

Mayor's Development Task Force								
February 2015								
Category	Sub Category	Concerns	Initiatives	Resources Needed	Timeline	Additional Questions / Comments	Priority	
Process and Procedure Challenges	Permit Payment	Delays caused with permit payment process	Expand options for on-line payments; "Expedite" line for quick service/payment	Staff time	2 months	Requires the collection of information before fee is paid. Customer should be aware of risk of delays for incomplete information.	Low	
		A) Payment of fees causing delays	Request: Plan Review fees paid in advance, especially on large-scale projects. Don't always know full cost when applying. Causes time delays. Start with flat fee	Staff time	6 months	Flat fees create disparities and other consequences - need to balance priorities.	Low	
	Fee Fatigue	B) Too many complicated and costly fees	Request: The cost of developing larger and more complicated tracks. All fees associated with infrastructure reduce room for profit.	Staff time	6 months	Flat fees create disparities and other consequences - need to balance priorities.	Low	
	Permit Processing and Timeliness of Work	Too many rounds of submitting and resubmitting	Work to develop a structured preliminary review process designed to filter out speculative inquiries from real projects.	?Possibly need additional staff depending on demand for service		Done (pending fee adoption)	Service may compete with services provided by code consultants and design professionals.	High
			Organize and improve on-line checklists; standardize across departments how comments are communicated and responded to		Staff time	In process - 3 months to complete	Could require coordination with website improvements	High
			Re-evaluate plan submittal requirements (can we simplify what is needed for review?)		Staff time	6-12 months	Less info on the front end requires more responsibility on the design later. Is community willing to accept responsibility?	Medium
			Provide regular training & updates to design professionals on requirements, changes, new policies, etc.		\$10,000 per year	2-4 months	Survey community to understand what they are interested in and would find valuable.	Medium
			Implement an auditing/oversight program to improve consistency & thoroughness		Could require one new high level position (\$100K)	6 months	May be challenging to find individual broadly familiar with all disciplines. Auditing can also cause time delays.	High
			Lengthy water closeout approval process.	Provide a check list at pre-construction outlining the requirements.	Staff time	Done.		
		Predictable turnaround times	With some enhancements to the system we will better be able to report and project timelines for review and overall turn around.	Part of Accela Phase II - \$200K project	In process - 6-12 months to complete (coordinated with larger Accela project)	Multiple strategies	High	
	Permit Retrieval	Unknown issues (i.e. outstanding permits)	Implement processes and reports for closing expired permits.	Part of Accela Phase II - \$200K project	Underway. 5 months. Requires review with Council Committee.	3 areas of focus, 1) Database development, 2) Establishing policies, 3) Enforcement	Low	
	Permit Requirements	Unexpected/unknown additional requirements (i.e. Green issues,etc)	Pre-assistance program, Fund Ombudsman, Add staff at front counter	\$100K	In process - new "Review Specialist" position created to help customers at time of application	Ombudsman option is part of a larger policy discussion	Medium	
Education	Need for Internal Education	Provide better instruction to volunteer commissioners; Review selection process	Improve Communication of expectations to volunteers (meetings, retreats, training)	\$10K + staff time	3-6 months	Multi-departmental effort - requires broad participation	Low	
	Need for External Education	Lack of understanding in general public on building code and permitting process	Develop education & outreach efforts	\$10K + staff time	6-12 months (currently working on electronic distribution of valuable info)	May want to survey community as to what they are most interested in.	Low	
Communication	Communication to Public	Lack of communication to public on policy and standards	Update Website; review options for broadcasting info electronically	\$10K + staff time	4-6 months		Low	
	Lack of communication between Departments and Services	Inter-departmental confusion and lack of communication	Initiate "Consistency Meetings" between departments	Staff time	2 months to establish, then on-going	Requires support and participation from other departments	Medium	
			Evaluate best practices around the country	None	4 months		High	
			Improve existing permit system to push notifications to all departments when action is needed.	Part of Accela Phase II - \$200K project	4 months		Medium	
	Provide technical and customer service training for staff	\$10K to accelerate	On-going		Medium			

Communication (Continued)	Lack of communication between Departments and Services	Cumbersome final inspection process	Set up meeting with stakeholders & DOT representatives to discuss improved coordination	Part of Accela Phase II - \$200K project	Study in process - 6 months to implement once study is complete	Inspection process is complicated and requires multiple steps and involves many different parties. Solution will need to meet basic needs and requirements for different functions.	Medium
		Disconnect between Transportation and DOT	Set up meeting with MSD representatives to better understand potential delays and what the COA can do to minimize	Staff Time	2 months		Low
		Delays on MSD reviews		Staff Time	2 months	City of Asheville coordinates with MSD but has no control over the turn around times or other delays.	Low

Culture	How to Empower and Inform Staff	Converting "no" to "yes"	Allow staff to specialize in preferred focus areas (stick with what you know)	Staff time	In trial	Implemented 2 trade specialization	Medium
			Develop an appeal process for both staff and customers.	Staff time	In progress - 2 months to complete	Informally done - need to follow up with formalizing through an SOP and share with staff	High
			Provide technical and customer service training for staff	\$10K	6-12 months		Medium
		Loss of institutional knowledge	Develop a plan for succession training	Staff time + HR assistance	Done		High
			Better document decisions and findings for reference/case examples	Staff time	3-4 months to address current need, then on-going		High
			Develop plan to retain existing staff.	Staff time + HR assistance	Underway	To some degree, employee retirement and turnover is inevitable and to be expected. There are also benefits to adding new, fresh perspectives, skills and talents.	High

Customer Service	Digital Submission	Inability to submit plans digitally	Research and review vendor & phasing options	Staff time + IT assistance	In process - 2-3 months to complete	Could begin with accepting revisions digitally	Medium
			Develop policy and staff + customer training	Consultant services	6-12 months	Very important - must be done BEFORE launch	Medium
			Implement	\$45K + annual maintenance fees	6-12 months		Medium
	Staffing	DSD not being open on Fridays	Review practices in other cities	Staff time	1-2 months		Low
			Survey community for hours/services needed	Staff time	1-2 months	Have received complaints re: early morning inspections being too early.	Medium
			Assess demand and resources needed	Staff time	2-3 months		High
			Develop a plan for change management for staff	Staff time	In process	Will need to seek input from staff and how this impacts them. Minimize risk of further employee turnover.	High
		Wasted Time in Line	Lobby Management System with Specialized Queues and Remote registratoin	\$6,030 plus \$4,530 Annual Maintenance Fee	2 months		Medium
		Cannot get TCO on Fridays	Open for business on Fridays	Uncertain - may balance	(contingent on opening on Fridays)	Requires participation from other departments.	Medium
		High Vacancy Rate	Hire more staff	\$100K	3-6 months	Not enough staff to keep up with volume creating back log and delays	High
	Credit Card Processing	Can't use credit card at Water Department	Change check payments to credit card	None	Done	Some payments still require checks for various reasons that can be explained	Low
	Permit System	Features not working properly	Restructure permit system to have one Building/Fire #, one Site # and to bring Water into the system with a third #.	Part of Accela Phase II - \$200K project	One year +/- to restructure		High
			Improve the tracking of information on-line. Will require tutorials/education.	Part of Accela Phase II - \$200K project	3-4 months - timed with restructure.	The tracking information in the former system (HTE) could be misleading (e.g. Project shown as "REC" indicated that project was "received" in the system but was not actually in "review"). The new system can be designed to show all stages.	Medium