

Department Name: Building Services
Division Name: Economic Development Division

Mission Statement: “Teaming with the Spokane community to ensure excellence in building and life safety”

Customer: The design and development community as well as all citizens who occupy buildings in Spokane with the expectation that their life, health, and safety will be preserved.

Product/Services provided: 1.) Facilitating new construction and redevelopment by providing: a) exceptional customer service delivery; b) timely review of construction plans by highly technical staff; 3) Responsive and consistent inspection service

SWOT:

Strengths: Extensive technical knowledge and expertise; turn-Around-Times for plan review extremely competitive at State and Regional level; established relationships with the design and development community; “Same-Day” response for inspection requests.

Weaknesses: Currently lacking engineering expertise in review section; only control a portion of the plan review process; limited web presence and ‘learning products’ for customer use; document management limitations

Opportunities: New permit system will result in increased transparency; ‘Real time’ information attributes of permit system; increase the role and visibility of the Building Advisory Board; improve outreach and communication with customers.

Threats: Employee/customer acceptance of new permit system; little to no ownership of entire plan review process; lack of incentive to improve customer experience; cyclical economic development (potential downturn).

Critical Success Factors: 1.) aggressive implementation of Accela Automation Permit System, 2.) consistent application and enforcement of the adopted building code, 3.) clear communication with all users of our processes, 4.) efficient and predictable plan review turn-around-time.

Departmental Strategies:

GOAL 1: Implement Enhancements to Accela Automation Permit System

1. Accela 6.4 upgrade will provide citizen access enhancements including on-line permitting capability and inspection scheduling: By August 2007
2. Outreach at trade professional & homebuilders meetings: By Sept/Oct 2007
3. Communicate change via revamped and updated website: BY Sept 2007
4. Accela System informational utility bill mailings: By Sept 2007
5. Accela Automation to be self-hosted by MIS: By August/Sept 2007

GOAL 2: Align all department functions towards a customer-first attitude

1. Recruit and fill newly budgeted positions in Building Department – Includes Deputy Building Official, Professional Plan Reviewer and inspectors:
2. Implement “Response/Promise Date” program to establish quality metrics for the building department to measure responsiveness and ensure predictability for our customers: By September 2007
3. Identify key customer value issues through an annual Voice of the Customer survey: By Fall 2007
4. Work with human resources to develop and implement a customer service training program for employees responsible for customer interaction: By Sept/Oct2007
5. Institutionalize, improve and evaluate the Permit Process Advisory Board: By Fall 2007
6. Elevate Permit Clerk position (currently Clerk III’s) to Permit Technician position in order to compensate this key customer service position commensurate to duties and to retain highly trained and capable employees: By September/October 2007

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GOAL 3: Expand the role of Plan Review Staff to assume increased ownership over projects in order to decrease processing time

1. Plan Review staff to track "Turn-Around-Time" for projects under their review until Accela Automation reporting functionality is available: By August 2007
2. Increase the number of "Over-the Counter" plan reviews for tenant improvement projects with a goal of conducting 35 commercial reviews per month and track residential "Over-the Counter" reviews currently being reviewed and permitted: By September 2007
3. Fill vacant Professional Plans Examiner position as it is a critical component to becoming a "Best in Class" Building Department: By September 2007

GOAL 4: Conduct Comprehensive Permit Fee Study

1. The Comprehensive Permit Fee Study has been initiated and is being conducted by the Financial Consulting Solutions Group (FCS): By study completion by October 2007
2. Primary purpose is to identify the "full cost of service" associated with permit fees
3. Identify current cost recovery levels for the Building Department as well as other City Departments that conduct project reviews routed as part of building permit applications:
4. Determine whether fee adjustments are needed or desired:

