downtown Street Standards to establish definitive future curb lines and property lines for all Downtown streets, and, in some locations, additional required average sidewalk easements to provide certainty for developers and their architects as to the building and street location and required roadway improvements.	These standards have not been developed for other portions of the City, and, at times, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Public Works, and the Water and Power Department apply different standards resulting in contradictory messages to the discretionary review applicant.

Exhibit 28 (2)

Best Practice	Strength	Opportunity for Improvement
The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio is involved in the development of design guidelines within Re:code.LA.		The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio is not involved in the development of design guidelines within Re:code.LA.
The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio is involved in the Case Management system in the Department of Building and Safety.	The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio is involved in large discretionary review projects, on a case-by-case basis.	The Development Services Bureau has not formalized the involvement of the City Planner in the Case Management system in a formal policy and procedure.

The intent of the advice and counsel by the City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should be to ensure consistency between citywide design guidelines (e.g., guidelines for residential, urban, and industrial uses, the downtown, downtown street standards, etc.) with those being developed for the Community Plans, assure the guidelines will improve the quality of new development and design, while allowing creative architectural expression, provide greater clarity for the community and applicants, and provide a sound basis for planners in the Development Services Bureau of the Department of City Planning to provide a subjective design review of discretionary review applications.

This does not necessitate the full-time involvement of the City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio in the updating of these Community Plans. The City Planner should be involved at key points during the development of the Community Plans such as discussions regarding design guidelines with the community, the formulation of design alternatives, the development of a preferred alternative and design guidelines, etc.

Recommendation #230: The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should be involved in the update of the Community Plans, to provide advice and counsel to the planners assigned to updating the Community Plan regarding the urban design guidelines being developed for the Community Plan.

(2) The Department of City Planning Should Ensure Conformance with Design Conditions of Approval by Conducting Field Inspections Prior to the Issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.

There are a number of steps that a planning department should take to ensure conformance with the conditions of approval for a project, including design review. These steps are portrayed below.

- The plans submitted for building permit and construction are required to be in substantial compliance with the approved discretionary review application regarding the design of the project and the material board submitted to the Department of City Planning. Any changes to the size, colors, construction materials, design, and location of the structures or project facilities on the site should not be made without prior City approval during building permit plan check by the Department of City Planning.
- The applicant should provide and attach a full copy of the approved design review conditions of approval to the building permit application submittal.
- The case planner that was assigned to the discretionary review application should make a site inspection(s) of the project during construction to determine compliance with the design review conditions of approval, prior to the final building inspection and / or to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

The case planners within the Department of City Planning are not conducting field inspections for discretionary review application projects to verify compliance with the design review conditions of approval prior to the final building inspection and / or to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy. The Department should conduct these field inspections, with the responsibility being assigned to the case planner that processed the discretionary review application. The cost of the field inspection by the case planner should be recovered in the discretionary fees. The case planner should record the specific dates and purposes of the site visits in the *Planning Case Tracking System*.

Recommendation #231: The Department of City Planning should conduct field inspections to verify compliance with the design review conditions of approval for discretionary review applications prior to the final building inspection and/or to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

Recommendation #232: The cost of the field inspection by the case planner from the Department of City Planning to verify compliance with the design review conditions of approval for discretionary review applications should be recovered in the discretionary fees.

Recommendation #233: The case planner should record the specific dates and purposes of the site visits to verify compliance with the design review conditions of approval for discretionary review applications in the *Planning Case Tracking System*.

(3) The Policy Planning Bureau, Department of City Planning Should Include Street Standards within Each Community Plan.

In 2009, the City Planning Commission adopted street standards for the downtown.

The downtown street standards were developed in response to contentious street dedications and street widening issues faced by developers in downtown Los Angeles, especially as they relate to the desire for wider sidewalks and the impact to development in the historical core, where significant landmarks block the implementation of currently set citywide standards for wider streets.

The downtown street standards updated the Central City Community Plan street designations based on a more comprehensive street hierarchy that balanced traffic flow with the functions of the street, including pedestrian needs, public transit routes and stops, bicycle routes, historic districts with fixed building street walls, the public face and transitional “front yard” of businesses, pedestrian environments, and linear open space considerations.

The Policy Planning Bureau, as it updates the Community Plans, should include the development of street standards, comparable to the downtown street standards, the California Complete Streets Act, and the Los Angeles County Model Streets Manual in the Community Plans. The development of these standards should be a cooperative effort with the Department of Transportation, the Department of Public Works, and the Water and Power Department.

Recommendation #234: The Policy Planning Bureau, as it updates the Community Plans, should include the development of street standards, comparable to the downtown street standards, the California Complete Streets Act, and the Los Angeles County Model Streets Manual.

Recommendation #235: The development of these standards should be a cooperative effort with the Department of Transportation, the Department of Public Works, and the Water and Power Department.

(4) The City Planner Assigned to the Urban Design Studio Should Participate in re:code.LA.

The City of Los Angeles is embarking on one of the City's largest planning initiatives to date: re:code.LA, a comprehensive revision of the City's zoning code. Originally adopted in 1946, the City's zoning code has grown from a simple, 84-page pamphlet to a 600 page book.

The update of the City's zoning code will likely include general design standards including general site design and facility standards; parking and loading design standards; landscaping, fences, walls, and screening design standards; site grading standards; outdoor lighting design standards; sign design standards; etc. Typically, a zoning ordinance will include standards regarding project context, site design, land use compatibility, design unity, scale, character, open space, circulation, environmental conservation, architectural detail, landscape design, and energy efficiency. The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should be provided the opportunity to provide input regarding these standards, including participating in the development of these standards as part of the team from the Policy Planning Bureau.

The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should be involved in the development of these design standards within re:code.LA.

Recommendation #236: The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should be involved in the development of the design standards within re:code.LA, including participating in the development of these standards as part of the team from the Policy Planning Bureau.

(5) The Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning Should Develop a Policy and Procedure Regarding the Role in Discretionary Review of the City Planner Assigned to the Urban Studio.

The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio is involved in large discretionary review applications, on a case-by-case basis. However, there is not a defined policy and procedure that clarifies the role and responsibility of the City Planner in discretionary review.

The Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should develop a written policy and procedure that clarifies the role and responsibility of the City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio in discretionary review in terms of involvement in Case Management / Department of Building and Safety. The intent should be to provide for a more robust preliminary design review phase, thereby giving applicants greater clarity on their proposed project designs earlier in the process. This policy and procedure should also define the role of the City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio during the discretionary review of an application. That involvement should be governed by the size and complexity of project; in other words, the City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio should not be involved in all discretionary review applications. The policy and procedure should also define the type of input to be provided by the City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio regarding the specific project (e.g., compliance with design standards, guidelines, and review principles; opportunities to improve design; etc.).

This participation by the City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio can be an invaluable tool to reinforce the classroom design review training provided to the

staff of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning by the City Planner.

Recommendation #237: The Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should develop a policy and procedure regarding the role of the City Planner assigned to the Urban Studio in the discretionary review process.

(6) The City Planner Assigned to the Urban Design Studio Should Provide Design Review Training to the Staff of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning on an Annual Basis.

The City Planner assigned to the Urban Design Studio provided classroom design review training in 2013 to the staff of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning. It consisted of 3-hours of classroom training. This training had not been provided previously to the staff of the Development Services Bureau as a whole.

This training should be provided on an ongoing and semi-annual basis. It should not be repetitive, but should cover a range of topics such as:

- How to ensure development that is compatible with and enhances the desirable characteristics of existing neighborhoods and districts;
- How to create, maintain, and enhance an architectural style or styles that convey the community's distinctive character;
- How to preserve the architectural style and integrity of historic areas or properties with architectural or historical significance;
- How to achieve community planning objectives such as encouraging pedestrian activity, protecting views of particular value, and enhancing natural resources such as creeks; and
- Specific considerations in the design review of discretionary review applications such as height, floor area, and setback, and how to identify other features that determine how the design of individual buildings and sites fits into and contributes to the C's fabric.

[illegible]

☐☐☐☐☐ should play an important role in raising the level of skills, knowledge and abilities of the staff of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning, and enhancing the consistency of these staff in applying the City's design standards.

Recommendation #238: The City Planner as _____ should provide classroom design review training to the staff of the Development Services Bureau on an ongoing and semi-annual basis. The attendance should be mandatory.

2. THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING SHOULD UPDATE COMMUNITY PLANS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE CYCLE ADOPTED IN FISCAL YEAR 2007-08.

In January 2008, the Department of City Planning presented a plan to the City Council that would enable the Department to update all Community Plans on an eight to ten year schedule.

At that time, the Department was updating 12 Community Plans, with Community Plans needing to be updated in the remaining 23 communities. As of November 2013, the Department was updating seven community plans, four of which had already been approved by the City Planning Commission. These are presented in the table below.

Community Plan	Expected Completion
Granada Hills Community Plan	Approved by Planning Commission, Council adoption anticipated by December, 2013
Sylmar Community Plan	Approved by Planning Commission, Council adoption anticipated by December, 2013
West Adams Community Plan	Approved by Planning Commission, Council adoption anticipated by December, 2013
San Pedro Community Plan	Approved by Planning Commission, Council adoption anticipated by December, 2013
South LA Community Plan	Expected completion December, 2014
Southeast LA Community Plan	Expected completion December, 2014
Boyle Heights Community	Expected completion mid-2015

However, much of the City's Community Plans are obsolete, exceeding ten years of age as noted in the exhibit following this page. As the exhibit indicates, the median age of the City's Community Plans is almost fifteen years. The Matrix Consulting Group recommends a "shelf life" of no more than ten years for Community Plans. Overall, of the thirty-six Community Plans presented in the exhibit, the average age is 14.5 years after considering the Community Plans that have already been adopted by the City Planning Commission (e.g., Granada Hills).

Of the thirty-six community plans, twenty-nine Community Plans are older than ten years and fifteen are older than fifteen years. There is obviously a lot of work to do.

The Department's Community Plan Program was proposed in January 2008 as an extensive expansion and improvement to past Community Plans. The proposal for updating the Community Plans included expanded connections to the General Plan Framework, Housing and Mobility Elements, urban design and walkable communities programs, quality of life programs, public facility plans, sustainability programs, Green Los Angeles programs, implementation programs, and other features. An Environmental Impact Report, Transportation Impact Mitigation Program Study, and a Transportation Impact Nexus fee analysis would accompany each Community Plan.

The Community Plan updates would require more neighborhood specific zoning regulations, design standards, etc., intensive staff field work, analysis, and outreach efforts. Additionally, the Department would include and prepare Facility Plans for each Community Plan to identify needed public facilities, services, and infrastructures to support new growth.

Exhibit 29 (1)

Age of Community Plans

APC Area	Community Planning Area Name	Plan Adoption	Age	Expected Completion
North Valley	Arleta - Pacoima	6-Nov-96	16.97	
North Valley	Chatsworth - Porter Ranch	14-Jul-93	20.28	
North Valley	Granada Hills - Knollwood	10-Jul-96	17.29	13-Dec
North Valley	Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills	9-Jun-99	14.38	
North Valley	Northridge	24-Feb-98	15.67	
North Valley	Sunland-Tujunga-Lakeview Terrace-Shadow Hills-La Tuna Canyon	18-Nov-97	15.93	
North Valley	Sun Valley-East La Tuna Canyon	13-Aug-99	14.20	
North Valley	Sylmar	6-Aug-97	16.22	13-Dec
South Valley	Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills	17-Aug-99	14.19	
South Valley	Encino - Tarzana	16-Dec-98	14.86	
South Valley	North Hollywood-Valley Village	14-May-96	17.45	
South Valley	Reseda -West Van Nuys	17-Nov-99	13.94	
South Valley	Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass	13-May-98	15.45	
South Valley	Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks	9-Sep-98	15.13	
West Los Angeles	Bel Air-Beverly Crest	6-Nov-96	16.97	
West Los Angeles	Brentwood-Pacific Palisades	17-Jun-98	15.36	
West Los Angeles	Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey	17-Sep-97	16.10	
West Los Angeles	Venice	29-Sep-00	13.07	
West Los Angeles	Westchester-Playa Del Rey	13-Apr-04	9.53	
West Los Angeles	West Los Angeles	27-Jul-99	14.25	
West Los Angeles	Westwood	27-Jul-99	14.25	
Central	Central City	8-Jan-93	20.80	
Central	Central City North	15-Dec-00	12.86	
Central	Hollywood	2-Mar-12	1.64	
Central	Westlake	16-Sep-97	16.11	
Central	Wilshire	19-Sep-01	12.10	
East Los Angeles	Boyle Heights	10-Nov-98	14.96	15-Jun
East Los Angeles	Northeast Los Angeles	15-Jun-99	14.36	

Exhibit 29 (2)

APC Area	Community Planning Area Name	Plan Adoption	Age	Expected Completion
East Los Angeles	Silver Lake-Echo Park-Elysian Valley	6-Jul-05	8.30	
South Los Angeles	South Los Angeles	22-Mar-01	12.59	14-Dec
South Los Angeles	Southeast Los Angeles	22-Mar-00	13.59	14-Dec
South Los Angeles	West Adams-Baldwin Hills-Leimert	6-May-98	15.47	13-Dec
Harbor	Harbor Gateway	6-Dec-95	17.89	
Harbor	San Pedro	17-Mar-99	14.61	13-Dec
Harbor	Wilmington - Harbor City	14-Jul-99	14.28	
Harbor	Port of Los Angeles	1-Sep-91	22.15	

Adequate staffing and funding are crucial to the success of updating the Community Plans.

The Department worked with the City Administrative Office and developed a schedule and funding requirements. The funding requirements, per Community Plan, as presented to the Council in January 2008 (but with updated salaries and including fringe benefits) are presented below.

	FTE Positions	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	TOTAL
City Planning Associate	1	\$118,000	\$118,000	\$118,000	\$354,000
Planning Assistant	1	\$100,300	\$100,300	\$100,300	\$300,900
City Planner	0.5	\$69,400	\$69,400	\$69,400	\$208,200
Overtime		\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$105,000
Other Expenses		\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$30,000
Traffic Impact Mitigation Program		\$225,000			\$225,000
Environmental Impact Report\			\$200,000		\$200,000
Traffic Impact Nexus Fee Study		\$66,667	\$66,667	\$66,667	\$200,001
TOTAL		\$624,367	\$599,367	\$399,367	\$1,623,101

As the table indicates, updating Community Plans is a serious and costly task with a total cost of \$1.6 million to update each Community Plan including a half-time City Planner and full-time City Planning Associate and Planning Assistant.

At the present time, Department allocates twenty-two (22) positions to updating Community Plans as noted in the table below. This excludes the Senior City Planner positions, and includes only the City Planner, City Planning Associate, and Planning Assistant positions. It also excludes the staff allocated to development of plans for the Transit Oriented District and the Los Angeles International Airport. This staffing is based upon an organization chart provided by the Department of City Planning to the Matrix Consulting Group, that reflects the plan of organization as of the 1st quarter 2013.

Staffing by Classification		Key Elements of Staffing
City Planner	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads City Planning Associates and Planning Assistants in the preparation of Community Plans and implementing ordinances for Hollywood, Wilshire, Downtown, Westlake, Coastal, West LA, North Valley, East LA, South LA, and Harbor. Responsible for leading and participating on the implementation of Community Plans.
City Planning Associate	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports to a City Planner. Prepares Community Plans and implementing ordinances (Community Planning Implementation Overlays) for Community Plans. Prepares special overlay district ordinances (e.g., Beverly Grove Residential Floor Area District). Manage Northeast Los Angeles Riverfront Collaborative, coordinate with other River planning organizations, and review and approve RIO and LA River Revitalization clearances. Supervises Student Professional Workers (as needed positions).
Planning Assistant	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports to a City Planner. Undertakes work similar to that of City Planning Associates but at a Planning Assistant level of complexity.

At the present time, the authorized level of staffing will not meet the levels necessary to update the Community Plans on a ten-year schedule, let alone to actually implement the Community Plans.

The Department indicated that two and one-half planning staff (half-time City Planner and a full-time City Planning Associate and a full-time Planning Assistant) would be required over a three-year period to prepare Community Plans.²² Based upon the Department's proposal, a total of 262 staff months would be required to update the thirty-five Community Plans over a ten-year period or a little more than twenty-six professional planners. This is four (4) less professional planning staff than presently authorized. This also does not address the staffing requirements necessary to implement the Community Plans.

²² Department of City Planning, Fiscal Year 2007-08 Adopted Budget Action No. 148 – Community Plan Update Cycle, January 2008

The Department has experienced a “learning curve” as it has begun to update the Community Plans. The update of the Hollywood Community Plan took far longer than three-years to complete.

The City of San Diego is experiencing the same “learning curve.” The City of San Diego has forty-seven community plans. The City is updating (or recently updated) nine community plans at the present time. The City noted that “the preparation of a community plan is an iterative process. Each subsequent community plan update effort builds on lessons learned from the previous effort. To improve the timeliness and cost effectiveness of the update process, staff in san Diego is looking at changes to the plan update preparation process, consultant timelines, and overall work program.” The specific changes that the City of San Diego proposed are presented below.²³

- Address the length of time required to approve consulting contracts by allowing the Department Director to approve higher dollar value contracts for professional planning and technical services rather than the City Council. This would help to reduce the contract processing time.
- Hire a single consultant team with all needed technical expertise or with the ability to sub-contract, instead of separate contracts for various technical disciplines for expertise that City staff does not have. This would reduce the time needed to process, interview, and select for multiple consultant contracts.
- Have City staff draft the community plan elements, rather than hiring a consultant, with the possible exception of Urban Design and specific technical aspects that City staff may not have the expertise needed to prepare.
- Establish a core community plan update team to focus staff resources and expertise. Have the staff work on fewer community plan updates at a single time. This would help to reduce the amount of time needed to prepare a community plan update.
- Complete the existing community plan conditions analysis prior to starting the community outreach phase. This would enable the community to understand issues and get right to work. This includes traffic modeling of the existing plan,

²³ City of San Diego, Report to the Planning Commission – Information Item – Status of Community Plan Updates, December 2012

which had taken more time than expected.

- Work internally to streamline traffic modeling and traffic analysis processes. This could include increasing the traffic modeling capacity, so traffic modeling could occur concurrently rather than sequentially. Due to current capacity, there is a queue of updates waiting to begin the modeling process. Modeling is an iterative process and requires dedicated staff familiar with the complexities associated with land use inputs, calibration, model runs, and analysis.
- Establish the expectations for travel forecasting and CEQA that are tailored to the needs of the community and the end result of the community plan. For example, is the end result of the community plan to minimize lengthy discretionary review at the individual project level or to implement a development program which will guide more development through a ministerial permit process?
- Work through existing community planning groups instead of establishing separate stakeholders groups.

Overall, San Diego is budgeting approximately \$1.9 million for each community plan update (after considering updates that include more than one community). A little more than one-half (52%) of these expenditures have been for consultants, 35% for City Planning staff costs, and 13% for the staff assistance from other departments. As noted previously, one of the changes the City plans on making is to “have City staff draft the community plan elements, rather than hiring a consultant, with the possible exception of Urban Design and specific technical aspects that City staff may not have the expertise needed to prepare.” So the mix of expenditures will likely change in the future (less consultants and more City planning staff).

The timelines used by the City of San Diego to update their community plans does not appear to vary considerably from the 3-year timeline used by the Department of City Planning (in terms of the time from the date of the 1st community workshop to adoption of the environmental impact report and adoption by the City Council). The City appears to be scheduling three years.

Additional planning staff should be authorized for the Community Planning Division, Department of City Planning to update community plans on a ten-year cycle.

First, however, the Department of City Planning should work with the Office of the City Administrative Officer to assess “lessons learned” so far in the updating of the City’s Community Plans and assess the allocation and adequacy of staff and consulting resources, and return with recommendations to the City Council so that the Department can meet the ten-year schedule for updating community plans established in January 2008.

The Department, in the assessment of “lessons learned” and the assessment of the adequacy of staff and consulting resources, should consider the resource impacts of implementation of the Community Plans. There are a number of measures that the Department should consider as it pertains to implementation including the following:

- Annual Budget - appropriating funds to achieve policy objectives and service delivery as defined within the Community Plans;
- Departmental operating procedures assigning responsibility for implementation of the Community Plans;
- Capital Improvement Programs that implement the capital aspects of the Community Plans;
- Grant Funding - applying for grants as appropriate and work with other agencies or public / private partnerships to receive and implement grant monies to implement the Community Plans;
- Public Education and Outreach – providing appropriate and effective notification, including written materials or presentations to the community on topics of interest regarding implementation of the Community Plans, keeping all printed and web materials updated, providing helpful and efficient customer service, providing opportunities for community involvement where appropriate;
- Public / Private Partnerships to further implementation of the Community Plans (e.g., through development review applications); and

- Intergovernmental Coordination and / or Advocacy – using agreements or policy coordination to effectively address issues affecting the City (e.g., partnerships with local, regional, state or federal agencies).

Implementation of the Community Plans is more than just adding professional-level planners to the Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division. It includes the development of City regulations such as ordinances, specific plans, and subdivision requirements; capital projects; Building and Zoning code modifications; transportation system management funding mechanisms; and other methods. This will require additional professional-level planners for the Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division, but the results expected from this staff should be identified in specific, measurable, time-phased plans.

Recommendation #239: Additional planning staff will be necessary for the Citywide Policy and Planning Division, Department of City Planning to update the Community Plans on a ten year cycle and to implement the recommendations contained in the Community Plans.

Recommendation #240: The Department of City Planning should work with the Office of the City Administrative Officer to assess “lessons learned” so far in the updating of the City’s Community Plans and assess the allocation and adequacy of staff and consulting resources. The Department of City Planning and the Office of the City Administrative Officer should return with recommendations to the City Council so that the Department can meet the ten-year schedule for updating community plans established in January 2008.

3. THE CITYWIDE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING DIVISION SHOULD ENHANCE ITS PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR THE PREPARATION OF COMMUNITY PLANS.

The Citywide and Community Planning Division has developed web sites for the Community Plans being updated. These effectively communicate how to get involved, the status of the plan, meetings / outreach, news, the Community Plan Advisory Committee, and a glossary. This keeps the community informed regarding the status of the development of their Community Plan.

In addition, the Division prepares work programs and schedules for the updates of Community Plans. These include bar charts that identify the phases, the tasks to be performed during the phase, and the quarter of the year in which the task will be started and completed. Examples of the phases include background and research, outreach, plan concepts, plan compilation etc. Examples of the tasks, in this instance for plan concepts, include draft initial policy framework, draft initial concepts plan, draft concept CPIO or other implementation tool, etc. In addition, the Division has prepared an extensive listing of tasks that may need to be performed in the updating of Community Plans.

And the Division is also preparing a quarterly report for the Planning and Land Use Management Committee of the City Council, but was unable to share it the Matrix Consulting Group since it had not yet been shared with the Committee.

However, there are a number of challenges in effective project management in the Citywide and Community Planning Division. These challenges are summarized below.

- The Division prepares an annual work program. However, it does not identify:
 - The overall priorities of the work to be performed;
 - The allocation of staff hours per planner to the various projects;
 - The month-by-month allocation of staff hours by planner;
 - A month-by-month Gantt chart for the following year that provides an overall summary of the tasks to be performed for each project;
 - The milestone dates for each project; and
 - The name of the project manager.

- The Division does not generate clear, easily read project status reports on a monthly basis that report actual versus planned progress, actual versus planned staff hours, actual versus planned consulting expenditures.

Recommendations to address these opportunities for improvement are presented below.

(1) A Summarized Twenty-Four Month to Thirty-Six Month Bar Chart Schedule Should Be Prepared for the Citywide and Community Planning Division's Projects, and the Bar Chart Schedule Should Be Updated Quarterly.

This schedule should portray start and finish dates for each project by simple activity descriptions for such as background and research, outreach, plan concepts, plan compilation, DEIR, etc. This schedule should be prepared for all projects that will be assigned to the Division during a rolling twenty-four to thirty-six month period.

The twenty-four to thirty-six month period bar chart should be updated quarterly

Recommendation #241: A summarized twenty-four to thirty-six month bar chart schedule should be prepared for all projects that are or will be assigned to the Citywide and Community Planning Division. The bar chart schedule should be updated quarterly.

(2) The Annual Work Program Prepared by the Citywide and Community Planning Division Should Be Expanded.

The Citywide and Community Planning Division should prepare an expanded annual work program. This expanded annual work program should identify the full-time equivalent staffing requirements to be assigned to that project for that fiscal year, the proposed Division staff to be assigned to the project, the consultant funding, etc. Specifically, the annual work program should include such information as the following:

- A description of the projects;
- The priority of the projects;

- A summary of previous work performed on the projects;
- The tasks to be performed for the projects in the next fiscal year on a month-by-month basis;
- The milestone dates for each projects;
- The name of the project managers;
- The allocation of staff hours per planner per month to the various projects;
- The month-by-month allocation of staff hours by planner and by project;
- The proposed budgets for the projects in the next fiscal year including the source of funding, appropriation status, and proposed expenditures by major component;
- A summary month-by-month Gantt chart for the year that provides an overall summary of the tasks to be performed for each project on a high level.

This annual work program should encompass all of the medium and major projects to which the Division will allocate staff and consultant resources, and should anticipate the allocation of staff resources for responding to requests from the City Council. The types of medium and major projects in the annual work program should also be based upon input from the neighborhood councils, Area Planning Commissions, the City Planning Commission, and the Planning Land Use Management Committee of the City Council.

The annual work program should be presented to the City Planning Commission and the Planning Land Use Management Committee of the City Council. The City Planning Commission and the Planning Land Use Management Committee of the City Council should receive semi-annual updates regarding the status of the annual work program.

Recommendation #242: The Citywide and Community Planning Division should expand its annual work program. The annual work program should be presented

to the City Planning Commission and the Planning Land Use Management Committee of the City Council. The City Planning Commission and the Planning Land Use Management Committee of the City Council should receive semi-annual updates regarding the status of the annual work program.

(3) The Citywide and Community Planning Division Should Prepare More Detailed Work Programs / Plans for the Updates of Community Plans.

The Division does prepare work programs / plans for the updates of Community Plans. The example provided to the Matrix Consulting Group for Boyle Heights was a “high level” work program / plan that identified the phases, the tasks to be performed during the phase, and the quarter of the year in which the task will be started and completed.

These work programs / plans should be prepared in a greater level of detail to clearly establish the accountability and expectations of the Senior City Planner who is managing the update. This greater level of detail will assist in the efficient development of the Community Plan, and requires the following:

- The project title, including the phase of the project, if relevant;
- A general project description, including a narrative summary description of the project and a statement of what the project will accomplish, what it will try to accomplish and, if appropriate, not try to accomplish;
- The project number (as noted in the annual work program);
- The proposed project manager and project team;
- The cost, including the source of funds and appropriation status;
- A budget covering the staffing hours required by major project task and consulting;
- The responsibility for completing the various components of the project, including the role of consultants in the project;
- The extent of coordination necessary, listing the inter-agency coordination by division, department, or outside agency with whom coordination will be required

in the project, the nature of the coordination, and the key contacts;

- The preliminary schedule for completing the project by major project task;
- Milestones with clearly defined dates of delivery to measure progress to enable top management to approve the completion of a phase or milestone and as go/no-go decision points to proceed with the project;
- Staffing levels required throughout the project, including the estimated staffing required on a month-by-month basis and the staff proposed to be assigned;
- Project reporting requirements, including cost and schedule control procedures; and
- Community relation and public information requirements including public hearings or meetings and how the public will be informed and involved in the project and informed about progress of the project.

The intent of a more detailed work program / plan is to define the project with sufficient detail to assure that the necessary resources are available for the completion of the project, that the risks of the project have been identified, the schedule is realistic, that milestones and the objectives are clearly identified, and that community relations and public information requirements are clear.

Recommendation #243: The Citywide and Community Planning Division should prepare more detailed work programs / plans for the updates of Community Plans.

- (4) The Quarterly Project Status Report Prepared by the Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division Should Define the Status of Each Community Plan Update Including a Comparison of Actual Versus Planned Schedule and Actual Versus Planned Expenditures.**

The Citywide and Community Planning Division will be issuing a quarterly status report to the Planning and Land Use Management Committee, but was unable to share the status report with the Matrix Consulting Group.

The quarterly report prepared by the Division should consist of a quarterly narrative statement regarding each project, prepared no later than the fifth working day

after the conclusion of the quarter. The project status report should be used to communicate the following key information:

- Current activity status versus the schedule including milestones accomplished / missed;
- Significant accomplishments for the current reporting period;
- Planned activities for the next reporting period;
- Financial status – actual versus planned in terms of staff hours / costs and consulting expenditures; and
- Present Issues, concerns, risks.

These should be simple reports. The Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division should publish these reports quarterly, on-line on the Internet.

Recommendation #244: The Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division should prepare a quarterly project status report regarding each project undertaken by the Division no later than the fifth working day after the conclusion of the quarter.

Recommendation #245: The Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division should publish these reports monthly, on-line on the Internet.

(5) The Planners Assigned to the Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division Should Utilize Project Accounting to Track the Hours Worked on Community Plans.

Once project plans are prepared, that include estimated staff hours required to update Community Plans, the Division next needs to track the actual hours worked versus the plan. The Division should utilize project accounting within the City's payroll system to charge and track the hours worked on updating the Community Plans, implementation of the Community Plans or other long-range planning tasks.

Recommendation #246: The Citywide Policy and Community Planning Division should utilize project accounting in the City's payroll system to charge and track the hours worked on updating the Community Plans, implementation of the Community Plans, or other long-range planning tasks.

4. THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING SHOULD ENHANCE ITS ADMINISTRATION OF CEQA.

In fiscal year 2010-11, the Department of Environmental Affairs was eliminated as part of a series of budget reductions. That Department was created to champion environmental issues. There has been a lack central California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) administration in the City for all City departments since the elimination of that department.

Not surprisingly, there are a number of problems with the City's administration of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This is not insignificant given the number of mitigated negative declarations and Environmental Impact Reports generated by the Department of City Planning itself as noted in the table below.

Type of CEQA Document	Fiscal Year 2011 - 2012		Fiscal Year 2012 2013	
	Filed	Completed	Filed	Completed
Mitigated Negative Declarations	352	291	311	317
Environmental Impact Reports	8	0	13	1

There are a number of indications that the Department needs to enhance its administration of CEQA, both on behalf of the Department and also all other City departments. These indications are presented in the exhibit following this page.

The Department of City Planning should take a number of steps to address the opportunities for improvement in its administration of CEQA as noted on the page following the exhibit.

Exhibit 30 (1)

Best Practices Evaluation of CEQA Compliance

Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
CEQA Guidelines have been adopted, are current and include thresholds of significance		The City's CEQA guidelines are out-of-date. The guidelines were last updated in 2002. The guidelines are not current.
The City Council has approved a list of different types of projects that are ministerial in nature and exempt from CEQA.	The City Council has approved a list of different types of projects that are ministerial in nature and exempt from CEQA.	
Use of Categorical exemptions and mitigated declarations are used to streamline the CEQA process.	Environmental Impact Reports do not comprise a substantive proportion of the entitlement permits.	
The Initial Study Checklist, Notice of Exemption, Notice of Exemption, Notice of Intent to adopt a Negative Declaration and other forms are consistent with the State Guidelines.	These documents are housed in the "H" drive with access by Department of City Planning staff only.	
Standard mitigations measures have been adopted.	The Department of City Planning was authorized \$250,000 in FY 2013-14 to develop a new initial study template, create a menu of standard mitigation measures, etc.	
Mitigation Monitoring Programs are adopted with all Mitigated Negative Declarations and Environmental Impact Reports	Mitigation Monitoring Programs are adopted.	Mitigation monitoring programs are not monitored.
Projects are deemed to be exempt or requiring an Initial Study within 30 days.		Projects are not consistently deemed to be exempt or requiring an Initial Study within 30 days.
Environmental Impact Reports are prepared by consultants from a list of City-qualified consultants including transportation impact analysis		Environmental Impact Reports (including transportation impact analysis) are not prepared by consultants from a list of City-qualified consultants.
Master, Tiered and programmed EIR's are used to streamline the CEQA review.		Master, Tiered and programmed EIR's are not consistently used to streamline the CEQA review.

Exhibit 30 (2)

Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
The Department of City Planning staff receives basic and advanced CEQA training at least annually.		The Department of City Planning staff does not receive basic and advanced CEQA training at least annually.
The Department of City Planning staff tracks all of the environmental processing requirements, environmental conditions, outside agency environmental permits and mitigation monitoring in PCTS or CDMS.		The Department of City Planning staff does not track all of the environmental processing requirements, environmental conditions, outside agency environmental permits and mitigation monitoring in PCTS or CDMS.
The Department of City Planning case manager field verifies compliance by permit applicants with mitigation measures e.g., AB 3180.		The Department of City Planning case manager does not field verify compliance by permit applicants with mitigation measures

(1) The Department of City Planning Should Update the CEQA Guidelines Utilized by the Department.

The Department of City Planning should update the CEQA guidelines utilized by the Department. This update should include

- General provisions, purpose and policy;
- Lead and responsible agencies for the City;
- Activities exempt from CEQA;
- Time limitations for CEQA (e.g., completion and adoption of a negative declaration);
- Procedures for preparation of the initial study, negative declaration, and environmental impact report;
- Types of environmental impact reports;
- CEQA litigation (e.g., timeliness, mediation, settlement, etc.); and
- Definitions.

Recommendation #247: The Department of City Planning should update the CEQA guidelines utilized by the Department.

(2) The Department of City Planning Should Comply with the Timeline Requirements of the Public Resource Code for Preparation of Initial Studies.

A review of discretionary review application case files by the Matrix Consulting Group indicated that the Department of City Planning was not consistently completing its initial environmental study thirty days after an application was accepted as complete or deemed complete.

The State *Public Resources Code* requires that, thirty days after an application is accepted as complete or deemed complete, the City must complete its initial

environmental study, which determines whether to require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or Negative Declaration.

The Department should consistently meet this requirement. The Department should institutionalize this requirement in a formal written policy and procedure, and hold its staff accountable for meeting this requirement.

Recommendation #248: The Department of City Planning should comply with the requirements of the State Public Resources Code that, thirty days after an application is accepted as complete or deemed complete, the City must complete its initial environmental study.

Recommendation #249: The Department of City Planning should institutionalize the requirement in a formal written policy and procedure that, thirty days after a discretionary review application is accepted as complete or deemed complete, the City must complete its initial environmental study, and hold its staff accountable for meeting this requirement.

(3) The City Should Change Its Approach Regarding Selection of Consultants to Prepare Environmental Impact Reports and Traffic Mitigation Impact Studies.

The Department of City Planning should change its approach to selection of consultants for preparation of Environmental Impact Reports. At the present time, the applicant for an entitlement permit can select any consulting firm that he or she wishes to hire to prepare an Environmental Impact Report. The same approach is available for traffic mitigation impact studies.

The City should require that the applicant for a discretionary review application select a consultant of the applicant's choice from a list of City-qualified consultants. This revised approach should include the following elements:

- The Department, in concert with the Department of Transportation, should issue a request for qualifications at the beginning of the fiscal year for environmental and traffic mitigation impact consultants for the preparation of environmental impact reports and traffic mitigation impact studies;

- From the list, the Department should select consultants for specific projects based on capability and qualifications and establish a “pool” of consultants;
- When environmental or traffic impact consultant services are indicated, the Department of City Planning or the Department of Transportation should provide the applicant with a list of three consultants from the applicable pool;
- The applicant may select any of the three identified consultants;
- Once selected by an applicant, both the consultant and the applicant should notify the Department of City Planning or the Department of Transportation within one workday of the selection;
- The Department of City Planning or the Department of Transportation should conduct an initial scoping meeting with the applicant and the consultant;
- After the initial scoping meeting, the consultant should prepare a written work program for the review and approval of the Department of City Planning or the Department of Transportation; and
- The consultant would continue to be paid by the applicant.

Recommendation #250: The City should require that the applicant for discretionary review select a consultant of the applicant’s choice, from a list of City-qualified consultants, to prepare an Environmental Impact Report or Traffic Mitigation Impact Study.

(4) The Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning Should Utilize Tiering of Environmental Impact Reports To Streamline Environmental Review.

The State has prepared Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Impact Report. These guidelines encourage the use of tiering.

Tiering refers to using the analysis of a broader environmental impact report (such as one being prepared for the City’s Community Plans) with later environmental impact reports and negative declarations on narrower projects, incorporating by reference the general discussions from the broader environmental impact report (the one prepared for the City’s Community Plans), and concentrating the later negative declaration solely on the issues specific to the later discretionary review application.

Tiering is appropriate when the sequence of analysis is from an environmental impact report prepared for a Community Plan to a site-specific mitigated negative declaration. Where an environmental impact report has been prepared and certified for a Community Plan, the City can and should limit the mitigated negative declaration on the later project to effects which:

- Were not examined as significant effects on the environment in the prior environmental impact report; or
- Are susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance by the choice of specific revisions in the project, by the imposition of conditions, or other means.

Through tiering, broad-based issues need not be reevaluated subsequently, having been previously identified and evaluated in the environmental impact report for the Community Plan.

Recommendation #251: The Department of City of Planning should utilize tiering of environmental impact reports to streamline environmental review, as occurred with the Hollywood Community Plan.

(5) The Department of City Planning Should Ensure that Its Planners Receive Annual CEQA Training.

The Department of City Planning has an obligation to ensure that its approach to CEQA and its interpretation of CEQA reflect the most current and best statewide practices. The Department should ensure that its planners receive CEQA training on an annual basis. The attendance should be mandatory.

The training should cover a broad range of topics including the following:

- Purpose of CEQA, its purpose, scope and the authorities granted under the act;
- Project Description (what is the definition of a project, what are the pros and cons of a narrow [short-term] versus a broad [long-term] project description;
- Consultation (why is early consultation important, consultation at the beginning and throughout the process, how to provide consultation throughout the project);

- Exemption Process (what are exemptions, how can they be used, what are the pros and cons);
- Initial Study (what is an Initial Study, what is its function, what forms are used, and what are the requirements for completing an Initial Study);
- Negative Declaration Process (step-by-step guide to this process);
- Mitigated Negative Declaration Process (a comparison of the Mitigated Negative Declaration process to the ND and EIR process);
- Environmental Impact Report Process (step-by-step guide to the EIR process);
- Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (what is a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, when is it required, and what is the role of the City in implementing a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan); and
- Recent CEQA Cases and Legislation. What are the major CEQA case decisions and how do they affect the process? What are the most recent changes to CEQA statute, Guidelines and proposed legislative changes?

As the Department has moved to a “One Project, One Planner” approach to case management, it becomes more and more critical that the Department allocate more resources to the training of its planners to maintain essential levels of expertise, including CEQA.

Recommendation #252: The Department should ensure that its Planners receive CEQA training on an annual basis. The attendance should be mandatory.

(6) The Department of City Planning Should Assure the Implementation of Mitigation Measures.

Section 21081.6 of the State of California Public Resources Code requires all state and local agencies to establish monitoring or reporting programs whenever approval of a project relies upon a mitigated negative declaration or an environmental impact report. The monitoring or reporting program must ensure implementation of the measures being imposed to mitigate or avoid the significant adverse environmental

impacts identified in the mitigated negative declaration or environmental impact report.

One of the requirements is monitoring. This involves regularly checking on the project's compliance with the mitigation measures and related conditions of approval, including progress toward meeting specified standards.

The Department of City Planning does not presently monitor compliance with mitigation measures. As presented in the previous chapter, the Department of City Planning should assign responsibility to its case planners for the implementation of this responsibility, including field inspection and monitoring.

Section 21089 of the State of California Public Resources Code authorizes the City to "charge and collect a reasonable fee from any person proposing a project subject to [CEQA] in order to recover the estimated costs incurred for procedures necessary to comply with [CEQA] on the project." This allows the City to levy fees to cover the costs of mitigation monitoring or reporting programs.

Recommendation #253: The Department of City Planning should implement a monitoring or reporting program for mitigation measures associated with mitigated negative declarations or an environmental impact reports.

Recommendation #254: The Department of City Planning should assign responsibility to its case planners in its Development Services Bureau for the implementation of this responsibility, including field inspection and monitoring.

Recommendation #255: The Department of City Planning establish and collect a fee to recover the costs incurred for procedures necessary to comply with CEQA on the project including the costs of mitigation monitoring or reporting programs.

(7) The Department Of City Planning Staff Should Track All of the Environmental Processing Requirements, Environmental Conditions, Outside Agency Environmental Permits and Mitigation Monitoring In PCTS or CDMS.

It is apparent that the Department of City Planning is not utilizing either PCTS or CDMS to track the environmental processing requirements, environmental conditions, outside agency environmental permits and mitigation monitoring. This is apparent from a review of PCIS and case files by the Matrix Consulting Group.

The planners in the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should be held accountable for the use of PCTS or CDMS for all aspects of the discretionary review application process including environmental processing requirements, environmental conditions, outside agency environmental permits and mitigation monitoring.

Recommendation #256: The planners in the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should be required to utilize PCTS or CDMS for all aspects of the discretionary review process including environmental processing requirements, environmental conditions, outside agency environmental permits and mitigation monitoring.

Recommendation #257: The Department of City Planning should develop a formal written policy and procedure requiring the planners of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning to utilize PCTS or CDMS for all aspects of the discretionary review application process.

11. ANALYSIS OF THE CO-LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

This chapter presents an analysis of opportunities to co-locate the City's development services staff to better serve the residents and businesses of Los Angeles.

The overarching intent of this plan is to meet the following goals, wherever feasible:

- Improve the City's operational efficiency;
- Improve the City's ability to provide consistent levels of service to all of its constituents;
- Locate staff so that they can be more conveniently accessed by the public, where workload warrants the location;
- Co-locate like- types of services to achieve economies- of- scale; and
- ☐ • Leverage the use of existing sites and facilities where logical.

The question that needs to be asked is whether the physical environment provided by the City for permit applicants reflects a user- friendly, service- oriented flow?

A summary of the recommendations contained in this chapter is presented in the following exhibit.

1. THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES MEETS A NUMBER OF BEST PRACTICES FOR ITS CONSTRUCTION SERVICES CENTERS.

The Matrix Consulting Group has developed a number of best practices for construction service centers.

Overall, the City of Los Angeles meets most of these best practices, but has a number of challenges in terms of decentralizing permit services beyond downtown and the Metro construction services center. The City should enhance its efforts to decentralize its permit services. Decentralization offers a number of benefits as noted on the page following the exhibit.

Exhibit 31 (1)

**Summary of Recommendations
Contained within Chapter 11**

Rec. #	Recommendation
258	The Metro Development Review Section for the Department of Transportation should be co-located with other development services functions at 201 North Figueroa Street (downtown).
259	The West Los Angeles Development Review Section for the Department of Transportation should be co-located with other development services functions at 1828 Sawtelle Boulevard.
260	The staff assigned by the Department of Transportation to B-Permit plan check should be co-located with other development services functions at 201 North Figueroa Street (downtown).
261	The staff of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning that are responsible for discretionary review in the Metro area, currently located at City Hall, should be re-located to the Metro construction services center at 201 North Figueroa Street. There is sufficient vacant space for these staff.
262	The Department of City Planning should assign Development Services Bureau staff to the West Los Angeles construction services center at 1828 Sawtelle Boulevard with responsibility for the discretionary review for West Los Angeles.
263	Rather than assign specialists for regular plan check (Electrical Engineering Associates and Mechanical Engineering Associates) for the larger construction projects to the West Los Angeles, South Los Angeles and the San Pedro construction service centers, the Department of Building and Safety should utilize electrical plan check technology, as recommended previously, to provide electrical plan check and mechanical plan check services over the Internet, so that applicants don't have to visit a construction services center at all. The entire plan check experience for regular plan check should occur over the Internet.
264	The West Los Angeles, South Los Angeles and the San Pedro construction services centers should continue to provide plan check staff for express and counter plan check using generalists (Structural Engineering Associates) for structural, electrical, and mechanical plan check for smaller construction projects.
265	The Department of Building and Safety should provide records research services at the West Los Angeles construction services center. If, as recommended in a previous chapter, the Department of Building and Safety is able to provide access to these records via the Internet, the need to establish a records counter at the West Los Angeles construction services center may be unnecessary.
266	The Fire Department's Hydrants and Access Unit should be re-located from 221 North Figueroa Street to 201 North Figueroa Street and co-located with other Fire Department staff, as planned by the Department.
267	The staff from the Department of Housing that review the <i>Tenant Habitability Plan</i> , <i>Confidential Memorandum</i> , or <i>Landlord Declaration of Intent to Evict</i> forms for building permits should be co-located at the construction service centers. The workload will likely not be full-time so a workstation for the staff should be established, so that these staff can perform other work for the Department of Housing when not reviewing these forms.

Exhibit 31 (2)

Rec. #	Recommendation
268	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should evaluate whether sufficient workload exists to warrant the assignment of staff by the Department of City Planning and the Fire Department to the San Pedro and the South Los Angeles construction service centers, and the assignment of staff by the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Engineering to the South Los Angeles construction services center.
269	The Department of Building and Safety should be assigned responsibility to act on behalf of the Department of City Planning and the Fire Department at the San Pedro and the South Los Angeles construction service centers, the Fire Department to the West Los Angeles construction service center, and the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Engineering at the South Los Angeles construction service centers to accept permit applications for applicants for these departments rather than require the applicants to travel to the construction service centers at Metro, West Los Angeles, or Van Nuys. This could be accomplished via the development of memoranda of agreement that clarify roles and responsibilities, the types of permits that can be issued by the Department of Building and Safety (and can't), etc.
270	The Fire Department should assign development services staff to the Van Nuys construction services center on a full-time basis, each and every business day for the entire business day to provide a full-range of plan check services.
271	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the departments assigned to the construction service centers to develop a proposal for the consideration of the Office of the Mayor and the City Council to expand the office hours from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm to 7:30 am to 5:30 pm at the construction service centers. This should initially be "piloted" at just one construction services center to gauge the reaction, and then, if successful, expanded to other construction services centers with high applicant volume (e.g., Metro).

- **Decentralization should contribute to (and enhance) efficient permit operations.** Grouping like and interrelated functions together or in close proximity to each other is an important benefit for applicants and the City. Many of these functions are intimately inter-related in the issuance of permits and the flow of permits from entitlement permit to building permit to engineering permit.
- **Decentralization should improve customer impressions about and access to the City's permit services.** Research consistently shows that positive opinions of a permit applicant's experience are shaped more by the users' perceptions of how they are treated and their impressions of the people, processes and place (construction services center) they encounter. To that end, the construction services center environment says a great deal about the fairness, dignity and respect permit applicants can expect from the City. Where applicants feel valued and appreciated, and where they can easily and efficiently find their way, they are prone to have greater trust and confidence in the City and its permit system. When the construction services center is disheveled, confusing, and dysfunctional, the message often received is: "We don't care much about you."

The decentralization of permit services to construction services centers conveys a service message from the City to its customers: a message the City should not want to convey.

2. THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES OPERATES A NUMBER OF CONSTRUCTION SERVICES CENTERS, BUT NONE OF THE CENTERS INCLUDE ALL OF THE PRIMARY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PARTICIPANTS.

The City has established a number of construction services centers. These centers, and the departments located in these centers, are presented in the table below.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
Analysis of the Opportunities to Improve Development Services

Location of construction services center	Department Located At construction services center?				
	Department of Building and Safety	Department of City Planning	Department of Transportation	Bureau of Engineering	Fire Department
Van Nuys 6262 Van Nuys Blvd	Yes, Room 251	Yes, Room 251	Yes, Room 320	Yes, Room 251	No
Downtown (Metro) 201 North Figueroa St.	Yes, 1st Floor - Express Permits, 4th Floor – Counter Plan Check	Yes, for counter services, but the Neighborhood Projects staff are located at City Hall	No, located at 100 S. Main Street, 9 th floor	Yes, for B-Permits (3 rd floor) and Planning Referrals (2 nd floor)	Yes, but at 221 North Figueroa
West Los Angeles 1828 Sawtelle Blvd.	Yes, on the 2 nd floor, but it does not include mechanical or electrical plan check	No	No; located at 7166 W. Manchester Avenue	Yes, 3 rd floor	No
San Pedro 638 S. Beacon St.	Yes, on the 2 nd floor, but it does not include mechanical or electrical plan check	No	Yes, on the 2 nd floor	Yes, on the 4th floor	No
South Los Angeles 8475 S. Vermont Ave.	Yes, 2 nd floor, but it does not include mechanical or electrical plan check	No	No	No	No

As the table indicates, the City does not have a fully functioning construction services center in which all of the primary development services participants - Building and Safety, City Planning, Transportation, Engineering, and Fire – are co-located in the same building. The construction services center in Van Nuys would be a full functioning construction services center with the participation of the Fire Department. The Downtown or Metro construction services center would be a full functioning construction services center with the participation of the Neighborhood Projects staff from the Department of City Planning. The West Los Angeles construction services center would

be a full functioning construction services center with the participation of the Department of City Planning and the Fire Department.

3. THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SHOULD CO-LOCATE ITS DEVELOPMENT REVIEW STAFF AT THE METRO AND WEST LOS ANGELES CONSTRUCTION SERVICES CENTERS.

Understanding the demands placed on the City's transportation network by a proposed development is an important tool for the Department of City Planning in assessing the overall impact of development. Traffic congestion results in a number of problems, including economic costs due to delayed travel times, air pollution and accidents. As one roadway becomes congested, drivers may use others not necessarily intended for through traffic. As a result, traffic impact analyses are becoming more critical as a planning tool to evaluate demands on the transportation network and to mitigate any negative impacts.

However, only one of the three Development Review Sections of the Department of Transportation are co-located with other development services functions: the Van Nuys construction services center. The Van Nuys or Valley Development Review Section of the Department of Transportation is co-located with other development services functions at 6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, 3rd Floor.

However, the other two Development Review Sections are not co-located. The Metro Development Review Section is located at 100 South Main Street, downtown, and the West Los Angeles Development Review Section is located at 7166 West Manchester Avenue. The staff assigned by the Department of Transportation to B-Permit plan check are all assigned to the Department's offices at 900 North Main Street, 9th floor.

Both of these sections should be co-located with other development services functions at 201 North Figueroa Street (downtown) and 1828 Sawtelle Boulevard for West Los Angeles.

Recommendation #258: The Metro Development Review Section for the Department of Transportation should be co-located with other development services functions at 201 North Figueroa Street (downtown).

Recommendation #259: The West Los Angeles Development Review Section for the Department of Transportation should be co-located with other development services functions at 1828 Sawtelle Boulevard.

Recommendation #260: The staff assigned by the Department of Transportation to B-Permit plan check should be co-located with other development services functions at 201 North Figueroa Street (downtown).

4. THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING SHOULD CO-LOCATE ITS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF AT THE METRO AND WEST LOS ANGELES CONSTRUCTION SERVICE CENTERS.

The Department of City Planning does not assign any of its staff to the West Los Angeles construction services center. The Department of City Planning has located its Development Services Bureau staff responsible for discretionary review in downtown at City Hall, although it has assigned counter staff to the Metro construction services center at 201 North Figueroa Street.

The Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning staff responsible for discretionary review of in downtown, currently located at City Hall, should be re-located at the Metro construction services center at 201 North Figueroa Street. There is sufficient vacant space for these staff.

Although the City of Los Angeles should first make a decision regarding the way it organizes its permit business first (e.g., functional transfer) before determining the geographical location or co-location of this staff, this is not always possible in the short-

term. Changing the way it organizes its permit business in the short-term may be too threatening to staff.

A less threatening way to move towards making that decision to functionally transfer the development service functions is to begin to co-locate the staff assigned to development services. This should include the co-location of the Department of City Planning staff, responsible for discretionary review in downtown, to the Metro construction services center at 201 North Figueroa Street.

This in turn can lead to a second step of changing the way the City organizes its permit business.

In addition, the co-location of these staff will enhance the face-to-face interaction with their peers at the Department of Building and Safety, Department of Transportation, Fire Department, and Bureau of Engineering. The interaction would be enhanced with the co-location of these staff at the Metro construction services center at 201 North Figueroa Street.

The Department of City Planning should also assign development services staff to the West Los Angeles construction services center at 1828 Sawtelle Boulevard. The Matrix Consulting Group is proposing a revised plan of organization for the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning, as noted in the chapter regarding organizational structure. This included the assignment of staff to West Los Angeles with responsibility for the discretionary review for West Los Angeles.

Recommendation #261: The staff of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning that are responsible for discretionary review in the Metro area, currently located at City Hall, should be re-located to the Metro construction services center at 201 North Figueroa Street. There is sufficient vacant space for these staff.

Recommendation #262: The Department of City Planning should assign Development Services Bureau staff to the West Los Angeles construction services center at 1828 Sawtelle Boulevard with responsibility for the discretionary review for West Los Angeles.

5. THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND SAFETY SHOULD UTILIZE ELECTRICAL PLAN CHECK TECHNOLOGY TO PROVIDE MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL PLAN CHECK SERVICES AT THE WEST LOS ANGELES, SAN PEDRO, AND SOUTH LOS ANGELES CONSTRUCTION SERVICES CENTERS.

The Department of Building and Safety, while it staffs the West Los Angeles, South Los Angeles and the San Pedro construction services centers with staff for express plan check, counter plan check, and regular plan check, does not provide electrical and mechanical plan check services at these three construction services centers. These three construction services centers currently have plan check staff for express and counter plan check using generalists (Structural Engineering Associates) that can provide structural, electrical, and mechanical plan check for smaller construction projects, but not the specialists for regular electrical and mechanical plan check (Electrical Engineering Associates and Mechanical Engineering Associates) for the larger construction projects.

The building permit workload at each of these three centers is much less than that of the Metro and the Van Nuys construction services centers as indicated in the table below.

**Building Permits Issued by Type of Plan Check Process for Calendar
Year 2013 Through the Week Ending August 3, 2013**

constructi on services center	Building	% of Total	Mechanical	% of Total	Electrical	% of Total	Total	% of Total
Metro	8,770	34.7%	6,668	41.0%	7,556	42.5%	22,995	38.8%
San Pedro	966	3.8%	587	3.6%	1,046	5.9%	2,599	4.4%
SLA	1,397	5.5%	840	5.2%	1,036	5.8%	3,273	5.5%
Van Nuys	10,975	43.5%	7,064	43.4%	6,639	37.4%	24,679	41.6%
WLA	3,133	12.4%	1,110	6.8%	1,481	8.3%	5,724	9.7%
TOTAL	25,241	100.0%	16,269	100.0%	17,758	100.0%	59,271	100.0%

As the table indicates, the Metro and Van Nuys construction services centers issued 80.4% of the building, mechanical, and electrical permits for calendar year 2013 through the week ending August 3, 2013, and 78.2% of all of the building permits. Overall, the construction services center at San Pedro issued 3.8% of all of the building permits, while South Los Angeles issued 5.5% of all of the building permits and West Los Angeles issued 12.4% of all of the building permits.

It is unclear whether there is sufficient workload to warrant the assignment of specialists for regular plan check (Electrical Engineering Associates and Mechanical Engineering Associates) for the larger construction projects to these three construction services centers.

Rather than assign specialists for regular plan check (Electrical Engineering Associates and Mechanical Engineering Associates) for the larger construction projects to these three construction services centers, the Department of Building and Safety should utilize electrical plan check technology, as recommended in the previous chapter regarding technology, to provide electrical plan check and mechanical plan check services over the Internet, so that applicants don't have to visit a construction services

center at all. The entire plan check experience for regular plan check can occur over the Internet.

These three construction services centers should continue to provide plan check staff for express and counter plan check using generalists (Structural Engineering Associates) for structural, electrical, and mechanical plan check for smaller construction projects.

Recommendation #263: Rather than assign specialists for regular plan check (Electrical Engineering Associates and Mechanical Engineering Associates) for the larger construction projects to the West Los Angeles, South Los Angeles and the San Pedro construction service centers, the Department of Building and Safety should utilize electrical plan check technology, as recommended previously, to provide electrical plan check and mechanical plan check services over the Internet, so that applicants don't have to visit a construction services center at all. The entire plan check experience for regular plan check should occur over the Internet.

Recommendation #264: The West Los Angeles, South Los Angeles and the San Pedro construction services centers should continue to provide plan check staff for express and counter plan check using generalists (Structural Engineering Associates) for structural, electrical, and mechanical plan check for smaller construction projects.

6. THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND SAFETY SHOULD ESTABLISH A RECORDS COUNTER AT THE WEST LOS ANGELES CONSTRUCTION SERVICES CENTER.

The Department of Building and Safety has two records research units at two construction service centers: Metro and Van Nuys. These records research units provide access to and copies of Building and Safety records including the following:

- Building Permits (from 1905 to present);
- Certificates of Occupancy (from 1940 to present);
- Range Files (violations);
- Plot Plans;

- Geology/Soils Reports;
- Affidavits/zoning interpretations;
- Approved building plans;
- Board files;
- Administrative Approvals; and
- Electrical, Plumbing, Mechanical (from 1985 to 1990 and from 1996 to present).

This service is not available at the West Los Angeles construction services center. The Department of Building and Safety should provide records research services at the West Los Angeles construction services center.

If, as recommended in a subsequent chapter, the Department of Building and Safety is able to provide access to these records via the Internet, the need to establish a records counter at the West Los Angeles construction services center may be unnecessary.

Recommendation #265: The Department of Building and Safety should provide records research services at the West Los Angeles construction services center. If, as recommended in a previous chapter, the Department of Building and Safety is able to provide access to these records via the Internet, the need to establish a records counter at the West Los Angeles construction services center may be unnecessary.

7. THE FIRE DEPARTMENT'S FIRE HYDRANT / ACCESS AND UNDERGROUND TANK UNIT SHOULD BE RELOCATED FROM 221 TO 201 NORTH FIGUEROA STREET, AS PLANNED BY THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.

The Fire Department's Hydrants and Access Unit is responsible for ensuring that newly constructed buildings meet minimum requirements for Fire Department emergency access and proximity to a fire hydrant. This includes the plan review of access, dead ends, fire lanes and fire lane signs, fire hydrants, lock boxes, etc.

These staff are presently located at 221 North Figueroa Street. This requires an applicant at 201 North Figueroa Street to proceed to another building – 221 North Figueroa Street to complete the plan checks and obtain clearances for emergency access and proximity to a fire hydrant.

These staff should be co-located with other Fire Department staff at 201 North Figueroa Street, as planned by the Fire Department.

Recommendation #266: The Fire Department's Hydrants and Access Unit should be re-located from 221 North Figueroa Street to 201 North Figueroa Street and co-located with other Fire Department staff, as planned by the Department.

8. THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING SHOULD ALLOCATE STAFF TO THE CONSTRUCTION SERVICE CENTERS.

The Department of Housing has two primary points of contact during the building permit process.

One is a review of tenant habitability plans. A landlord must file a *Tenant Habitability Plan* with the Department of Housing. This plan must mitigate conditions related to the primary renovation work that might make occupied rental units temporarily uninhabitable, either through precautions to ensure that tenants can safely remain in place during construction, or through the temporary relocation of tenants to replacement housing.

The second is the withdrawal of a unit from the rental market. The permanent removal of a unit from the rental housing market requires compliance with the Ellis Act, which requires that the landlord record with the County Recorder's Office a *Non-Confidential Memorandum and Extension* of the date of *Withdrawal from Rental Housing Use* form. A copy of the recorded *Non-Confidential Memorandum* along with

the Landlord *Declaration of Intent to Evict* should be submitted concurrently to the Department of Housing.

The Department of Housing has six regional offices, none of which are located at the construction service centers. This necessitates that an applicant for a building permit that requires approval of a *Tenant Habitability Plan*, *Confidential Memorandum*, or Landlord *Declaration of Intent to Evict* must proceed from one of the construction service centers to one of the six regional centers for the Department of Housing, and then back to one of the construction service centers.

The staff from the Department of Housing that review these forms should be co-located at the construction service centers. The workload will likely not be full-time, so a workstation for the staff should be established so that these staff can perform other work for the Department of Housing when not reviewing these forms.

Recommendation #267: The staff from the Department of Housing that review the *Tenant Habitability Plan*, *Confidential Memorandum*, or Landlord *Declaration of Intent to Evict* forms for building permits should be co-located at the construction service centers. The workload will likely not be full-time so a workstation for the staff should be established, so that these staff can perform other work for the Department of Housing when not reviewing these forms.

9. THE CITY SHOULD EVALUATE WHETHER SUFFICIENT PERMIT WORKLOAD EXISTS TO WARRANT FULL CONSTRUCTION SERVICE CENTERS IN SAN PEDRO AND SOUTH LOS ANGELES.

At the present time, the San Pedro and the South Los Angeles construction services centers are not fully functioning centers. These two construction services centers are staffed by the Department of Building and Safety. The Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Engineering staff the San Pedro construction services center, but not the South Los Angeles construction services center. The Fire Department and the Department of City Planning do not staff either of these centers.

The Office of the City Administrative Officer should evaluate whether sufficient workload exists to warrant the assignment of staff by the Department of City Planning and the Fire Department to the San Pedro and the South Los Angeles construction service centers, the Fire Department to the West Los Angeles construction services center, and the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Engineering to the South Los Angeles construction services center. The Matrix Consulting Group believes that there is not sufficient workload, but the need assessment should be further evaluated.

An alternative that the Matrix Consulting Group recommends is the assignment of responsibility to the Department of Building and Safety to act on behalf of these other departments to accept their permit applications for applicants (e.g., Fire, Engineering, City Planning, etc.) rather than require applicants to travel to full construction service centers at Metro, West Los Angeles, or Van Nuys. This could be accomplished via the development of memorandums of agreement between the Department of Building and Safety and these other departments that clarify roles and responsibilities, the types of permits that can be issued by the Department of Building and Safety (and can't), etc.

Recommendation #268: The Office of the City Administrative Officer should evaluate whether sufficient workload exists to warrant the assignment of staff by the Department of City Planning and the Fire Department to the San Pedro and the South Los Angeles construction service centers, and the assignment of staff by the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Engineering to the South Los Angeles construction services center.

Recommendation #269: The Department of Building and Safety should be assigned responsibility to act on behalf of the Department of City Planning and the Fire Department at the San Pedro and the South Los Angeles construction service centers, the Fire Department to the West Los Angeles construction service center, and the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Engineering at the South Los Angeles construction service centers to accept permit applications for applicants for these departments rather than require the

applicants to travel to the construction service centers at Metro, West Los Angeles, or Van Nuys. This could be accomplished via the development of memoranda of agreement that clarify roles and responsibilities, the types of permits that can be issued by the Department of Building and Safety (and can't), etc.

10. THE FIRE DEPARTMENT SHOULD ASSIGN PLAN CHECK STAFF ON A FULL-TIME BASIS TO THE VAN NUYS CONSTRUCTION SERVICES CENTER.

At the present time, the Fire Department assigns its development services staff at the Metro construction services center at 201 North Figueroa Street.

Yet more building, mechanical, and electrical permits are issued at the Van Nuys construction services center than any other construction service center. The Fire Department has assigned development services staff to this construction services center, but not on a full-time basis.

The Fire Department should assign development services staff, on a full-time basis, to the Van Nuys construction services center, each and every business day for the entire business day to provide a full-range of plan check services including compliance with the applicable Los Angeles Fire Code, California Fire Code, City of Los Angeles Building Code, and National Fire Protection Association standards, Division 5 permits (e.g., underground storage tanks, drying ovens, pressure vessels exceeding 60 gallons, etc.), and Division 15 permits (plan check and inspection of new construction for conformance with California Administrative Code, Title 19, including, but not limited to, hospitals, high-rise structures, institutions, educational facilities, public assemblies, and hazardous occupancies, and Division 9 of the California Code of Regulations relating to access, hydrants, and fireflow requirements).

Recommendation #270: The Fire Department should assign development services staff to the Van Nuys construction services center on a full-time basis, each and

every business day for the entire business day to provide a full-range of plan check services.

11. THE CITY SHOULD EXPAND ITS OFFICE HOURS AT THE CONSTRUCTION SERVICES CENTERS.

The City uses a mix of schedules for its employees including 5-40 and 9 – 80.

Other cities that have shifted to a 9-80 schedule have begun to utilize that schedule to offer expanded office hours for permit services, particularly express permits and counter plan check. This typically expands the office hours from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm to 7:30 am to 5:30 pm.

The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the departments assigned to the construction service centers to develop a proposal for the consideration of the Office of the mayor and the City Council to expand the office hours from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm to 7:30 am to 5:30 pm at the construction service centers. This should initially be “piloted” at just one construction services center to gauge the reaction, and then, if successful, expanded to other construction services centers with high applicant volume (e.g., Metro).

Recommendation #271: The Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the departments assigned to the construction service centers to develop a proposal for the consideration of the Office of the Mayor and the City Council to expand the office hours from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm to 7:30 am to 5:30 pm at the construction service centers. This should initially be “piloted” at just one construction services center to gauge the reaction, and then, if successful, expanded to other construction services centers with high applicant volume (e.g., Metro).

12. ANALYSIS OF THE CULTURE OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICE FUNCTIONS

In our experience, the City's employees in its development services functions will be the key to the successful transformation of development services. A new strategy for development services, imposed from above, will be at odds with the ingrained practices and culture and likely fail. The success of this transformation requires that the concerns of the employees need to be identified and incorporated from the start and revisited again and again throughout the implementation process.

A summary of the recommendations contained within this chapter is presented in the exhibit following this page.

1. THE TALENTS AND SKILLS OF THE CITY'S PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE UTILIZED TO FACILITATE THE SUCCESS OF THE DELIVERY OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES BY THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES.

The recommendations to transform development services and improve service delivery presents a number of serious human resource challenges. The goal of the Personnel Department should be to assist all employees embrace this transformation to enable its success.

However, this assistance should be provided before the transformation begins (or shortly thereafter). It is critical to begin the work of getting the employees, supervisors, and managers in the City's development service functions to work together amicably, as a team, before the City begins the effort of transforming development services.

Exhibit 32 (1)

**Summary of Recommendations
Contained within Chapter 12**

Rec. #	Recommendation
272	The Personnel Department should conduct a cultural assessment of all of the development service functions.
273	The City should appropriate \$50,000 for the cultural assessment and allocate the appropriation to the Personnel Department.
274	The Personnel Department should provide training at every level of the departments, bureaus and divisions involved in development services as quickly as possible after the approval of this report by the City Council and the Office of the Mayor and after needs are identified as a result of the Cultural Assessment.
275	The City should appropriate \$100,000 for the training of development services executives, supervisors and managers, and line staff and allocate the appropriation to the Personnel Department.
276	The Personnel Department, in concert with the executive and top management of the City's development services, should develop and work with inter-departmental work teams to recommend changes to the development services work processes to address work flow problems and improve customer service.
277	The Department of Personnel should facilitate a series of "open" town hall meetings with the employees of the City's development service functions to allow the employees to hear the rationale for the transformation of development services and voice their concerns.
278	The Department of Personnel should establish an e-suggestion box for the employees of the City's development service functions about how to do things more efficiently and expediently.
279	The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer and the development services leadership team (General Managers and Bureau managers) should spell out the impact of the transformation of development services on the employees in its development services functions including how the transformation would personally impact employees and what it means for them personally (e.g., changes in roles and responsibilities, skills and knowledge, performance expectations, customer centric behavior, etc.).
280	The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer and the development services leadership team (General Managers and Bureau managers) should build a case for the transformation of development services for employees and transmit that message. This should include a discussion of why the City is transforming development services, what is changing and what is staying the same, what are the benefits to the City and to the employees themselves.
281	The Office of the Mayor should communicate the desired behaviors to the development services leadership team (General Managers and Bureau managers) and holds that leadership team accountable for those behaviors including leading, by example, with their behaviors and actions in the transformation of business processes, the co-location of staff, the enhancement of the regulatory framework, etc.
282	The City should use inter-departmental teams of employees to implement the recommendations contained within this report.

Exhibit 32 (2)

Rec. #	Recommendation
283	The City needs to embed this transformation of development services through metrics. The Office of the City Administrative Officer, and the General Managers and Bureau managers of the development services functions should collaborate to articulate the expected metrics. The General Managers and Bureau managers of the development services functions should be held accountable for meeting these metrics, to measure the expected results of the transformation (e.g., cycle time for permits) using <i>BuildLA</i> , to utilize inter-departmental teams to implement streamlines business practices, etc. This is not a one-time effort. It needs to be an ongoing effort.

This type of assistance has many challenges including:

- Bringing departments with disparate work cultures together to provide effective and streamlined business processes so that permit applicants experience the type of customer service a world class city, such as Los Angeles, should be known for;
- Motivating personnel to embrace this transformation of development services in spite of resistance and discouragement on the part of some;
- Retaining good employees through these changes;
- Engaging employees and preventing morale from cascading into discouragement; and
- Maintaining the productivity of employees, while these employees deal with possible changes in work location, supervision and management, and work flow.

The Personnel Department should be an essential partner of the management, supervisory, and line employees of the development service functions to ensure that all employees are engaged in serving customers, and not engaged in disagreements regarding “moving boxes” and the transformation of development services. The partnership with the Personnel Department in this transformation should begin from the start. The specific steps that should be taken by the Personnel Department, in concert with the management, supervisory and line employees of the development service functions, are presented below.

(1) Conduct a Culture Assessment.

This would involve a survey of all employees in all of the development service functions and an executive workshop.

Conducting surveys of the disparate development service organizations serves to identify the current cultures, gain an understanding of current perspectives and practices, aide in the development of the “target” culture, and engage all employees

early in the process. Such a survey would be purchased, administered online, and tabulated and analyzed by a consultant with expertise in business transformation.

Qualified Personnel Department staff would supplement the survey with interviews of development service executives and other key stakeholders. The Personnel Department would facilitate a half-day executive workshop, wherein the group determines the desired culture for development services based on the assessment results. The gap analysis would determine the training required to attain the desired culture for development services. This six-week process should begin immediately after the approval of this report by the City Council and the Office of the Mayor. A potential vendor that is already on contract with the City estimated the cost for the employee survey, analysis, and executive workshop. The cost impact is presented in the table below.

Recommendation	One-Time Cost
The Personnel Department should conduct a cultural assessment of all of the development service functions.	\$50,000

Recommendation #272: The Personnel Department should conduct a cultural assessment of all of the development service functions.

Recommendation #273: The City should appropriate \$50,000 for the cultural assessment and allocate the appropriation to the Personnel Department.

(2) Training

The culture assessment will identify training needs, however a need for training will occur at every level of the City's development service functions – executives, supervisors and managers, and line staff as noted below

- **Executive Training.** The success of getting the employees and supervisors and middle managers of the City's development service functions to work together lies in the hands of upper management, and demands that they be effective leaders and change agents. Training should be provided to all executives who

will be involved in this transformation of development services and ongoing change as soon as possible after needs are identified. This training should be mandatory.

Such training would be provided by a consultant / executive coach or subject matter expert within the City where possible. Topics will likely include, effective leadership, change management, personal values, and ethics.

In addition, this training should also include meetings of executives, managers, and supervisors in the City's development service functions to identify the desired culture for the City's development service functions and to begin the work necessary to develop a cohesive managerial and supervisory team to further the development of that desired culture.

- **Training for Supervisors and Managers.** Supervisors and Managers are crucial to the City's success in delivering responsive development services as a team. They are the "adjustment conduit" from upper management to the employees and vice versa. This level of training will likely be a series of courses both online and face-to-face. This should occur as quickly as possible at the beginning of the transformation and after needs are identified as described previously. Such training is likely to cover such topics as:
 - Supervision / Management 101 (online and classroom);
 - Leadership and Teamwork (online and classroom);
 - Communication (classroom);
 - Coaching for Performance (online); and
 - Managing Conflict and Difficult Behavior (online).
- **Training for Line Staff.** It is important to incorporate ways to keep line staff apprised of the organizational changes, solicit their input, and encourage or reward them for their efforts. In addition to the recommendations below, the culture assessment will assist in identifying trainings oriented to line staff and their concerns. This should occur as quickly as possible at the beginning of implementation and after needs are identified as a result of the Cultural Assessment.

The estimated one-time cost for this training is provided in the table below.

Recommendation	One-Time Cost
The Personnel Department should provide training at every level of the departments, bureaus and divisions involved in development services as quickly as possible after the approval of this report by the City Council and the Office of the Mayor and after needs are identified as a result of the Cultural Assessment.	\$100,000

Recommendation #274: The Personnel Department should provide training at every level of the departments, bureaus and divisions involved in development services as quickly as possible after the approval of this report by the City Council and the Office of the Mayor and after needs are identified as a result of the Cultural Assessment.

Recommendation #275: The City should appropriate \$100,000 for the training of development services executives, supervisors and managers, and line staff and allocate the appropriation to the Personnel Department.

(3) Inter-Bureau Employee Teams Should be Utilized To Identify Opportunities to Improve and Streamline Development Services.

Since 2009, the Personnel Department has been involved in addressing the impact of the fiscal crisis faced by the City resulting in downsizing, layoffs, ERIPs, functional transfers, eliminations of Departments, and other cost-saving measures. Numerous trainings have been, and are currently being developed, for many City Departments facing these issues. They have included:

- Dealing With Uncertainty;
- Doing So Much More with Less;
- Managing Uncertainty, Stress and Anger;
- Maintaining Resiliency During Organizational Changes;
- Lifting the Backpack of Stress; and
- Creating a Culture of Trust.

Employees who are engaged in the shared work processes of the departments know best what works and what does not. As such they are in the best position to recommend changes to these processes to address work flow problems and improve customer service. Inter-departmental work groups should be established to begin the work process assessment to transform and streamline development services work processes.

Since work cultural differences could impede the progress of these groups, it is recommended that a facilitator (a clinical or organizational psychologist) be assigned to the groups to intervene as necessary and to assist the groups to be more productive, engaged, and committed to the success of the transformation.

Recommendation #276: The Personnel Department, in concert with the executive and top management of the City's development services, should develop and work with inter-departmental work teams to recommend changes to the development services work processes to address work flow problems and improve customer service.

(4) The Department of Personnel Should Conduct Open "Town Hall" Meetings

The Department of Personnel should facilitate a series of town hall meetings (two hours in length) that all employees of the City's development service functions should be able to attend (two hours in length) to hear the rationale for the transformation of development services and voice their concerns. This should occur soon after the executive workshop, when executives of the City's development service functions are clear on the message regarding transformation and the plan for the culture of development services. The presenters at these meetings must be upper management of the City's development service functions, with assistance from the Mayor's Office.

The presenters must be committed to this consolidation and knowledgeable about the challenges that lie ahead.

Recommendation #277: The Department of Personnel should facilitate a series of “open” town hall meetings with the employees of the City’s development service functions to allow the employees to hear the rationale for the transformation of development services and voice their concerns.

(5) The Department of Personnel Should Establish An e-Suggestion Box

The goal of the e-suggestion box is to encourage creative problem solving around this transformation of development services. Many development services employees have ideas about how to do things more efficiently and expediently. They must be encouraged to submit their ideas and become part of their implementation going forward. This could occur after the approval of this report by the City Council and the Office of the Mayor and after needs are identified as a result of the Cultural Assessment. This would require minimal staff time to set up electronic suggestion box, and could be as simple as an e-mail account or a web-based form.

Recommendation #278: The Department of Personnel should establish an e-suggestion box for the employees of the City’s development service functions about how to do things more efficiently and expediently.

7. THE CITY SHOULD IMMEDIATELY BEGIN WORK ON TRANSFORMING DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AND ENGAGE EMPLOYEES TO ASSURE THE SUCCESS OF THE TRANSFORMATION.

The “people” component is essential to the successful transformation of the City’s development services. In fact, the “people” dynamic, while recognized as important, is consistently underestimated and under-resourced in transformations. To succeed, “people” issues need to be identified and incorporated into the plans for transformation from the start, and revisited again and again throughout the implementation process.

This will require five steps.²⁴

- **First, the City should spell out the impact of the change in development services on the employees in its development services functions.** This includes a discussion with employees of how the transformation is personally impacting them and what it means for them personally (e.g., changes in roles and responsibilities, skills and knowledge, performance expectations, customer centric behavior, etc.).
- **Second, the City should build a case for the transformation for employees and transmit that message.** It is easy to build a rational case for the transformation; the more difficult task is making a “gut” connection with employees. This requires that the development services leadership team identify what the change means for the employees personally, not only why it benefits the City. This includes a discussion of why are we changing, what is changing and what is staying the same, and what are the benefits to the City and to the employees themselves.
- **Third, the executive and middle managers for development services need to role model the transformation.** The City and its development services leadership team must lead (not impose) this transformation. Leading the change means that the General Managers, departmental executives and middle managers must not only “lead” the transformation, but also be “in front,” modeling the new development services behaviors they are asking of their employees and holding themselves accountable for the successful implementation of the recommendations. This means that the General Managers, departmental executives and middle managers must lead, by example, with their behaviors and actions in the transformation of business processes, the co-location of staff, the enhancement of the regulatory framework, etc. It is critical that the Office of the Mayor communicate the desired behaviors to the development services leadership team and hold that leadership team accountable for those behaviors.
- **Fourth, the City should use inter-departmental teams of employees to implement the recommendations.** Most transformations are done “to” employees, not “with” them or “by” them. While the development services leadership team can push transformation from the top, employee’s not involved in the transformation will likely dig in their heels. To counteract this tendency, the City should involve employees in the implementation.
- **Fifth, the City needs to embed the transformation through metrics.** Too often, cities declare victory in transformations too soon. To embed the transformation and ensure that it sticks, the City will want to articulate the expected metrics and hold the managers and supervisors of the development services functions responsible for meeting these metrics, to measure the expected results of the transformation (e.g., cycle time for permits) using *BuildLA*,

²⁴ Booz and Company, Making It Stick: Delivering Sustainable Organizational Change, 2006

to utilize inter-departmental teams to implement streamlines business practices, etc. This is not a one-time effort. It needs to be an ongoing effort.

Recommendation #279: The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer and the development services leadership team (General Managers and Bureau managers) should spell out the impact of the transformation of development services on the employees in its development services functions including how the transformation would personally impact employees and what it means for them personally (e.g., changes in roles and responsibilities, skills and knowledge, performance expectations, customer centric behavior, etc.).

Recommendation #280: The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer and the development services leadership team (General Managers and Bureau managers) should build a case for the transformation of development services for employees and transmit that message. This should include a discussion of why the City is transforming development services, what is changing and what is staying the same, what are the benefits to the City and to the employees themselves.

Recommendation #281: The Office of the Mayor should communicate the desired behaviors to the development services leadership team (General Managers and Bureau managers) and hold that leadership team accountable for those behaviors including leading, by example, with their behaviors and actions in the transformation of business processes, the co-location of staff, the enhancement of the regulatory framework, etc.

Recommendation #282: The City should use inter-departmental teams of employees to implement the recommendations contained within this report.

Recommendation #283: The City needs to embed this transformation of development services through metrics. The Office of the City Administrative Officer, and the General Managers and Bureau managers of the development services functions should collaborate to articulate the expected metrics. The General Managers and Bureau managers of the development services functions should be held accountable for meeting these metrics, to measure the expected results of the transformation (e.g., cycle time for permits) using *BuildLA*, to utilize inter-departmental teams to implement streamlines business practices, etc. This is not a one-time effort. It needs to be an ongoing effort.

13. ANALYSIS OF THE PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

This chapter presents a proposed plan of organization of the development services functions. The Matrix Consulting Group recommends that development services functions be transferred to a new department, just not now and not all at once. There are a number of steps the City should take, incrementally, before the development service functions are transferred to a new department.

However, this chapter does not only look at the functional transfer. It also evaluates opportunities to enhance the service delivery through the use of “process owners” for the three core processes to provide end-to-end accountability for those processes; enhance the service delivery within the Department of City Planning assigning its development services to specific geographical areas and not a mix of functional and geographical assignments; and the use of contractors or other flexible staffing solutions to provide “peaking” service for plan checking for Planning, Building and Safety, Transportation, Engineering, and Fire.

A summary of the recommendations contained within this chapter is presented in the exhibit following this page.

1. THE CITY SHOULD UTILIZE A SHARED SERVICES CONCEPT FOR DELIVERY OF THE PERMIT INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FUND ACCOUNTING.

Shared services is a way of organizing administrative functions to optimize the delivery of cost-effective, flexible, reliable services to all customers, not just one department.

Exhibit 33 (1)

**Summary of Recommendations
Contained within Chapter 13**

Rec. #	Recommendation
284	The permit information services and staff from the five departments (Department Building and Safety, the Department of City Planning, the Department of Transportation, the Public Works Department, and the Fire Department) should be integrated into one department and one information technology unit using a shared services approach.
285	In developing the shared services concept for <i>BuildLA</i> , the City will need to determine the role of the information technology service provider for <i>BuildLA</i> service delivery.
286	In the implementation of the shared services concept for <i>BuildLA</i> , a memorandum of agreement should be developed between the service provider and the departments that are customers of the service provider.
287	An issue resolution framework will need to be developed. There needs to be a mechanism for raising and resolving the inevitable issues that will arise between the customers for the shared service delivery of <i>BuildLA</i> and the service provider. Ideally, a governance council will oversee this process.
288	The processes used for the service delivery of <i>BuildLA</i> will have to be a “one size fits all.” It is unrealistic to expect that <i>BuildLA</i> business processes can be customized for each department.
289	The Department of Building and Safety should be designated as the service provider for the information technology services associated with <i>BuildLA</i> .
290	A Bureau-level manager should be authorized to manage the <i>BuildLA</i> shared service given its importance in service delivery for the City of Los Angeles.
291	Once the City of Los Angeles completes the development and deployment of the shared services concept for <i>BuildLA</i> , it should proceed to the development of a shared services concept for fund accounting for the revenues collected by the development service functions in these five departments.
292	The Department of City Planning should assign the staff in the Development Services Bureau geographically at the Metro, Valley, and the proposed West Los Angeles office.
293	The Department of City Planning staff assigned to the Subdivision Section, the Zoning Administrator Section, and the Major Projects Section should be reassigned to the Metro and Valley Neighborhood Project sections, and also used to open a proposed West Los Angeles office.
294	The Associate Zoning Administrator supervising the construction service centers for the Department of City Planning should be reclassified as a Principal City Planner.
295	The vacant Principal Planner position that reports to the Deputy Director of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should be utilized to supervise one of the three Neighborhood Projects offices at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.
296	The Senior City Planner position in the Office of Zoning Administration should be reallocated to management of professional planners assigned to Neighborhood Projects at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.
297	The vacant Senior City Planner in the construction services center should be reallocated to management of professional planners assigned to Neighborhood Projects at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.

Exhibit 33 (2)

Rec. #	Recommendation
298	The vacant Senior City Planner position in Expedited Processing should be reallocated to management of professional planners assigned to Neighborhood Projects at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.
299	Two Principal City Planner positions should be authorized for the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning to enable implementation of a geographically based plan of organization.
300	A Senior City Planner position should be authorized for the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning to enable implementation of a geographically based plan of organization.
301	The Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should conduct a staffing and workload analysis to determine the appropriate distribution of professional-level planner positions at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.
302	The Office of the Mayor should develop a formal citywide written policy and procedure regarding process ownership for the discretionary review process, the building permit process, and the engineering permit process and the authority of the process owner to act on behalf of the Office of the Mayor with a clear, final decision-maker role.
303	The policy and procedure developed by the Office of the Mayor should designate the process owner as an executive, a General Manager, who possesses the necessary organizational clout and authority to act on behalf of the Office of the Mayor, not just negotiate.
304	The policy and procedure developed by the Office of the Mayor should assign responsibility to the process owner to work with inter-departmental teams to improve and streamline the process, monitor the service levels delivered by the process (e.g., cycle time), and manage the process in terms of the levels of service provided (e.g., cycle time).
305	The Office of the Mayor should closely monitor implementation for the first 12 to 18 months after adoption of the process ownership policy, particularly decisions involving the senior management team across departmental boundaries. In essence, representatives of the Office of the Mayor should be at the table for the first twelve to eighteen months after adoption of process ownership to ensure successful adoption.
306	The Office of the Mayor should solicit ongoing feedback during the first 12 to 18 months of implementation of the process ownership policy and procedure regarding what is and is not working well, and “tweak” the process owner policy and procedure as necessary.
307	Any development services bureau, division or department whose services are funded via a special revenue fund should be authorized to immediately fill any vacant positions that are funded as part of the special revenue fund, and not require the approval of the City’s vacant position review committee.
308	: The City should initiate contracts with consultants for peak development services plan check and permit workload in Planning, Building and Safety, Transportation, Engineering, and Fire. This should be used just to manage temporary peak workload and to temporarily respond to vacancies in positions.
309	The development service functions should explore alternative staffing arrangements in which part-time staff are utilized to meet these peak staffing workload demands.
310	The City should functionally transfer development services from five departments to a new Department including the Department of Building and Safety; the Department of City Planning; Fire Department; the Department of Transportation; and the Bureau of Engineering, Department of Public Works.

Exhibit 33 (3)

Rec. #	Recommendation
311	The functional transfer <u>should only occur</u> after business processes have been substantively streamlined, <i>BuildLA</i> has gone live, development services staff have been co-located, and the culture of the development services functions have been substantially aligned.
312	The functional transfer should not happen all at once. The transition to a new Department should occur over a one to two year period. The functional transfer, however, should begin with the transfer of the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety to a new department. After the successful transition of this transfer, other functions could be transferred to the new department.
313	The City should add a position to manage the new Department: a General Manager.
314	The City should eliminate, through attrition, thirteen (13) positions upon the functional transfer.
315	The new Department and the Fire Department, Department of Transportation, and the Fire Department should develop a Memorandum of Agreement to clarify the roles and relationships between the new Department and the staff transferred to the new Department from these other departments.
316	The new Department should bring together executives, supervisors, and line employees, representing all of the Bureaus in the Department, to develop a mission statement for the new Department, shortly after the formation of the new Department. The Matrix Consulting Group should not develop the mission for the new Department.
317	The title of the new Department should be the Planning, Building and Safety Department.

In the current decentralized methodology, each department is autonomous, has separate administrative services functional staff, with different systems and non-standard processes (witness the City's five different permit information systems). In the shared services concept, a separate and single organization delivers administrative services for multiple departments, linked to customers through an oversight model. Service delivery is managed through service level agreements. The shared services organization is metric driven through measurement and feedback. The shared services organization is responsible for the process and systems end-to-end.

This concept has been successfully used at the federal level with *Service First*. *Service First* is a joint Bureau of Land Management / Forest Service initiative designed to improve customer service by providing streamlined, one-stop shopping across agency jurisdictional boundaries for public land users. It has been used primarily for co-locating offices, joint permitting, shared management and single points of contact for resource programs. It also focused on reducing costs by pooling human resources and property, eliminating redundancy, leveraging employee skills and knowledge across agency boundaries, enhancing communication.

Universities have been using shared services to reduce administrative overhead costs. At the University of Michigan, for example, the use of shared services is projected to reduce costs by \$5 million to \$6 million annually. The University of North Carolina, which faced draconian cuts in State funding, has generated \$58.1 million in recurring savings through shared services (e.g., a unified business center rather than each academic unit having its own human resource and finance functions).

In an analysis of the implementation of shared services in 193 companies, some of which had more than 100,000 employees (the median company had 25,000 employees), the Hackett Group (a global strategic business advisory and operations improvement consulting firm) found that shared services:

- Have delivered their cost promise (reducing cost);
- Are no longer just about cost: effective service delivery is now as important as improving efficiency;
- Are becoming more strategic: 'link to strategy' is the fastest growing driver for shared services;
- Are moving beyond the transaction processes (e.g., payroll, accounts payable, etc.) into non-transaction work;
- Are forming of Centers of Excellence (e.g., centralized service providers that are selected to perform certain specialized procedures because of their expertise) to complement 'traditional' transaction processing model;
- Are driven by automation with transactional shared services (e.g., payroll, accounts payable, etc.) at the forefront;
- Are increasingly run across functions with solutions becoming more integrated across departmental boundaries; and
- Are focusing on developing talent to deliver higher value.²⁵

Shared services have crossed over from the private sector to the public sector to reduce costs, improve service and quality, accuracy and timeliness.

The City of Los Angeles has recently decided to use the shared services concept for delivery of human resources by integrating responsibility for delivery of those services in the Department of Personnel.

It is time for the City of Los Angeles to take a next step in shared services.

²⁵ The Hackett Group, Hackett Shared Services Performance Study Results Ten Key Insights, 2009

The next step should be the consolidation of the permit information services and staff from the five departments (Department Building and Safety, the Department of City Planning, the Department of Transportation, the Public Works Department, and the Fire Department) into one department and one information technology unit. This shared service unit should encompass all of the staff and resources necessary to support *BuildLA* on behalf of all of the departments in Los Angeles that will be using the system: primarily the Department of Building and Safety, the Department of City Planning, the Department of Transportation, the Public Works Department, and the Fire Department.

First, in developing the shared services concept for *BuildLA*, the City will need to determine who shall be the service provider and what the role of the service provider should be in *BuildLA* service delivery. The determination of roles will need to address such issues as:

- End user device support (e.g., new user set-up, remote or in-person support with customer troubleshooting, help-desk support, installation and upgrade of *BuildLA* software, development of information technology standards regarding *BuildLA* including end-user device support tools, etc.);
- Device procurement (e.g., personal computers and monitors necessary for support of electronic plan checking, physical move of equipment, etc.);
- Application support (e.g., remote or in-person support for *BuildLA*, technical training in the use of *BuildLA*, network security, etc.); and
- Other support (e.g., web services related to on-line permitting, audio conferencing support for applicants and staff, coordination with other applications such as the City's financial systems, etc.).

Second, in the implementation of the shared services concept, a memorandum of agreement should be developed between the service provider and the customers of the service provider. This agreement must include requirements on the customer (e.g.,

frequency of training) as well as the service provider (e.g., service levels and metrics). The service provider needs to be accountable, but so does the customer.²⁶

Third, it is also important that metrics be developed, wherever possible, to quantify what the customer is getting through a shared service provided by the service provider.²⁷ The metrics should involve more than just the direct costs of a service. This could include such metrics as the following:

- Customer satisfaction as measured by customer satisfaction surveys;
- First contact resolution rate for the Help Desk;
- *BuildLA* costs as a % of total development services costs; and
- % uptime of the data servers used by the *BuildLA* service provider or “managing partner” (e.g., 99.999%);

Fourth, an issue resolution framework will need to be developed. There needs to be a mechanism for raising and resolving the inevitable issues that will arise. Ideally, a governance council will oversee this process.²⁸

And lastly, the processes used for the service delivery of *BuildLA* will have to be a “one size fits all.” It is unrealistic to expect that *BuildLA* business processes can be customized for each department. An effective *BuildLA* process will have economies of scale that are larger than can be captured by one individual department using the service. *BuildLA* will require a set of business rules that must work well for all of the departments despite arguments some may make for having unique needs.²⁹

²⁶ IBM Center for The Business of Government, A County Manager’s Guide to Shared Services in Local Government, 2013

²⁷ IBM Center for The Business of Government, A County Manager’s Guide to Shared Services in Local Government, 2013

²⁸ IBM Center for The Business of Government, A County Manager’s Guide to Shared Services in Local Government, 2013

²⁹ IBM Center for The Business of Government, A County Manager’s Guide to Shared Services in Local Government, 2013

The Department of Building and Safety should be designated as the service provider for *BuildLA*. The Department of Building and Safety should establish and maintain the *BuildLA* shared service with approval by departmental leadership for that would serve as a governing council. The “managing partner” should develop, implement, and maintain financial and service models as well as memorandums of agreement with customers or the partners in *BuildLA* – the other departments that will use *BuildLA*. The Department of Building and Safety should be responsible for the success of the *BuildLA* shared service, and report its success using metrics.

A Bureau-level manager should manage the *BuildLA* shared service given its importance in service delivery for the City of Los Angeles. The cost of this recommendation is presented in the table below, and reflects salaries and fringe benefits at the top step of the salary range.

Recommendation	Ongoing Annual Cost Increase
A Bureau-level manager should manage the BuildLA shared service given its importance in service delivery for the City of Los Angeles.	\$200,000

Once the City of Los Angeles completes the development and deployment of the shared services concept for *BuildLA*, it should proceed to the development of a shared services concept for fund accounting for the revenues collected by the development service functions in these five departments. As noted earlier, Action Plan 9 within the *Development Reform Strategic Plan* calls for the City to implement a simpler mechanism for making payments, involving credit cards, draw-down accounts, and a single cashier. This report similarly recommends that the City should require that all development-related fees be paid to and processed by the cashiers employed by the Department of Building and Safety. This includes the fees for the Bureau of Engineering

and any other Bureau or Department located in any of the construction service centers.

The fund accounting for these revenues should be provided by the Department of Building and Safety on behalf of all of the departments (Department of Building and Safety, the Department of City Planning, the Department of Transportation, the Public Works Department, and the Fire Department).

Recommendation #284: The permit information services and staff from the five departments (Department Building and Safety, the Department of City Planning, the Department of Transportation, the Public Works Department, and the Fire Department) should be integrated into one department and one information technology unit using a shared services approach.

Recommendation #285: In developing the shared services concept for *BuildLA*, the City will need to determine the role of the information technology service provider for *BuildLA* service delivery.

Recommendation #286: In the implementation of the shared services concept for *BuildLA*, a memorandum of agreement should be developed between the service provider and the departments that are customers of the service provider.

Recommendation #287: A *BuildLA* issue resolution framework will need to be developed. There needs to be a mechanism for raising and resolving the inevitable issues that will arise between the customers for the shared service delivery of *BuildLA* and the service provider. Ideally, a governance council will oversee this process.

Recommendation #288: The processes used for the service delivery of *BuildLA* will have to be a “one size fits all.” It is unrealistic to expect that *BuildLA* business processes can be customized for each department.

Recommendation #289: The Department of Building and Safety should be designated as the service provider for the information technology services associated with *BuildLA*.

Recommendation #290: A Bureau-level manager should be authorized to manage the *BuildLA* shared service given its importance in service delivery for the City of Los Angeles.

Recommendation #291: Once the City of Los Angeles completes the development and deployment of the shared services concept for *BuildLA*, it should proceed to the development of a shared services concept for fund accounting for the

revenues collected by the development service functions in these five departments.

2. THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES BUREAU, DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING SHOULD BE CHANGED TO A GEOGRAPHICALLY BASED PLAN WITH THE EXCEPTION OF EXPEDITED PROCESSING.

The Department of City Planning uses a mixed approach to organizational structure for its Development Services Bureau: the approach is both functionally and geographically based. The Subdivision Division, the Office of the Zoning Administrator, and the Major Projects Division are functionally based, while the Neighborhood Projects Divisions are geographically based.

There are a number of problems with a functionally based plan of organization.

- The functions can work at cross purposes if they have different priorities and performance measures.
- The focus of the staff in a functionally based organization is on the function itself, and not the customer (not looking at the customer and the process from an end-to-end perspective).
- Processes across functions can break down given a lack of clarity regarding roles and a lack of accountability for the process on an end-to-end basis, and not just the process within the function.
- Conflicts and disagreements among functions have to be pushed up to the management chain to get resolved.

On the other hand, there are a number of advantages to geographically based teams as noted below.

- The planners have a better understanding of the neighborhoods they serve and a better grasp of how to analyze the application in the context of those neighborhoods. As the Department of City Planning's 2010-11 strategic plan stated, the use of geographically based teams will help the planners look at the "big picture of how individual issues, projects and decisions affect the neighborhood as a whole. These teams will help ensure that planners stay up-to-date on neighborhood issues and maintain a local context for the projects they are reviewing."

- Grouping planners by geographically based teams encourages the formation of strong, collaborative teams, engage in land use planning and decision-making regarding the neighborhoods together, and understand each other's personalities and work styles.
- Customers and residents of the neighborhoods feel more at ease when speaking with planners who fully understand their neighborhoods.
- The use of geographically based teams results in planners with deeper cross-functional skills, who can process all types of discretionary permits, and have better promotional opportunities as a result.
- The use of geographically based teams enables the Department of City Planning to better respond to fluctuations in workload by case type since a planner can be assigned any type of case, and not just tentative parcel or tract maps or Zoning Administrator cases.

Overall, it is rare to find planning departments, even in large cities, that organize their planners by function. There are simply too many disadvantages.

In addition to the challenges associated with the functional versus geographical basis of organization for the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning, there also appear to be challenges associated with spans of control based upon metrics utilized by the Matrix Consulting Group. The Senior City Planner for Metro in the Development Services Bureau, for example, supervises twenty-one (21) staff: five (5) City Planners, seven (7) Planning Assistant's, seven (7) City Planning Associates, and two (2) Senior Clerk Typists.

Important points to note regarding the present allocation of positions among Subdivisions, the Office of Zoning Administration, Major Projects, Metro, and Valley Neighborhood Projects are presented below.

- There are eight (8) positions assigned to Subdivisions. This includes three (3) City Planner positions (one position is vacant), three (3) City Planning Associate positions, and two (2) Planning Assistant positions.

- There are eighteen (18) positions assigned to the Office of Zoning Administration (excluding the Chief Zoning Administrator and the seven Associate Zoning Administrators). This includes one (1) Senior City Planner position, five (5) City Planner positions, four (4) City Planning Associate positions, and eight (8) Planning Assistant positions.
- There are twenty-nine (29) professional planner positions assigned to Metro and the Valley Neighborhood Projects: approximately 70% at Metro and 30% at the Valley. This includes two (2) Senior City Planner positions, seven (7) City Planner positions, nine (9) City Planning Associate positions, and eleven (11) Planning Assistant positions.
- There are seventeen (17) professional planner positions assigned to Major Projects. This includes one (1) Senior City Planner, six (6) City Planners, four (4) City Planning Associates, five (5) Planning Assistants and one (1) Environmental Specialist II position.

This staffing is based upon an organization chart provided by the Department of City Planning to the Matrix Consulting Group, that reflects the plan of organization as of the 1st quarter 2013.

A breakdown of these positions by classification title and functional or geographical assignment is summarized in the table below. The table excludes the Chief Zoning Administrator and the seven Associate Zoning Administrators.

Class Title	Subdivisions	Office of Zoning Administration	Metro	Valley	Major Projects
Senior City Planner	0	1	1	1	1
City Planner	3	5	5	2	6
City Planning Associate	4	4	7	2	4
Planning Assistant	1	8	7	4	5
Environmental Specialist II	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	8	18	20	9	17

The Department of City Planning should assign the staff in the Development Services Bureau geographically. The staff assigned to Subdivisions, the Office of the Zoning Administrator, and Major Projects should be reassigned to the Metro and Valley

Neighborhood Projects, and also used to open a West Los Angeles Neighborhood Projects office.

However, the Chief Zoning Administrator and the seven (7) Associate Zoning Administrators should continue to function as hearing officers irrespective of this proposed change in organization.

If the Subdivisions and the Office of Zoning Administration positions were reallocated to the Valley and the Metro based upon the present allocation of positions to these two centers, then eight (8) professional planner positions would potentially be allocated to the Valley construction services center (for a total of seventeen professional planner positions) and eighteen (18) professional planner positions potentially to the Metro construction services center (for a total of thirty-eight [38] professional planner positions). Approximately 35% of the Metro cases originated in the West Los Angeles service area; this would suggest that 35% of the staff allocated to Metro should potentially be assigned to West Los Angeles. This would suggest that 35% of the suggested thirty-eight (38) professional planner positions should potentially be assigned to the West Los Angeles construction services center or a total of thirteen (13) professional planner positions, with twenty-five (25) professional planner positions potentially remaining in Metro.

If the staff allocated to Major Projects were allocated based upon this suggested allocation of staff to these three construction service centers, then eight (8) of the seventeen (17) professional planner positions would potentially be allocated to the Metro construction services center, five (5) professional planner positions would potentially be allocated to the Valley construction services center, and four (4)

professional planner positions would potentially be allocated to the West Los Angeles construction services center.

The final potential allocation of these seventy-two professional planner positions to these three construction service centers would be as noted in the table below.

Construction Services Center	Number of Professional-Level Planner Positions Potentially
Metro	33
Valley (Van Nuys)	22
West Los Angeles	17
TOTAL	72

This allocation of professional-level planner positions is not designed to actually recommend the number of professional planner positions that should be allocated to each construction services center; the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should conduct that analysis and make that recommendation. The purpose of this analysis is to identify the potential number of positions in each construction services center so that a plan of organization can be developed to provide effective levels of supervision and management at each construction services center for the Department of City Planning.

The allocation of these professional planner positions to each of these construction service centers would suggest the following:

- **Valley Office.** A Principal Planner should be assigned to the Valley or Van Nuys office of Department of City Planning and two Senior City Planners. The two Senior City Planners would have a span of control of nine to ten City Planners, City Planning Associates, and Planning Assistants.
- **West Los Angeles Office.** A Principal Planner should be assigned to the West Los Angeles office of Department of City Planning and two Senior City Planners. The two Senior City Planners would have a span of control of seven City Planners, City Planning Associates, and Planning Assistants.

- **Metro Office.** A Principal Planner should be assigned to the Metro office of Department of City Planning and three Senior City Planners. The three Senior City Planners would have a span of control of nine to ten City Planners, City Planning Associates, and Planning Assistants.

A Principal Planner should also manage the Expedited Unit.

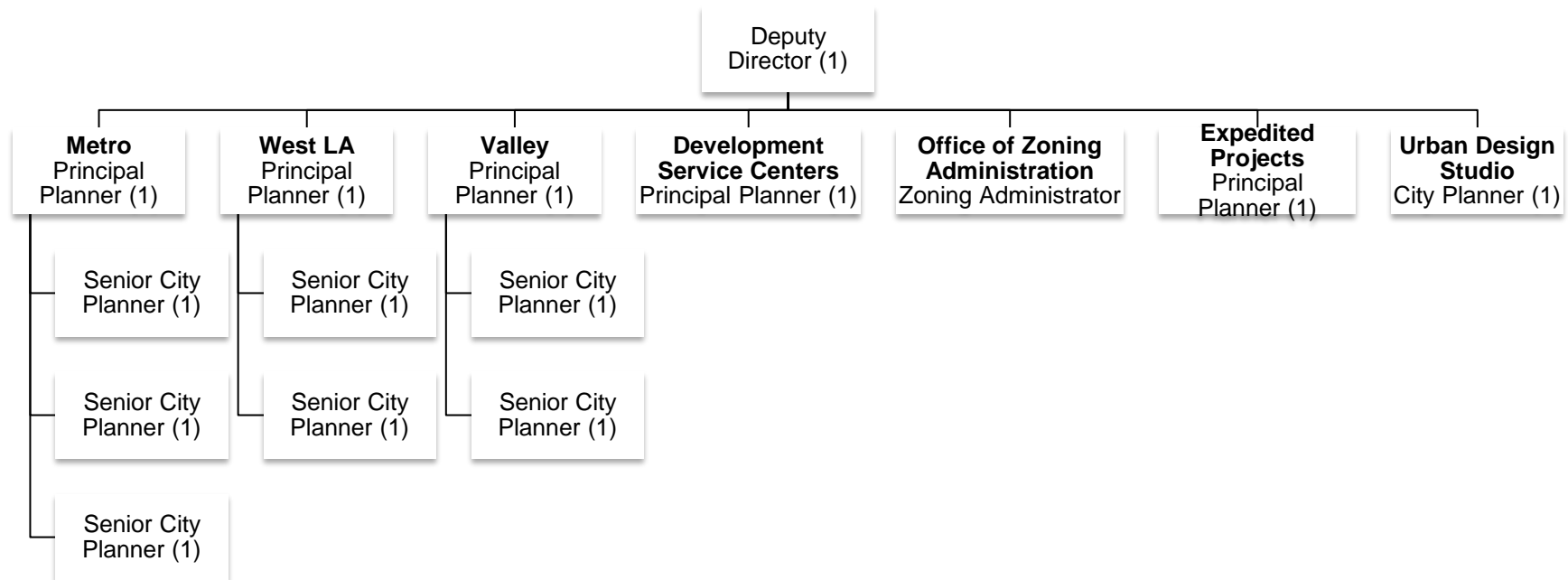
This would require an adjustment in the existing plan of organization of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning. The proposed plan of organization is presented in the exhibit following this page. Important points to note regarding the plan of organization are presented below.

- **The Matrix Consulting Group recommends that a Principal City Planner position be utilized to manage each of the organizational units within the existing Development Services Bureau.** The City's classification for Principal City Planner defines the position as "responsible for directing all phases of activity in a major division in the Planning Department which includes several groups of professional, technical, and clerical employees."
- **The Matrix Consulting Group recommends that a Senior City Planner be utilized as a section leader with spans of control of seven to ten professional planner positions.** The City's classification for Senior City Planner defines the position as "supervises the work of a large specialized section of the City Planning Department involved subdivision and parcel map, or zoning and public hearings work."
- **The Matrix Consulting Group recommends that the City Planner be utilized as a team leader.** While the span of control for a Senior City Planner might seem broad, the City's classification for City Planner defines the position as performing "responsible professional city planning work and exercising considerable independent judgment and discretion in supervising small groups of professional and sub professional City planning employees..." Clearly, this classification should be utilized to lead and participate in professional city planning work. The use of this position would mitigate the supervisory responsibilities of the Senior City Planner.
- **The Matrix Consulting Group recommends that the Associate Zoning Administrator supervising the development service centers for the Department of City Planning be reclassified as a Principal City Planner.** This position is not functioning as an Associate Zoning Administrator. The position is "responsible for directing all phases of activity in a major division in the Planning Department which includes several groups of professional, technical, and clerical employees." The position should be reclassified as a Principal City Planner.

in a particu

Exhibit 34

**Proposed Plan of Organization of the Development
Services Bureau, Department of City Planning**



To mitigate the costs associated with the implementation of this proposed plan of organization, the Matrix Consulting Group recommends that the Department of City Planning reallocate existing positions, including vacant positions.

- **A vacant Principal Planner position should be filled and an existing Principal Planner position used to manage four of the sections in which Principal Planners are recommended as managers.** This vacant Principal Planner position is position #228, and reports to the Deputy Director of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning. The filled Principal Planner position manages the Plan Implementation Division, and is position #186. The proposed plan of organization will require the addition of two (2) Principal Planner positions.
- **Existing Senior City Planner positions should be reallocated to meet the managerial requirements of this proposed plan of organization.** The Senior City Planner positions that should be reallocated include a Senior City Planner in the Office of Zoning Administration (position #220), a vacant Senior City Planner in the development services center (position #420), and a vacant Senior City Planner position in Expedited Processing (position #253). The vacant Senior City Planner position in the development services center is a one-over-one supervisory position and should be reallocated to the management of professional planners assigned to Neighborhood Projects. There are three existing Senior City Planner positions that could be utilized for management of professional planners assigned to Neighborhood Projects including positions #61, #356, and #197. The proposed plan of organization would require the addition of one (1) Senior City Planner position.

The ongoing cost impact of this proposed plan of organization is presented in the table below.

Recommendation	Annual Ongoing Cost Impact
Two Principal City Planner positions should be authorized for the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning to enable implementation of a geographically based plan of organization	\$400,000
A Senior City Planner position should be authorized for the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning to enable implementation of a geographically based plan of organization	\$150,000

Altogether, the proposed plan of organization would require the addition of two (2) Principal City Planner positions, and one (1) additional Senior City Planner position.

Recommendation #292: The Department of City Planning should assign the staff in the Development Services Bureau geographically at the Metro, Valley, and the proposed West Los Angeles office.

Recommendation #293: The Department of City Planning staff assigned to the Subdivision Section, the Zoning Administrator Section, and the Major Projects Section should be reassigned to the Metro and Valley Neighborhood Project sections, and also used to open a proposed West Los Angeles office.

Recommendation #294: The Associate Zoning Administrator supervising the construction service centers for the Department of City Planning should be reclassified as a Principal City Planner.

Recommendation #295: The vacant Principal Planner position that reports to the Deputy Director of the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should be utilized to supervise one of the three Neighborhood Projects offices at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #296: The Senior City Planner position in the Office of Zoning Administration should be reallocated to management of professional planners assigned to Neighborhood Projects at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #297: The vacant Senior City Planner in the construction services center should be reallocated to management of professional planners assigned to Neighborhood Projects at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #298: The vacant Senior City Planner position in Expedited Processing should be reallocated to management of professional planners assigned to Neighborhood Projects at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.

Recommendation #299: Two Principal City Planner positions should be authorized for the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning to enable implementation of a geographically based plan of organization.

Recommendation #300: A Senior City Planner position should be authorized for the Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning to enable implementation of a geographically based plan of organization.

Recommendation #301: The Development Services Bureau, Department of City Planning should conduct a staffing and workload analysis to determine the appropriate distribution of professional-level planner positions at the Metro, Valley, or West Los Angeles offices of the Department of City Planning.

3. THE CITY SHOULD CLARIFY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE OWNERSHIP OF ITS CORE PERMIT PROCESSES.

When cities begin improving their development services processes, the natural tendency is for them to do it within silos, within specific permit processes. Cities don't necessarily improve processes that cross divisions and departments.

However, permit processes must often be reengineered this way to improve the customer's experience.

If the City of Los Angeles is to successfully reengineer its permit processes, it must first establish responsibility – at the executive level – for ownership of these processes - the discretionary review process, the building permit process, and the engineering permit process – as these processes cross division and departmental boundaries.

Such ownership does not exist right now; no one single executive is responsible for the ownership of any one of these three processes – as these processes cross division and departmental boundaries except the Office of the Mayor. It is not possible for the Office of the Mayor to continuously intervene in these three processes; that responsibility needs to be “pushed down” to the General Manager level of the City organization and institutionalized.

Why is this important?

There are numerous examples in City departments in which the customer must navigate the development services process on his or her own. One example is the requirements for a customer to obtain clearances for building permits. In this instance, a customer may have to obtain as many as 127 clearances (e.g., bicycle corral, driveway

locations, CEQA review for historic resources, front yard and parking lot landscaping, etc.) from as many as 18 different City departments and outside agencies (e.g., Airports, California Occupational Safety and Health Administration, City Planning, Community Redevelopment, Cultural Affairs, Fire, Housing, etc.). The customer is required to navigate this process, rather than the City navigating that process on behalf of the customer.

A process owner, in this example, should resolve that problem, make the City easier to do business with, and redesign the clearance process so that the City resolves these clearances, not the customer.

The City should designate responsibility – at the executive level – for ownership of the discretionary review process, the building permit process, and the engineering permit process – as these processes cross the departmental boundaries. This executive must exert influence across departmental boundaries on behalf of the customer. This would require three “process owners” – one for each of these three processes.

A process owner should be a City executive (e.g., a General Manager) with end-to-end responsibility for one of these three processes (e.g., building permit plan checking) across departmental-boundaries. These executives must have authority and responsibility for the design and redesign of these processes, the management of these processes across departmental boundaries, and the development of metrics and measurement systems to assess the success of these processes in serving the customer. The process owners are supposed to be highly placed, respected, and connected to make things happen.

The role of the process owner ranges from the mundane to the critical, and include the responsibilities noted below.

- **Developing a process vision, process strategy, and process objectives.** The process owner should set a citywide vision for the process, and performance objectives for the end-to-end process (e.g., 1st plan check for new commercial / industrial shell buildings or commercial / industrial shell - tenant improvements shall be completed within 28 calendar days). The process owner should meet with other departmental managers that participate in the process (e.g., Fire Department, Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, etc.) to communicate the strategy and objectives and obtain feedback. The process owner is responsible for ensuring that the process strategy for achieving these objectives fulfills the City's overall strategy for development services.
- **Develop and implement process improvement initiatives.** Working with inter-departmental teams of employees (involving employees from all of the affected departments), the process owner would:
 - Gather and apply external best practices to the process;
 - Develop and lead the process improvement teams to identify high-impact, cross department process improvement initiatives;
 - Collect ideas regarding how to improve the processes from these inter-departmental teams of employees;
 - Prioritize the initiatives;
 - Validate the merit of the process improvement initiatives; and
 - Ensure that departmental employees from all of the affected departments are part of the planning and implementation process.

There are examples of these initiatives elsewhere. Ventura County, for example, assembled a team of subject matter experts from twelve departments to identify opportunities to streamline the discretionary review process through a lean six sigma process. At a 5-day event, these subject matter experts:

- Evaluated the procedures that guided the County's discretionary reviews;
- Developed flow charts to show the sequence of events in the process (e.g., movement of information, materials and actions);
- Developed a plan of implementation; and

- Developed agreed-upon metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of the new processes, and provide feedback to make further adjustments.

This initiative resulted in significant reductions in the amount of calendar days required by Ventura County to achieve a complete discretionary review application, and to process a discretionary review from submittal to decision. The Director of Planning indicated that this effort fostered teamwork across County departments, enhanced communication among County departments, resulted in updated and more efficient procedures, an updated CEQA Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, the provision of CEQA training for County staff, a reduction of the number of forms an applicant has to complete, and the streamlining of fee payments by the applicant.

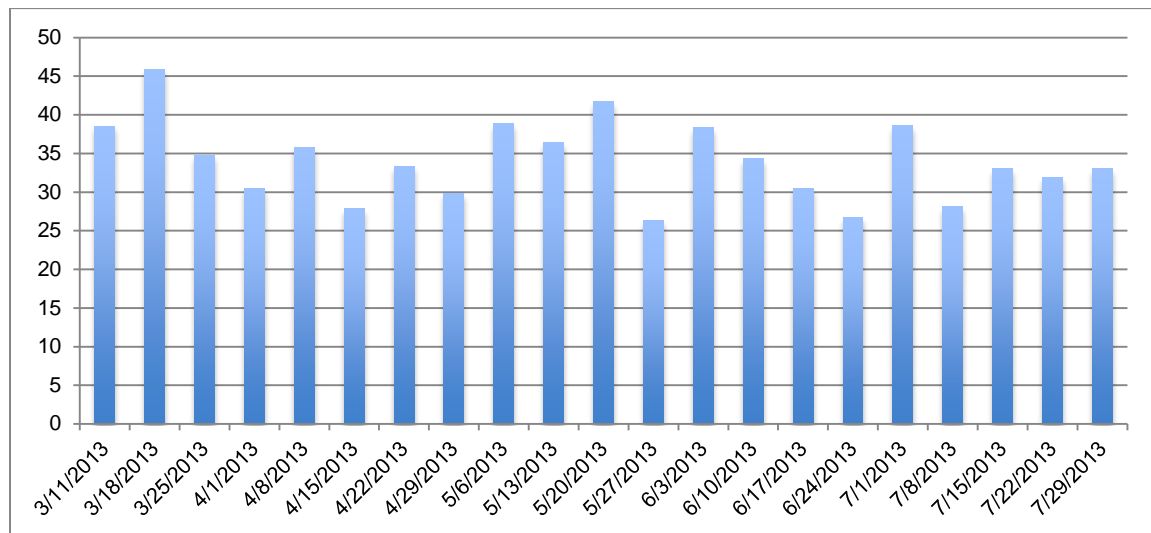
- **Process performance management and measurement.** The process owner:

- Monitors the implementation of process improvement initiatives,
- Defines metrics, such as cycle time goals, in concert with the other departments involved in the process, and then
- Collects and reports actual cycle time process performance.

A “scoreboard” or “dashboard,” on a publicly accessible web site, should be utilized to post the cycle time objectives and the actual results, with the results updated not less than monthly, by the process owner.

The City of Chicago, for example, publishes building permit plan check cycle time (in terms of calendar days) to its web site on a weekly basis. The example below presents actual data regarding the cycle time to issue standard (or regular) plan check permits on a week-by-week basis. The City has adopted a cycle time goal of 50 calendar days. In the week of July 29, it was issuing standard plan review program permits in 33.03 calendar days, for example.

Calendar Days Required by the City of Chicago to Issue a
Standard Plan Review Program Building Permit in 2013



Ultimately, the process owner is responsible for identifying performance gaps (instances in which actual cycle time does not meet metrics), and launching remedial initiatives accordingly. This could include across department initiatives. The process owner is also responsible for resolving inter-departmental conflicts on the process that he / she owns, and intervening appropriately.

- **The creation and maintenance of development services process documentation so that the processes can be standardized and service delivery is consistent from customer to customer.** Some organizations have run into trouble by allowing too much variation in how a development service process is performed with each department having their own particular way of doing business. It is up to the process owner to lead an effort to document the process so that it can be standardized end-to-end. The process owner should ensure that these processes are documented, and that gaps in policies and procedures are remediated.

For the City to succeed in establishing process owners, the City should ensure that the following criteria are met.

- The Office of the Mayor will need to develop a formal citywide written policy and procedure regarding process ownership and the authority of the process owner to act on behalf of the Office of the Mayor with a clear, final decision-maker role.
- The process owner should be an executive, a General Manager, who possesses the necessary organizational clout and authority to act on behalf of the Office of the Mayor, not just negotiate.

- The process owner should work with inter-departmental teams to improve and streamline the process, monitor the service levels delivered by the process (e.g., cycle time), and manage the process in terms of the levels of service provided (e.g., cycle time).
- The process owner must possess an in-depth understanding of the activities and challenges of the process, with knowledge of upstream and downstream activities, and not just the processes within their own department.

Making the change to a “process owner” will not be easy or simple given the “turf” issues involved. The transition typically takes 12 to 18 months. There are three essential steps that the City must take to enhance the likelihood of success of establishing process owners within the City.

- **The Office of the Mayor must closely monitor implementation soon after the adoption of the policy, particularly decisions involving the senior management team across departmental boundaries.** City staff will be watching the actions and behaviors of the senior executive team; consequently, the senior executive team must demonstrate (walk the talk) the new behavior and expectations. In essence, representatives of the Office of the Mayor should be at the table for the first twelve to eighteen months after adoption of process ownership to ensure successful adoption.
- **The Office of the Mayor and the General Managers that are the process owners must continuously demonstrate commitment to process ownership.** This should be accomplished through senior executive platforms, management and supervisory meetings within their departments, meetings across departmental boundaries, etc.
- **The City should solicit ongoing feedback during the first 12 to 18 months of implementation of the process ownership policy and procedure** regarding what is and is not working well, and “tweak” the process owner policy and procedure as necessary.

This will likely be a difficult change for the City, but the reward is improved execution and performance for the discretionary review process, the building permit process, and the engineering permit process.

Recommendation #302: The Office of the Mayor should develop a formal citywide written policy and procedure regarding process ownership for the discretionary review process, the building permit process, and the engineering permit process

and the authority of the process owner to act on behalf of the Office of the Mayor with a clear, final decision-maker role.

Recommendation #303: The policy and procedure developed by the Office of the Mayor should designate the process owner as an executive, a General Manager, who possesses the necessary organizational clout and authority to act on behalf of the Office of the Mayor, not just negotiate.

Recommendation #304: The policy and procedure developed by the Office of the Mayor should assign responsibility to the process owner to work with inter-departmental teams to improve and streamline the process, monitor the service levels delivered by the process (e.g., cycle time), and manage the process in terms of the levels of service provided (e.g., cycle time).

Recommendation #305: The Office of the Mayor should closely monitor implementation for the first 12 to 18 months after adoption of the process ownership policy, particularly decisions involving the senior management team across departmental boundaries. In essence, representatives of the Office of the Mayor should be at the table for the first twelve to eighteen months after adoption of process ownership to ensure successful adoption.

Recommendation #306: The Office of the Mayor should solicit ongoing feedback during the first 12 to 18 months of implementation of the process ownership policy and procedure regarding what is and is not working well, and “tweak” the process owner policy and procedure as necessary.

4. THE CITY SHOULD OUTSOURCE PEAK PLAN CHECK WORKLOAD TO PREVENT THE DEVELOPMENT OF BACKLOGS IN THE PROCESSING OF PERMITS AND IN DISCRETIONARY REVIEW.

The Department of Building and Safety has a backlog in regular plan check workload. The Metro construction services center current backlog is 16 business days for regular plan checks and 8 business days for expedited plan checks. This means that a regular plan check will wait 16 business days before it is assigned for plan checking, while an expedited plan check will wait for 8 business days. This is not unusual; similar backlogs were observed in other development services functions in the City.

This is purely a function of the workload versus the resources necessary for plan checking of building permit plans. The Department of Building and Safety has already

filled a number of vacant plan check positions and begun the process for training of these staff. The filling of these positions required the approval of the City's vacant position review committee that approves the filling of vacant positions in the City (with the exception of the Police Department and Fire Department).

However, the City should take a number of steps to address peak workload including the filling of vacant positions.

The Department of Building and Safety is funded via special revenue fund. Any development services bureau or department whose services are funded via a special revenue fund should be authorized to immediately fill any vacant positions that are funded as part of the special revenue fund, and not require the approval of the City's vacant position review committee.

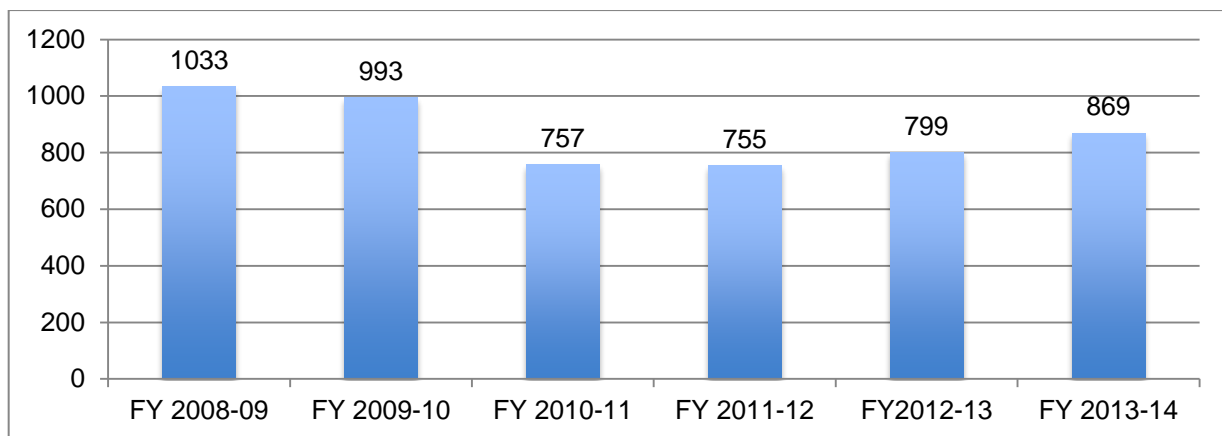
Secondly, these development service functions should initiate consulting contracts for the provision of development services (e.g., plan check, traffic mitigation studies, etc.). This is a common approach to service delivery used by cities, large and small. These development service functions should establish consulting contracts just to manage temporary peak workload and to temporarily respond to vacancies in positions, and NOT to replace City positions.

The City of San Jose, for example, has consulting contracts with eight contractors to provide on-call or as-needed building inspection, building plan check, fire plan check and current planning services for various fee-funded, private development projects. The City noted that it utilized these Planning, Building and Safety, and Fire peak staffing contracts to cover peak workloads during City staff vacancies and to help address high volumes of developmental activities. The City further noted that it has

continued to experience a steady increase in overall activity and has received a significant number of high profile, large projects. In addition to increased activity, the City continued to experience staffing challenges resulting from a high turnover rate in certain classifications. As new staff was hired, managers and supervisors were spending significant amounts of time training staff and less time working directly with customers. As a result, the City was not meeting all of its timeliness cycle time goals. The consulting contracts provided Planning, Building and Safety, and Fire with the flexibility needed to meet staffing gaps until permanent staffing can be hired and trained to meet customer demand.

The important point is these development service functions should manage to adopted cycle time goals for service delivery. If it cannot meet those goals, it should utilize consulting contractors for development services, temporarily.

The development service functions should not rely solely on its own staff for development services given the large variations in workload over time and the resulting employee impacts. As the chart below indicates, the extent of authorized regular positions for the Department of Building and Safety has decreased by almost 16% since fiscal year 2008-09.



This reduction in staffing occurred, in many instances, through layoffs. It would be preferable to layoff the consultants, and not employees.

Thirdly, the development service functions should explore alternative staffing arrangements in which part-time staff are utilized to meet these peak staffing workload demands.

Recommendation #307: Any development services bureau, division or department whose services are funded via a special revenue fund should be authorized to immediately fill any vacant positions that are funded as part of the special revenue fund, and not require the approval of the City's vacant position review committee.

Recommendation #308: The City should initiate contracts with consultants for peak development services plan check and permit workload in Planning, Building and Safety, Transportation, Engineering, and Fire. This should be used just to manage temporary peak workload and to temporarily respond to vacancies in positions.

Recommendation #309: The development service functions should explore alternative staffing arrangements in which part-time staff are utilized to meet these peak staffing workload demands.

5. OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS, AS OTHER CHALLENGES WITH DEVELOPMENT SERVICES ARE ADDRESSED, THE CITY SHOULD FUNCTIONALLY TRANSFER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO A NEW DEPARTMENT.

There is a lot of work to be done before the City of Los Angeles is ready to functionally transfer development services to a new department. This includes work in technology (*BuildLA*), co-location of development services staff in the City's construction service centers, streamlining of the City's core development service business practices and processes, enhancing its regulatory framework (e.g., *recode.la*, code enforcement, CEQA, etc.), and getting the employees within development services ready for the functional transfer.

Nonetheless, the City should functionally transfer development services when it has made substantive progress in this work. The basis for this recommendation is presented in the sections that follow.

(1) The Matrix Consulting Group Utilized a Number of Factors to Evaluate the Present Plan of Organization for Development Services.

The evaluative dimensions were categorized into six classifications with each having its own subset of evaluation criteria. These criteria were applied to assess whether one scenario compared more favorably to another. Specifically:

- **Organization and Structure** - The criteria for this dimension includes clarity in the lines of accountability, spans of control that were flat, and if like processes were grouped together more efficiently and effectively (functional cohesion);
- **Communication and Coordination** - The criteria for this dimension includes the number of handoffs / exchanges required, physical / virtual proximity importance, shared knowledge / understanding within departments and channel clarity (are there clear and consistent lines of communication);
- **Resource Utilization** - The criteria for this dimension includes total headcount comparison, administrative overhead, workload management distribution, process efficiency / standardization and resource sharing capacity;
- **Service Quality and Responsiveness** - The criteria for this dimension includes cycle times, stakeholder input / user friendliness, performance management, quality control / number of checks and balances and consistency of policy / procedure application;
- **Agility and Flexibility** - The criteria for this dimension includes the scalability to manage peaks and valleys and adaptability to offer cross-functional capabilities; and
- **Human Capital** - The criteria for this dimension includes enhanced career development opportunities, training occurrences and recruiting and retaining capabilities.

The application of these six evaluative dimensions led us to our findings on the strengths and weaknesses of the City's existing plan of organization for the delivery of development services by the City of Los Angeles and the development of the structural

alternative: the new Department that consolidates these development services. The following is a brief description of the alternatives used in the evaluation process:

- Scenario “A” - “As Is” Organization Structure – No change from the current organization as it exists today; and
- Scenario “B” - Fully integrate development services into a single, multi-purpose organization or Department.

As the analysis proceeded, the existing and the alternative structure were compared and contrasted one to another, within the framework of the evaluative dimensions. The purpose of this comparison was to understand the arguments for and against each structure (pros and cons) in terms of the evaluative dimensions. Then, based on this analysis, the relative attractiveness of each alternative could be objectively assessed, and a recommended plan of organization developed.

(2) Scenario “A” – The Existing Plan of Organization For Delivery of Development Services In the City of Los Angeles.

Currently, the City of Los Angeles has fragmented the delivery of development services among five different departments: the Department of Building and Safety, the Department of City Planning, the Fire Department, the Department of Public Works, and the Department of Transportation.

The organizational and operational findings and observations for the current “As-Is” state, Scenario “A”, are categorized within the previously cited six evaluative dimensions. The findings and observations regarding each of the six evaluative dimensions are presented below for the current “As-Is” state, Scenario “A”.

- **Organization and Structure.** Under the existing plan of organization, there is no single department that is accountable for the development services process as a whole, end-to-end. If a permit applicant has a problem, the only resource for the applicant lies within the Offices of the City Council or the Office of the Mayor. The problem with this “silo” approach to delivery of development services includes:

- Departments avoid taking responsibility for mistakes and problems since the development services process, as a whole, is “not my responsibility”;
- Departments do not understand the perspectives and technical work language used by their peers in other departments that provide development services;
- There is only a minimal sense of belonging to the larger City entity, the development services process as a whole, and its mission of customer service;
- Managers and employees in the five departments delivering development services only take care of themselves and their customers that are seeking permits from their departments, focusing on their own objectives without concern with how this focus impacts other departments;
- Effective communication and coordination between the five departments delivering development services is lacking;
- Resistance to change as there may be no real evidence that direct or indirect benefits will flow to anyone of the five departments delivering development services (there is concern only for the individual department, and not the development services process as a whole or the customer experience as a whole); and
- Opportunities for operational improvement that involve departmental collaboration are simply overlooked. It’s not within their operational focus to consider other departments.

Both the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety are responsible for administration of the City’s zoning code. The Department of City Planning is responsible for writing the zoning code including re:code.LA, administering and interpreting the zoning code for discretionary review applications, and responsible for plan checking building permit plans and applications for adherence to the zoning code. The Department of Building and Safety dedicates staff at the Metro construction service center to zoning (e.g., providing zoning information to the public, responding to requests for zoning information, providing zoning clearances for business license applications, etc.), and plan checks building permits for compliance with the zoning code. This fragmented responsibility is deeply ingrained in both departments; the Department of City Planning actually provides a link to the Department of Building and Safety for the zoning code manual and commentary.

In an development services organization comprised of “silos”, the loyalty is to the specialty, and progress in streamlining work methods for the end-to-end

development services process is limited since it must be negotiated among the five “silos”.

- **Communication and Coordination.** The number of handoffs / exchanges required in the existing development review process utilized the City of Los Angeles is extensive. In essence, the applicant must manage the process of obtaining clearances by the City’s departments for the building, discretionary, and engineering permit process. Examples are provided below.
 - In the tentative parcel and tract map process, for example, the applicant works with the departments to identify and resolve issues that are identified during those departments’ review. It is the applicant’s responsibility to work directly with these departments during the review process; the Department of City Planning does not coordinate this review on the applicant’s behalf.
 - This same challenge exists with building permits and the need to obtain “clearances” by departments other than the Department of Building and Safety; this is the applicant’s responsibility. The Department of Building and Safety does not coordinate the review of the building permit by other departments.
 - For B-permits issued by the Bureau of Engineering, the applicant is required to deliver plans to other bureaus or departments for plan checking such as the Bureau of Street Lighting. The Bureau of Engineering does not route the plans on behalf of the applicant.
 - Much of the staff allocated to development services are not co-located in the City’s construction service centers. For example:
 - The staff allocated to processing discretionary reviews in the Metro area by the Department of City Planning are located at City Hall, and not the Metro construction services center;
 - The staff allocated by the Department of Transportation to processing B-Permits are located at their central offices at 100 South Main Street, downtown, and not the Metro construction services center; and
 - While the Department of Building and Safety has established construction services centers in West Los Angeles, San Pedro, and South Los Angeles, other departments do not similarly staff these construction service centers.

There are problems with “message mixing” through a multi-department development services communication channel. The Matrix Consulting Group, in focus groups with applicants, heard specific concerns expressed about “message

mixing” in regards to the zoning code with problems of differing interpretations of the zoning code by the two departments.

The “silos” inevitably result in differences regarding the vision about development services and its customers. From these differences comes a profound depth of feelings about control.

- **Resource Utilization.** The spreading of development service functions across five different departments, not within a unified structure, limits the City’s ability to optimally leverage resources. Examples of the City’s inability to optimally leverage resourced are presented below.
 - The Department of City Planning has a Deputy Director for its Resource Management Bureau; the Department of Building and Safety has a Deputy Director for its Resource Management Bureau as well.
 - The Department of City Planning has a Director of Systems to manage its information technology systems; the Department of Building and Safety has a Director of Systems as well.
 - The Department of City Planning has a Condition Compliance and Abatement Unit; the Department of Building and Safety has a Code Enforcement Bureau.
 - The Department of City Planning has a Senior Management Analyst responsible for managing administrative services (e.g., contracts, payroll, accounting, etc.); the Department of Building and Safety has a Chief Management Analyst responsible for managing administrative functions (e.g., budget, accounting, record keeping, etc.).
 - The Department of Building and Safety has staff dedicated to the Internet Document Imaging System (IDIS). The Department has been utilizing document imaging for over ten years including back file conversion. The Department of City Planning is still reliant on hard copy files. This impacts customer service. For example, to plan check a final map at the Metro construction services center, the Department of City Planning must request the delivery of the appropriate discretionary review file with hard copy documents, and then review the file with the applicant to ensure that all conditions tied to final map have been met. This obviously does not occur on the same business day. The applicant must return to the Metro construction services center for a 2nd meeting to ensure that all conditions tied to final map have been met.
- **Service Quality and Responsiveness.** Overall, the cycle times for permits issued by the City of Los Angeles exceed metrics. In some instances, metrics are significantly exceeded. This results, in part, from the sequential nature of some of

the development processes, from illogical work methods for some processes, and from the lack of performance metrics. For example:

- A clearance by the Bureau of Engineering for a *Bureau of Engineering Processing Fee* (2,920 clearances) requires the applicant, at the Department of Building and Safety offices at 201 North Figueroa Street, to leave the 4th floor, go to the 3rd floor, pay the fee, and then return to the 4th floor, and get back in line.
- Solar photovoltaic permits, in the area served by Metro construction services center, are issued through the express permit center at the 1st floor of 201 North Figueroa Street. However, solar permits also require clearance by the Fire Department on the 3rd floor of 201 North Figueroa Street and the Department of Building and Safety's zoning counter on the 4th floor of 201 North Figueroa Street. The City and County of San Francisco is issuing these types of electrical permits, 4kW and less, on-line.
- The Bureau of Engineering requires an average of 25 calendar days to process and complete the B-Permit bond and fee estimate process, based upon information from the Bureau of Engineering's B-Permit information system. Other cities and counties use an altogether different process than does the City of Los Angeles. The cities of San Diego and San Jose, and the counties of San Diego and Orange begin their plan check process based upon engineering estimates of improvement costs developed by the applicant based upon unit cost data supplied by the City.
- The Department of City Planning routes a tentative tract map or parcel map to the Land Development Group, Bureau of Engineering, for plan checking. The Land Development Group, Bureau of Engineering, upon receipt of the referral, will calculate the necessary fees for the Group to conduct the plan check, prepare a fee letter for the applicant, and require the applicant to travel to the Group's offices at 201 North Figueroa Street to pay the fee.
- An applicant needing a Title 19 or Title 24 plan check or fire alarm plan check by the Fire Department at the Metro construction services center must obtain a ticket from the Q-Matic System on the 4th floor and then go to the Fire Department counter station located on the 3rd floor and wait for the Q- Matic number to be called for plan check. After the Fire Department completes the plan check, the Fire Department provides the applicant with the invoice and directs the applicant to pay the fees on the 4th floor. The applicant goes to the 4th floor to pay the Fire Department's fees. After paying the appropriate plan check fees, the applicant returns to the Fire Department on the 3rd floor. The Fire Department plan checker records

that the plan checks have been paid in the Department's Fire Schedule Information System (Firelog) system.

Applicants for development-related permits in the City of Los Angeles lack a single point of contact for resolution of issues for the discretionary review, the building permit, and the engineering permit. There are numerous examples in City departments in which the customer must navigate the development services process on his or her own.

Other cities use a case or project manager as the City's 'project manager' throughout project development from early design concept through final inspection. The provision of a single point of contact for resolution of issues for the discretionary review, the building permit, and the engineering permit is a prevailing practice.

- **Agility and Flexibility of the Organization.** The five departments responsible for development services in the City of Los Angeles lack the flexibility to manage peaks and valleys.

The City of San Jose has developed contracts with eight different consulting contractors to provide on-call or as-needed building inspection, building plan check, fire plan check and current planning services for various fee-funded, private development projects. The City noted that it utilized these Planning, Building and Safety, and Fire peak staffing contracts to cover peak workloads during City staff vacancies and to help address high volumes of developmental activities. The City was not meeting all of its timeliness cycle time goals. The peak staffing agreements developed by the City of San Jose provide Planning, Building and Safety, and Fire with the flexibility needed to meet staffing gaps until permanent staffing can be hired and trained to meet customer demand.

The ability to shift resources across the five departments to address shifts in workload and to balance workload is extremely difficult with five (5) different departments delivering development services.

- **Human Resources.** The fragmentation of development services among five different departments makes it extremely difficult to create a consistent organizational culture and operational philosophy, congruent with those of the Office of the Mayor and the City Council. There is little done to create a "community of development services practice" for personal growth and professional development. There is little done to encourage collaboration across departmental boundaries through personal interaction.

* * * * *

As the previous analysis indicates, there is and was a strong basis to fully transfer the City's development service functions in the five different departments to a new department. In fact, it is a common practice in other cities to functionally transfer development service functions to a new department (e.g., San Diego, Phoenix, San Antonio, Portland, San Jose, Long Beach, etc.).

(3) A New Department Should Be Established That Integrates Development Services After the City Has Addressed Streamlining of Business Processes, *BuildLA*, Co-Location, and the Cultural Alignment Of Development Service Functions.

The first exhibit presented at the end of this chapter presents the proposed plan of organization – Scenario “B” - for the new Department. Scenario “B” integrates the development services in the five departments into a single, unified structure to create a new Department.

This scenario offers several advantages over the current arrangement, not the least of these is the opportunity to optimize administrative overhead and associated costs. It is not, however, a perfect alternative. Size and diversity, as well as the sheer logistics of combining these diverse functions present challenges to implementing this alternative. The second exhibit presented at the end of this chapter outlines arguments for and against the establishment of a new Department. Important points to note regarding the proposed plan of organization are presented below.

- **The new Department would be managed by a departmental director with five bureaus:** Neighborhood Preservation (now entitled Code Enforcement), Policy Planning, Current Planning, Building Plan Check and Inspection, and Resource Management (or Administration).
- **The Neighborhood Preservation Bureau (now entitled Code Enforcement) would be a bureau in the new Department,** and would include the Condition Compliance and Abatement Unit of the Department of City Planning, and the Code Enforcement Bureau of the Department of Building and Safety.

- **The Policy Planning Bureau would be a bureau in the new Department**, but would remain unchanged in its current plan of organization. A Deputy Director would manage the Bureau. This bureau would provide the advanced planning for the City (e.g., updating Community Plans).
- **The Current Planning Bureau would be a bureau in the new Department**. A Deputy Director would manage the Bureau. The bureau would include the Transportation Planning and Development Services Unit (currently located in the Department of Transportation), and the other existing units of the Development Services Bureau of the Department of City Planning. The organizational relationship between the Department of Transportation and the new Department regarding the Transportation Planning and Development Services Unit would be sustained and clarified within a Memorandum of Agreement. As indicated in the previous chapter, the staff of Transportation Development Services – Metro and B-Permits in this Unit should be relocated to the Metro construction services center.
- **The Building Plan Check and Inspection Bureau would be a bureau in the department**. A Deputy Director would manage the Bureau. The Bureau would include building permit plan checking, building inspection, fire plan check; and engineering plan check (all of the Bureau of Engineering staff allocated to development services including B-permits, other permit plan check staff such as tract maps, parcel maps, planning case referrals, etc.). The organizational relationships for the Fire Department and Bureau of Engineering would be sustained and clarified within a Memorandum of Agreement between the new Department and the Fire Department and Bureau of Engineering.
- **Resource Management would be a bureau in the department**. A Deputy Director would manage the bureau. This bureau would include all aspects of the Resource Management Bureau of the Department of Building and Safety and the Resource Management Bureau of the Department of City Planning.

The functional transfer should not happen all at once. The transition to a new department should occur over a one to two year period. The functional transfer, however, should begin with the transfer of the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety to a new department. After the successful transition of this transfer, the other functions could be transferred to the new department.

This proposed plan of organization for the new Department includes one additional position: a General Manager.

This proposed plan of organization would propose the reduction of a number of positions through attrition. Altogether, thirteen (13) positions could be eliminated, through attrition, with the functional transfer, generating approximately \$1.7 million annually in salary and fringe benefit cost savings at the top step of the range.

Recommendation #310: The City should functionally transfer development services from five departments to a new Department including the Department of Building and Safety; the Department of City Planning; Fire Department; the Department of Transportation; and the Bureau of Engineering, Department of Public Works.

Recommendation #311: The functional transfer should only occur after business processes have been substantively streamlined, *BuildLA* has gone live, development services staff have been co-located, and the culture of the development services functions have been substantially aligned.

Recommendation #312: The functional transfer should not happen all at once. The transition to a new Department should occur over a one to two year period. The functional transfer, however, should begin with the transfer of the Department of City Planning and the Department of Building and Safety to a new department. After the successful transition of this transfer, other functions could be transferred to the new department.

Recommendation #313: The City should add a position to manage the new Department: a General Manager.

Recommendation #314: The City should eliminate, through attrition, thirteen (13) positions upon the functional transfer.

Recommendation #315: The new Department and the Fire Department, Department of Transportation, and the Fire Department should develop a Memorandum of Agreement to clarify the roles and relationships between the new Department and the staff transferred to the new Department from these other departments.

6. THE MISSION OF THE NEW DEPARTMENT SHOULD REFLECT ITS BROADER PURPOSE.

The peer cities, and other cities, that have functionally transferred development services to a new Department have adopted mission statements that reflect the full

range of development related purposes of these departments. Examples of these missions are provided below.

- **City of San Diego, California.** To provide healthy, safe, and livable neighborhoods and enhance San Diegans' quality of life through superior development, effective community planning, timely and effective management of development and compliance processes, and quality customer service.
- **City of San Jose, California.** To guide the physical change of San Jose to create and maintain a safe, healthy, attractive, and vital place to live and work.
- **City of Portland, Oregon.** The Bureau of Development Services promotes safety, livability and economic vitality through efficient and collaborative application of building and development codes.
- **City of Glendale, California.** Through ongoing dialogue with all segments of the community, the department captures the community's vision for its future quality of life and translates it into a well-coordinated, internally consistent, streamlined work program, according to the missions of the City Council, Successor Agency and Housing Authority.
- **City of Long Beach, California.** To make a difference in our community by building a dynamic, safe and sustainable city that honors its past and embraces the future.
- **Seattle, Washington.** We partner with the community to build and preserve a great city – safe and sustainable, diverse and healthy, energizing and supportive.
- **Irvine, California.** To ensure that community values are reflected in the physical environment; to focus on planning and implementing standards that maintain the City's high quality of life as the City continues to develop and mature; and to encourage a balance of inviting and safe residential communities, vibrant commercial centers, and varied manufacturing and employment opportunities.

The Matrix Consulting Group does not recommend that the Matrix Consulting Group develop the mission of the new Department.

That should, in fact, be one of the first tasks of the new Department. The new Department should bring together executives, supervisors, and line employees, representing all of the Bureaus in the department, to develop a mission statement for the new Department.

The mission statement for the new Department should not be a dumb statement, like a Hallmark card, consisting of jargony quasi-poetry.

The mission statement for the new Department needs to convey clearly what the new Department is trying to do – a clear and compelling purpose that serves as a unifying focal point of effort, to foster team spirit.

The new Department should facilitate the development of the mission statement in a series of workshops. The workshops should be designed not only to develop this mission statement, but also to facilitate the participation of employees at all levels and all disciplines working together collaboratively.

Recommendation #316: The new Department should bring together executives, supervisors, and line employees, representing all of the Bureaus in the Department, to develop a mission statement for the new Department, shortly after the formation of the new Department. The Matrix Consulting Group should not develop the mission for the new Department.

7. THE NEW DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE ENTITLED AS THE PLANNING, BUILDING AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT.

Each of the seven cities included in the peer survey that have functionally transferred development services to a new Department have chosen different departmental names. These names are presented below.

- **Glendale, California** has entitled its department as the Community Development Department.
- **Portland, Oregon** has entitled its department as the Development Services Department. It should be noted that Portland maintains a separate Department for long-range planning entitled the Planning and Sustainability Department, which includes all of the long-range planning functions, and which places a new emphasis on planning for sustainability.
- **San Diego, California** has entitled its department as the Development Services Department. It is, however, in the process of placing its long-range planning services in a separate department: the Planning and Neighborhood Restoration Department.

- **Phoenix, Arizona** has entitled its department as the Planning and Development Department.
- **San Jose, California** has entitled its department as the Planning, Building and Code Enforcement Department.
- **Long Beach, California** has entitled its department as the Development Services Department.
- **Dallas, Texas** has entitled its department as the Sustainable Development and Construction Department.

Seattle, Washington, which has also functionally transferred development services to one department, has entitled the new department as the Planning and Development Department.

There is certainly little in uniformity in departmental titles except the title of Development Services Department.

The Matrix Consulting Group does not recommend that the City entitle this new Department as the Development Services Department. In several Neighborhood Council meetings, the reaction to that departmental name was negative; the departmental name implied that the department served developers.

The title of the new Department should reflect its primary functions: Planning, Building and Safety. Or the title of the new Department should be nondescript and reflect, in general, the primary function of the new Department: Planning, Building and Safety.

Recommendation #317: The title of the new Department should be the Planning, Building and Safety Department.

Exhibit 35

**Proposed Organizational Structure
for the New Department**

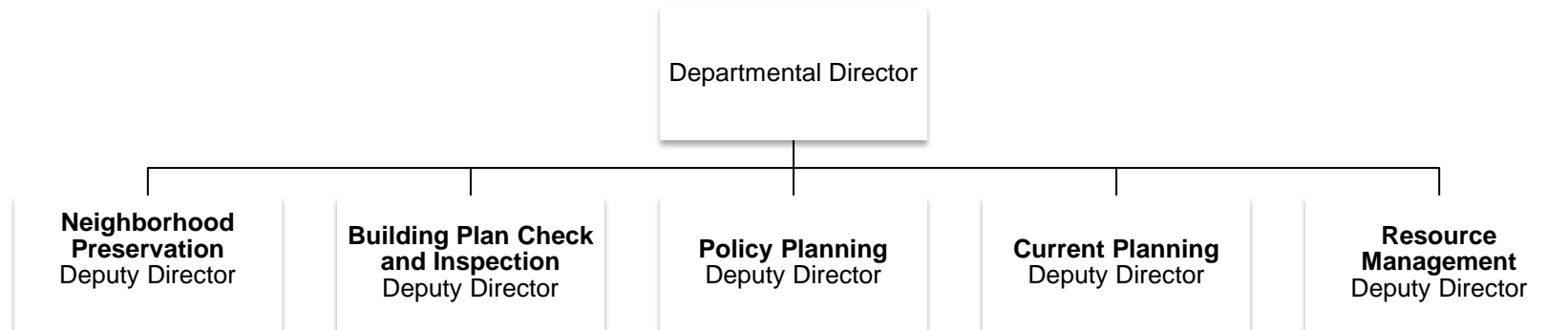


Exhibit 36 (1)

**Arguments For and Against
Functional Transfer of Development Services
Functions to a New Department**

Evaluative Dimensions	Arguments For	Arguments Against
Organization & Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combining functions into single department will facilitate cooperation, reduce “finger pointing” and creates shared ownership of results. Accountability will be increased as items can “fall between the cracks” of the organization. Accountability for the delivery of development services is clarified. “Unity of command” principal is emphasized, with a single accountable leader responsible for the bulk of the city’s day-to-day development services related activities. Concentration of core competencies and strong organizational cohesion of highly related functions. Personnel performing similar and highly interdependent functions will be grouped together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization could become excessively hierarchical and difficult to effectively control. The large diversity of functionally distinct (though related) units requires very active management and leadership oversight. Management and supervisory spans of control would be broadened. Intangible “transition costs” in the form of resistance to change, organizational adaptation, short-term productivity losses can be expected. Potential for blurred cross-departmental accountability for shared projects and processes exists. Consolidation of development services personnel into the new Department could be difficult from historical perspectives.

Exhibit 36 (2)

Evaluative Dimensions	Arguments For	Arguments Against
Communication & Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With all development services related personnel linked within the same organization, management of permit processes will be more closely aligned with the City's philosophy. • Improved ability to coordinate the totality of the City's development review process. • Opportunities for "message mixing" through the communications channel are minimized as contrasted to a multi-department scenario. • Same-level or peer-to-peer communication and coordination is enhanced by removal of departmental boundaries. • Assigning responsibility for who does what should be more easily communicated e.g., code enforcement. • Cross-functional knowledge sharing is easier within a single departmental structure. • Fewer handoffs will occur between departments, with like functions being together. Enhanced ability to create, share and use knowledge. • Some dynamic tension between the theoretical (building permit plan check) and practical (building inspection) is maintained, promoting healthy discussion and debate with these functions reporting to one manager. • Ability to communicate and coordinate closely related, common functions is enhanced as contrasted to the current organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in managing knowledge effectively due to the diversity of skills within the department. • Potential for stifling differing views, dissent, debate, etc. in an effort to conform to the accepted departmental "doctrine." • Time lags and lapses between engineering and inspection are more likely than under a unified structure (e.g., building inspection and building plan review do not report to the same manager).

Exhibit 36 (3)

Evaluative Dimensions	Arguments For	Arguments Against
Resource Utilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimized administrative cost / overhead can be expected. By combining the departments, the city will be able to reduce costs through attrition. This is the result of eliminating, through attrition, administrative managerial and supervisory positions. Sharing of scarce or specialized resources, including people and equipment, is more easily accommodated within the context of a single set of priorities and a single department. Improved ability to re-allocate resources to meet shifting workload demands. Standardization of common administrative and permit practices, processes and procedures is facilitated. The ability to set and enforce project priorities for the development services process – end-to-end - should improve. Enhanced ability to manage development workload – end-to-end - more effectively as compared to the current state with the ability to shift resources based upon workload. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care will have to be taken that as the knowledge base is broadened, specialized skills are not lost. Cost accounting systems must be unified (e.g., a common chart of accounts).

Exhibit 36 (4)

Evaluative Dimensions	Arguments For	Arguments Against
Service Quality & Responsiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential to create a single organizational point of contact for the majority of the City's development / permit services is enhanced. • The development of comprehensive measures of performance for closely related functions could be enhanced. • Opportunities to avoid conflicting and / or incompatible responses to service issues are enhanced. • Single department accountability for a larger number of service quality and responsiveness issues • Improved, more comprehensive development services quality assurance. • Enhanced clarity of roles and responsibilities from a citizen / applicant perspective. • Development review cycle times should improve with the concentration of resources dedicated to development services. • Consistent application of development services standards, judgment, etc. across all disciplines is facilitated. • Adoption of a common technology platform (BuildLA) for development services in each discipline is easier than in the current model. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain issues may take longer to resolve, as an appropriate starting place will not be as clear to external customers in this larger department. • Some need to provide for the physical relocation of certain units will be required to achieve desired synergies. • Depriving the Department of Transportation of Development Services Unit risks diminished service levels related to transportation planning.
Agility & Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scalability (the ability to grow and/or shrink in response to workload / customer demands) is improved given the capability to shift resources. • Rapid cross-unit resource shifting and workload balancing is made easier. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision making tends to be slower in larger, more layered and hierarchical organizations • Over time, larger organizations tend to develop an "inertia" that makes the future introduction of change more difficult than in smaller organizations.

Exhibit 36 (5)

Evaluative Dimensions	Arguments For	Arguments Against
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced opportunity to create and sustain a consistent organizational culture and operational philosophy, congruent with those of the executive leadership and policy makers, is enhanced. Increased multi-disciplinary training opportunities exist within the unified development services structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidation of historically separate entities can engender significant change resistance, fear, uncertainty and resistance. These issues will require explicit identification, acknowledgement and planning. Executive level skills required to lead a large and diverse department are substantial and scarce. Transportation engineers, civil engineers, and fire protection engineers will feel separated from their profession without explicit identification, acknowledgement and planning to mitigate. Creation of a new and consistent departmental culture and ethic, aligned with those of the City, is likely to be difficult. Reduces the “communities of practice,” especially for the Transportation engineers, civil engineers, and fire protection engineers, potentially reducing opportunities for personal growth and professional development.

14. ANALYSIS OF COST RECOVERY FOR DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

This chapter presents an analysis of cost recovery and revenue for development services in those instances in which issues were apparent.

A summary of recommendations within this chapter is presented in the exhibit following this page.

1. THE CITY SHOULD AMEND ITS USER FEE POLICY FOR THE PROVISION OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES.

The City of Los Angeles has adopted revenue policies within its Financial Policies; the most current version dates from April 2005. That policy states that the “City will charge fees for services where such an approach is permissible by state and federal law, and where a group of beneficiaries who can pay such fees is identifiable.” The revenue policy further states that “sufficient user charges and fees shall be pursued and levied to support the full cost of operations for which fees are charged, including all operating (direct and indirect) and capital costs. All user charges and fees for the City shall be monitored annually to determine that rates are adequate and each source is maximized. If fees or charges are not set at 100 percent full cost recovery, the Mayor and Council will specifically recognize the subsidy and shall take specific action to appropriate the necessary funds to subsidize the fee for service.”

Exhibit 37

**Summary of Recommendations
Contained within Chapter 14**

Rec. #	Recommendation
318	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should expand the revenue policy within the City's financial policies as it pertains to user fees, for the consideration of the City Council.
319	The policy developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer should require that, generally, cost recovery for development services should be 100% with the exception of appeals. However, in charging full cost recovery levels, the City needs to clearly establish and articulate metrics for its performance to ensure that there is "value for cost."
320	Upon adoption of the expanded revenue policy by the City Council, the Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the Department of City Planning to evaluate cost recovery, including direct and indirect costs, and return to the City Council with recommendations regarding appropriate levels of cost recovery for the services provided by the Department.
321	The City should fund the delivery of development services delivered by the Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, and Fire Department through special revenue funds.
322	The use of special revenue funds for the delivery of development services by the Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, and Fire Department should <u>not</u> be based on the presumption that user fees and service charges should fund all of the services.
323	The revenue policy for the City should be expanded to include a goal of maintaining a diversified and stable revenue stream to provide a greater reliance on user fee service charges to reduce reliance on property tax revenues.
324	The revenue policy for the City should be expanded to require that managers for special revenue funds prepare long-term financial plans for the consideration of the Office of the City Administrative Officer.
325	The Bureau of Engineering should migrate towards a flat fee for the processing of B-permits.
326	A comprehensive user fee study should be conducted for the development service functions in the Bureau of Engineering, Fire Department and the Department of Transportation.
327	The City of Los Angeles should conduct a nexus study as the basis for establishing a fire facilities fee. A nexus study is an analysis of the need to establish a fire facilities fee based upon an analysis of the population growth of the City of Los Angeles and the associated capital facilities associated with growth.
328	The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop for consideration of the City Council a user fee waiver / reduction policy. The purpose of the policy should be to provide a uniform and consistent guideline for receiving, reviewing, considering and processing requests for fee waivers or reductions.
329	These requests for fee waivers or reductions should be received, reviewed, considered and processed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer, with recommendations developed for consideration of the City Council.

The intent, in part, of a revenue policy should be to provide guidelines to staff for establishing and maintaining a comprehensive user fee schedule and structure. The policy should document the process for establishing and updating fees, and the extent to which fees should / should not cover the costs of the services provided, as recommended by the *Government Finance Officers Association*, the *National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting*, and the *Federal Government Office of Management and Budget (Circular A-87)*.

The *Government Finance Officers Association* and *National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting* recommend that local governments calculate the full cost of the different services they provide. For instance, the *Government Finance Officers Association* recommends the following factors be considered when setting user fees.

- Provide specific requirements for frequency of fee review;
- Identify how fees are set and what factors are considered in setting the fees;
- Develop a cost recovery principle which will allow revenue enhancement through full cost accounting, which will maintain equity considerations in regard to provision of government services;
- State the local governments intent to set fees to recover costs of providing services;
- Identify what full cost recovery rates include (e.g., direct and indirect costs);
- Provide a basis for instances in which the local government chooses to set a fee lower than the full cost of a service (e.g., appeals);
- Set a frequency for updating cost of services (e.g., in-depth user fee studies should be undertaken every five years with annual adjustments based on certain economic inflators or changes in budget allocations);
- Allow stakeholder input regarding updates of user fees. The *Government Finance Officers Association* recommends that stakeholders be given an opportunity to provide input as part of the discussion of the proposed fees, and the schedule of fees should be easily available to the public.

The Office of the City Administrative Officer should amend the revenue policy, as it pertains to user fees, for the consideration of the City Council. That policy should include:

- A definition of terms;
- Requirements for annual fee increase (e.g., user fees will be increased each July 1 to keep pace with increases in the City' s costs, and the increase should be calculated based on changes in the preceding December Consumer Price Index [Bureau of Labor Statistics, Los Angeles Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers] in those years in which a comprehensive user fee study is not conducted);
- Applicability of the policy (e.g., the policy applies to any City department with user fees and charges for service);
- The rationale for determining the extent of cost recovery (e.g., full cost recovery or less than full cost recovery);
- How cost recovery will be calculated (e.g., City departments with user fees shall determine cost recovery rates based on direct and indirect costs for all fees with indirect costs to include allocated central support service costs such as information technology, risk management, fleet management, etc.);
- That revenue should not exceed the related reasonable total cost of providing the related fee-based services;
- The frequency for conducting comprehensive user fee studies (e.g., it is planned that a comprehensive user fee study should be conducted at least every five years to assure that user fees reflect the City' s underlying costs); and
- The public input process in setting user fees and the availability of user fee information to the public.

The rationale for determining the extent of cost recovery should consider a number of factors as noted below.³⁰

- **Community-wide versus special benefit.** The level of user fee cost recovery should consider the community-wide versus special service nature of the program or activity. The use of general fund revenues is appropriate for community-wide services, while user fees are appropriate for services that are of special benefit to easily identified individuals or groups.

³⁰ City of San Luis Obispo, Budget and Fiscal Policies

- **Service recipient versus service driver.** After considering community-wide versus the special benefits of the service, the concept of service recipient versus service driver should also be considered. For example, it could be argued that the applicant is not the beneficiary of the City's development service efforts: the community is the primary beneficiary. However, the applicant is the driver of development service costs, and as such, cost recovery from the applicant is appropriate.
- **Consistency with City public policies and objectives.** City policies and City Council goals focused on long-term improvements to the community may impact cost recovery as fees can be used to change community behaviors, promote certain activities or provide funding for pursuit of specific community goals (e.g., health and safety, environmental stewardship, renewable energy, economic development).
- **Effect of pricing on the demand for services (elasticity).** Pricing of services can significantly impact demand for those services. At full cost recovery, for example, the City is providing services for which there is a genuine market and genuine demand. Conversely, high cost recovery may negatively impact lower income groups and this can work against public policy outcomes if the services are specifically designed to serve particular groups.
- **Discounted rates and surcharges.** Rates may be discounted to accommodate lower income groups or groups who are the target of the service, such as senior citizens or residents. Higher rates are considered appropriate for non - residents to further reduce general fund subsidization of services.
- **Feasibility of collection and recovery.** Although it may be determined that a high level of cost recovery may be appropriate for specific services, it may be impractical or too costly to establish a system to identify and charge the user. Accordingly, the feasibility of assessing and collecting charges should also be considered in developing user fees.

In considering the extent of cost recovery (full cost recovery versus less than full cost recovery), the City should consider factors regarding low cost recovery and factors regarding higher (or full) cost recovery.³¹ Factors to consider for lower cost recovery include the following:

- There is no intended relationship between the amount paid and the benefit received (almost all "social service" programs fall into this category as it is expected that one group will subsidize another);

³¹ City of San Luis Obispo, Budget and Fiscal Policies

- Collecting the fees is not cost-effective or will significantly impact the efficient delivery of the service;
- There is no intent to limit the use of (or entitlement to) the service (again, most "social service" programs fit into this category, as do public safety [police and fire] emergency response services, and access to neighborhood and community parks);
- The service is non-recurring, generally delivered on a "peak demand" or emergency basis, cannot reasonably be planned for on an individual basis, and is not readily available from a private sector source (public safety services also fall into this category); and
- Collecting fees would discourage compliance with regulatory requirements and adherence is primarily self-identified, and as such, failure to comply would not be readily detected by the City (small-scale licenses and permits might fall into this category).

Factors to consider for higher or full cost recovery include the following:³²

- The service is similar to services provided through the private sector;
- Other private or public sector alternatives could or do exist for the delivery of the service;
- For demand management purposes (managing the extent of services provided), it is intended that there be a direct relationship between the amount paid and the level and cost of the service received;
- The use of the service is specifically discouraged (e.g., police responses to false alarms might fall into this category);
- The service is regulatory in nature, and voluntary compliance is not expected to be the primary method of detecting failure to meet regulatory requirements. Building permit plan checks and discretionary review fees for projects would fall into this category.

Generally, cost recovery for development services should be 100% with the exception of appeals or services that benefit the community and permit applicants (e.g., updating Community Plans). However, in charging high cost recovery levels, the City

³² City of San Luis Obispo, Budget and Fiscal Policies

needs to clearly establish and articulate metrics for its performance to ensure that there is “value for cost.”

Recommendation #318: The Office of the City Administrative Officer should expand the revenue policy within the City’s financial policies as it pertains to user fees, for the consideration of the City Council.

Recommendation #319: The policy developed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer should require that, generally, cost recovery for development services should be 100% with the exception of appeals. However, in charging full cost recovery levels, the City needs to clearly establish and articulate metrics for its performance to ensure that there is “value for cost.”

2. THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING SHOULD ENHANCE ITS COST RECOVERY FOR PROCESSING DISCRETIONARY REVIEW PERMITS.

The Matrix Consulting Group completed a fee analysis and study for the Department of City Planning in February 2009. The study found that “the cumulative results of this User Fee Study identified an overall subsidy provided to the fee payer, where the annual revenue collected for all fee related services is, on average, less than the estimated true cost of providing those services. From a detailed, fee-by-fee perspective, the results demonstrate that while some charges for services are set at levels higher than the true costs of providing services, other charges for service are generating much less than their estimated true cost. However, as shown in the following table, the net result of the Study found an overall undercharge for services by the Department of City Planning for planning services.”

Projected Annual Revenue at Current Fee / Deposit	Projected Annual Revenue at Full Cost per Unit	Annual Revenue Surplus / (Subsidy)	Full Cost Recovery Rate
\$ 7,149,000	\$17,938,000	\$(10,789,000)	40%

The study noted that the Department was recovering approximately 40% of the estimated full cost of providing most fee related services.

The Matrix Consulting Group recommended that the Department “try to recover as much of the service costs as feasible.

The Department has increased its fees, but is still relying on the general fund to provide funding for a number of fee-related services or services that support fee-related services. Examples of these challenges are presented below.

- **The general fund is supporting three staff allocated to Case Management in the Department of Building and Safety: a City Planner, City Planning Associate, and a Planning Assistant.** The direct annual cost of these positions in terms of annual salaries and fringe benefits is \$281,700. The Department of City Planning’s case processing fund, not the general fund, should fund these positions.
- **The general fund is supporting \$2.4 million in direct costs, in terms of annual salaries and fringe benefits, for citywide planning, code studies, Community Plan updates, and Policy Planning Bureau managerial costs.** The Long Range Planning Fund is only supporting a little less than \$900,000 in costs, in terms of annual salaries and fringe benefits, for Community Plan updates, the zoning code rewrite, GIS support for the Community Plan updates and zoning code rewrite, and application support for the zoning code rewrite. In essence, the general fund is supporting 72% of the long range planning costs of the Department of City Planning. The Long Range Planning Fund should be supporting a higher proportion of these costs, albeit not 100%.
- **The Department of City Planning’s case processing fund is supporting a little less than \$400,000 in direct costs, in terms of annual salaries and fringe benefits, for historic preservation overlay zone creation and maintenance.** The general fund is supporting almost \$190,000 for the Office of Historic Resources for an Arts Manager I and an Architect in direct costs, in terms of annual salaries and fringe benefits.
- **The general fund is supporting \$1.2 million in direct costs, in terms of annual salaries and fringe benefits, for department-wide support staff.** These represent department-wide support in the Administrative Services Bureau, including automated records, duplicating, fiscal management payroll, etc. The case processing funds is supporting approximately \$800,000 in department-wide support or approximately 40% of department-wide support costs.

These represent fiscal choices that should be made in the context of the user fee policy adopted by the City Council.

Recommendation #320: Upon adoption of the expanded revenue policy by the City Council, the Office of the City Administrative Officer should work with the Department of City Planning to evaluate cost recovery, including direct and indirect costs, and return to the City Council with recommendations regarding appropriate levels of cost recovery for the services provided by the Department.

3. THE CITY SHOULD ESTABLISH SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, BUREAU OF ENGINEERING, AND FIRE DEPARTMENT.

A number of other cities have established development services special revenue funds or enterprise funds to support the costs of development services. These include cities such as Phoenix, Arizona; San Diego, California; and Portland, Oregon. These special revenue funds consist of revenue sources that are earmarked for specific purposes. The City's special revenue fund for the Department of Building and Safety is an example.

The use of a special revenue fund for development services does not imply that all of development services is funded exclusively by fees. In San Diego, for example, the general fund provides \$9.3 million in support for City Planning (long-range planning) and \$6.6 million for Neighborhood Code Compliance. The City's Development Services Department recovers 80% of its costs through revenue.

The value of the development and adoption of special revenue funds for development services is to encourage departmental managers to develop diverse sources of funding for service delivery other than the general fund.

The *Governmental Finance Officers Association*, in its publication "Building a Financially Resilient Government through Long-Term Financial Planning", recommended that cities maintain a diversity of funds to reduce reliance on the general

fund.³³ The revenue policy for the City should be expanded to include a goal of maintaining a diversified and stable revenue stream to provide a greater reliance on user fee service charges to reduce reliance on property tax revenues.

In addition, the *Governmental Finance Officers Association*, in its publication “Building a Financially Resilient Government through Long-Term Financial Planning” encouraged a decentralization of financial planning to compel managers to manage their cost and revenue structures. The special revenue funds for development services should be utilized to compel managers in development services to think more strategically about their cost and their revenue structure, rather than relying solely on the efforts of the Office of City Administrative Officer. In fact, the revenue policy for the City should be expanded to require that managers for special revenue funds prepare long-term financial plans for the consideration of the Office of the City Administrative Officer.

Decentralizing responsibility for long-term financial planning to the managers for these special revenue funds enhances their understanding of the financial condition of their special revenue funds, and, therefore, their perception of the need for a solid, long-term financial strategy.

Recommendation #321: The City should fund the delivery of development services delivered by the Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, and Fire Department through special revenue funds.

Recommendation #322: The use of special revenue funds for the delivery of development services by the Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, and Fire Department should not be based on the presumption that user fees and service charges should fund all of the services.

³³ Government Finance Officers Association, *Building a Financially Resilient Government through Long-Term Financial Planning*, 2013.

Recommendation #323: The revenue policy for the City should be expanded to include a goal of maintaining a diversified and stable revenue stream to provide a greater reliance on user fee service charges to reduce reliance on property tax revenues.

Recommendation #324: The revenue policy for the City should be expanded to require that managers for special revenue funds prepare long-term financial plans for the consideration of the Office of the City Administrative Officer.

4. THE CITY SHOULD CONDUCT USER FEE STUDIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT SERVICE FUNCTIONS OF THE BUREAU OF ENGINEERING, FIRE DEPARTMENT, AND THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

It does not appear that these three organizational units - the Bureau of Engineering, the Fire Department, and the Department of Transportation – have conducted formal user fee studies to determine appropriate levels of user fees.

The Bureau of Engineering relies on time and material charges based upon their actual costs. It is our observation that while the logic of a time and material fee is sound, it is often difficult to administer. Many California cities have not been successful with time and material fee structures. The Bureau of Engineering should migrate towards a flat fee for the processing of B-permits. This fee should be based upon a comprehensive user fee study conducted of the development service functions in the Bureau of Engineering.

In addition, the comprehensive user fee study should include the Fire Department and the Department of Transportation, for their development service functions only.

Recommendation #325: The Bureau of Engineering should migrate towards a flat fee for the processing of B-permits.

Recommendation #326: A comprehensive user fee study should be conducted for the development service functions in the Bureau of Engineering, Fire Department and the Department of Transportation.

5. THE CITY SHOULD ADOPT A FIRE FACILITIES IMPACT FEE.

The City of Los Angeles does not have a fire facilities impact fee. This is unusual. Many other cities in California (e.g., Anaheim, San Diego, Sacramento, etc.) charge a fire facilities fee to pay for capital facilities associated with growth. This includes new and relocated fire stations, the upgrade of facilities to expand their original capacity or functionality to accommodate growth, expanded training facilities, additional apparatus to accommodate growth, additional equipment related to communication, and the rehabilitation or replacement of fire facilities associated with growth.

The basis for levying a fire facilities fee was established by the State's *Mitigation Fee Act* (the *Act*) in Assembly Bill 1600 and subsequent amendments. The *Act* is contained in *California Government Code* Section 66000 *et seq.* and establishes requirements for the imposition and administration of impact fee programs. The *Act* became law in January 1989 and requires local governments to document the five findings explained in the sections below when adopting an impact fee:

- Identify the purpose of the fee;
- Identify the use to which the fee is to be put: if the use is financing public facilities, the facilities shall be identified;
- Determine how there is a reasonable relationship between the fee's use and the type of development project on which the fee is imposed;
- Determine how there is a reasonable relationship between the need for the public facility and the type of development project on which the fee is imposed; and
- Determine how there is a reasonable relationship between the amount of the fee and the cost of the public facility or portion of the public facility attributable to the development on which the fee is imposed.

There are obvious fire facility needs. The average age of the City's fire stations is 62 years. One fire station is 74 years old. These stations will need to be upgraded and rehabilitated to accommodate growth. Indeed, the Regional Transportation Plan prepared by the *Southern California Association of Governments* projected a population of 4,320,000 by 2035.³⁴ The State Department of Finance estimated that the City of Los Angeles had a population of approximately 3,864,000. The projections by the *Southern California Association of Governments* represent an increase in population for Los Angeles of 456,000.

The City cannot just levy a fire facilities fee without first conducting a nexus study. That is where the City should start; it should conduct a nexus study as the basis for establishing a fire facilities fee. A nexus study is an analysis of the need to establish a fire facilities fee based upon an analysis of the population growth of the City of Los Angeles and the associated capital facilities requirements for the Fire Department to respond, effectively, to that growth.

Recommendation #327: The City of Los Angeles should conduct a nexus study as the basis for establishing a fire facilities fee. A nexus study is an analysis of the need to establish a fire facilities fee based upon an analysis of the population growth of the City of Los Angeles and the associated capital facilities associated with growth.

6. THE CITY SHOULD DEVELOP AND ADOPT A FEE-WAIVER POLICY AND PROCEDURE.

From time-to-time, the City Council waives or reduces user fees for development services. As the functions assigned to development services move towards an approach that funds these services through special revenue funds, the reduction or waiver of these user fees are likely to result in negative impacts (e.g., an inability to fund

³⁴ Southern California Association of Governments, Regional Transportation Plan: 2012-2035, April 2012

responsive levels of service due to an inability to provide requisite levels of staffing to provide these levels of service).

The fundamental principle of the City's user fee policies and procedures should be that user fees should be utilized to finance those City services that provide a direct benefit(s) to specific users and that user fees should be set to recover the full cost of those services to the extent that there is no conflict with City policy objectives and other legislative requirements.

The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop for consideration of the City Council a user fee waiver / reduction policy. The purpose of the policy should be to provide a uniform and consistent guideline for receiving, reviewing, considering and processing requests for fee waivers or reductions.

The City has established a user fee schedule detailing fees for development processing fees for various governmental services. During the course of normal City operations, various groups may request waivers or reductions of user fees. A comprehensive policy on user fee waivers or reductions is needed to establish consistent criteria to consider waivers or reductions and increase the efficiency of processing and handling of the requests.

The Matrix Consulting Group recommends that waiving of user fees, in whole or in part, should be considered to ensure that identifiable vulnerable groups are not excluded from using a particular user fee service. Waivers or reductions should be considered where:

- Groups of individuals without sufficient income to pay the full amount of the user fee would otherwise be denied the privilege of consuming the service;
- Granting relief from full cost recovery promotes or advances economic or social benefits, specific City policy goals and objectives (e.g., supporting non-profit

organizations in the development of projects or activities with clear societal benefits; and

- Legislation or City policy requires the protection of identifiable vulnerable groups.

These requests for fee waivers or reductions should be received, reviewed, considered and processed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer, with recommendations developed for consideration of the City Council. This should include recommendations for denials of fee waivers or reductions by the Office of the City Administrative Officer for consideration of the City Council. The recommendations by the Office of the City Administrative Officer should include:

- **Criteria for Eligibility** – eligibility criteria can be by target groups or by type of service. Target groups can be those needing services that have strong societal benefits or those included for 'merit reasons' (e.g. low income).
- **Criteria Weight** – it is necessary to have a scale along which the eligibility of the criteria can be determined. For example, if low income is one of the criteria, the range that constitutes low income should be clearly stated.
- **Financial Impact of the Waiver** – waiver of fees represent a potential loss of revenues to the City. It is possible that the recipient of a fee waiver can pay some or part of the user fees, but not the full amount. Whether the fees will be waived in full or there will be a partial waiving of a portion of the fee and the financial impact of the waiver on the City's operating budget should be stated in the report.
- **Period for which the Waiver is Applicable** – the report should state if the waiver is a one- time only or the period for which the waiver is applicable. Waivers that are not one-time request should be reassessed on a yearly basis unless circumstances warrant a more frequent review.
- **Justification for the Waiver** – the report must state full details of the reasons for waiving the fees and how it will benefit the City, and the cost of granting the waiver, and other relevant information that will facilitate City Council's decision-making.

The ultimate goal of any fee waiver or exemption system is to improve equity in access to services, promote or advance City policy objectives, and to provide assistance to community groups and not-for-profit organizations whose programs and

services provide societal benefits that enhances the quality of life for residents of the City.

Recommendation #328: The Office of the City Administrative Officer should develop for consideration of the City Council a user fee waiver / reduction policy. The purpose of the policy should be to provide a uniform and consistent guideline for receiving, reviewing, considering and processing requests for fee waivers or reductions.

Recommendation #329: These requests for fee waivers or reductions should be received, reviewed, considered and processed by the Office of the City Administrative Officer, with recommendations developed for consideration of the City Council.