



**Development** CITY OF AUSTIN  
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

*Building a Better Austin Together*

**Progress Report**  
**February 23, 2016**

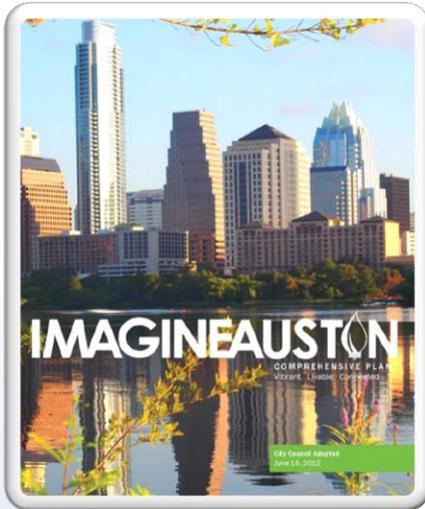
# Overview

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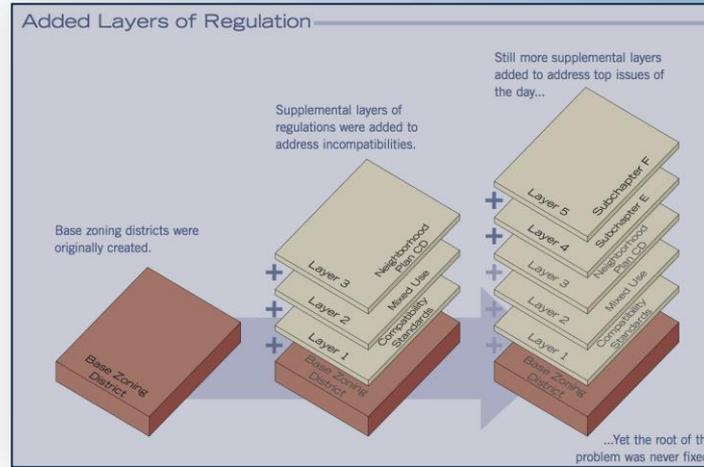
- Building Blocks: Imagine Austin, Code Analysis, Zucker Analysis
- Two-Year Action Plan
- Progress-to-Date
  - Customer Service
  - Technology
  - Coordinated Plan Reviews
- On the Horizon
- Next Steps



# Building Blocks



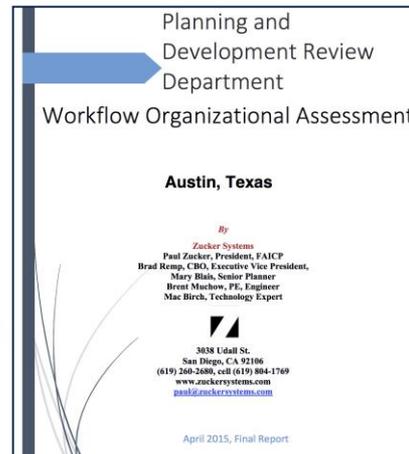
Completed 2012



Code Analysis 2014

**Code Approach Alternatives & Annotated Outlines**  
Austin Land Development Code Update

Completed 2014



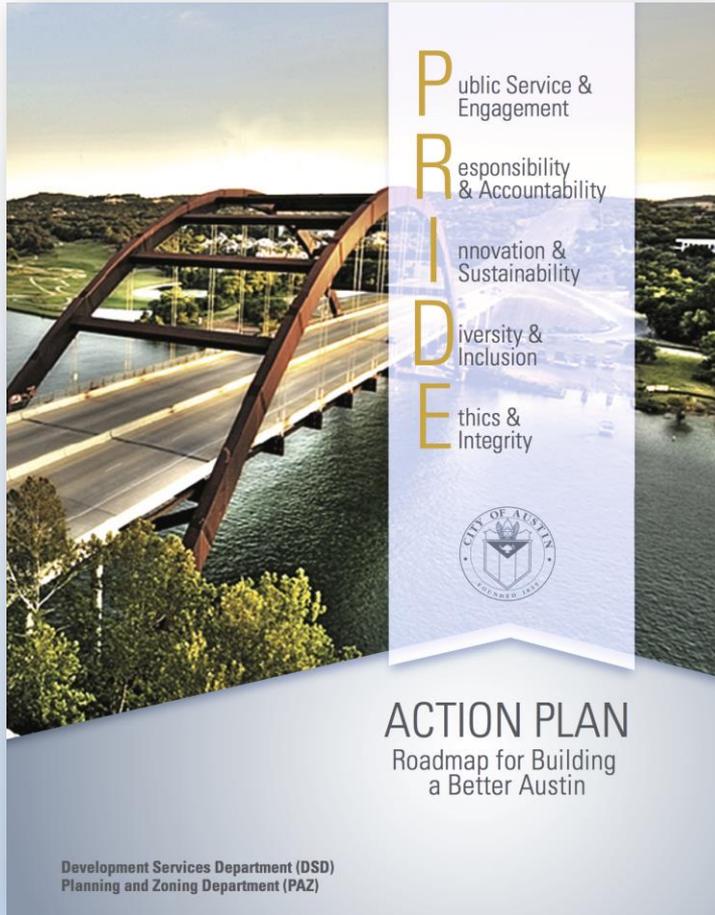
Completed 2015



Underway



# Two-Year Action Plan



## Focused on:

- Customer service (wait times, plan review times, quality, consistency)
- Investment in Employees
- Technology
- Coordinated plan reviews

## Success metrics:

- Defines what success will look like
- Adjustments can be made when we receive new information



# Progress-to-Date



# Customer Service

## Internal Facing for Employees

- Redefined department vision/mission, standards for customer service
- Integrated expectations into Success Strategy Performance Reviews
- Developed New Employee Orientation training
- Started department-wide mandatory customer service training as part of City Manager's department-wide initiative
- Developing department-specific policies and procedures



**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

We care about our community, our environment, and the vibrancy of Austin.

Photo credit: Michael Knox

We help our customers navigate the development process by being knowledgeable, accessible, responsive, fair, consistent, flexible, creative, and informative.

TEAMWORK	RESPECT	INTEGRITY	QUALITY
We share a commitment to our relationship with each other, to our work, and to the team.	We value differences of opinion, background, perspective and approach.	We trust one another's character and competence.	We ensure that we are knowledgeable about our area.
We commit to communicating and getting back to each other in a timely manner.	We show empathy for one another's work and workload and situations.	We are honest with each other.	We always check for accuracy.
We share information when we have it and no one should have to ask for it.	We consciously listen to each other and our customers.	We always act in a fair manner.	We embrace creativity.
We are mindful of and share our workload.	We approach our communication for mutual understanding.	We have the courage to do the right thing.	We are committed to safety.
We are a better team when we have fun.		We are transparent in what we do and say.	We focus on quality not quantity.
We help others when they need our help.			We respect our customers' time.
We share information with each other, both the good and bad, so we can learn from each other.			We respond in a timely manner.
			We are willing to learn and apply our new learning.



# Customer Service

## External Facing for Customers

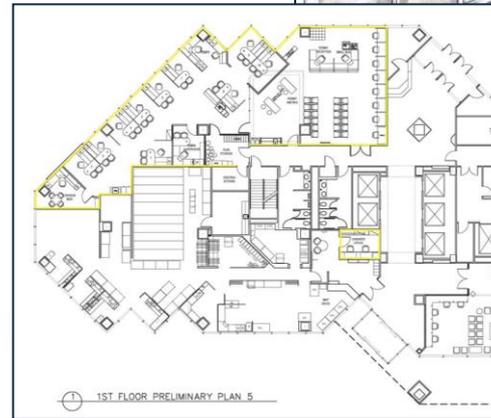
- Developing interactive web portal (BazaarVoice) to assist small businesses with the development process
- Implementing alternate notification process for sound permit applications to reduce the permit costs for music venues
- Contracting with a third-party to support on-time residential/commercial plan reviews



# Customer Service

## Customer Experience

- Hiring new positions for Land Use Review, Commercial Plan Review, Building Inspections, Customer Call Center, Development Assistance Center, and Support Services
- Began construction to improve customer wait area in Permit Center



# Customer Service

## Investment in Employees

- Revamped Reward and Recognition Program to be based on City's P.R.I.D.E. values
- Initiating a program for supporting certifications, licensures, and continuing education credits
- Reprogramming existing space to accommodate new positions and improve space utilization
- Contracted with Austin Community College for customized technical training
- Developing a mentorship program



# Customer Service

## Community Outreach

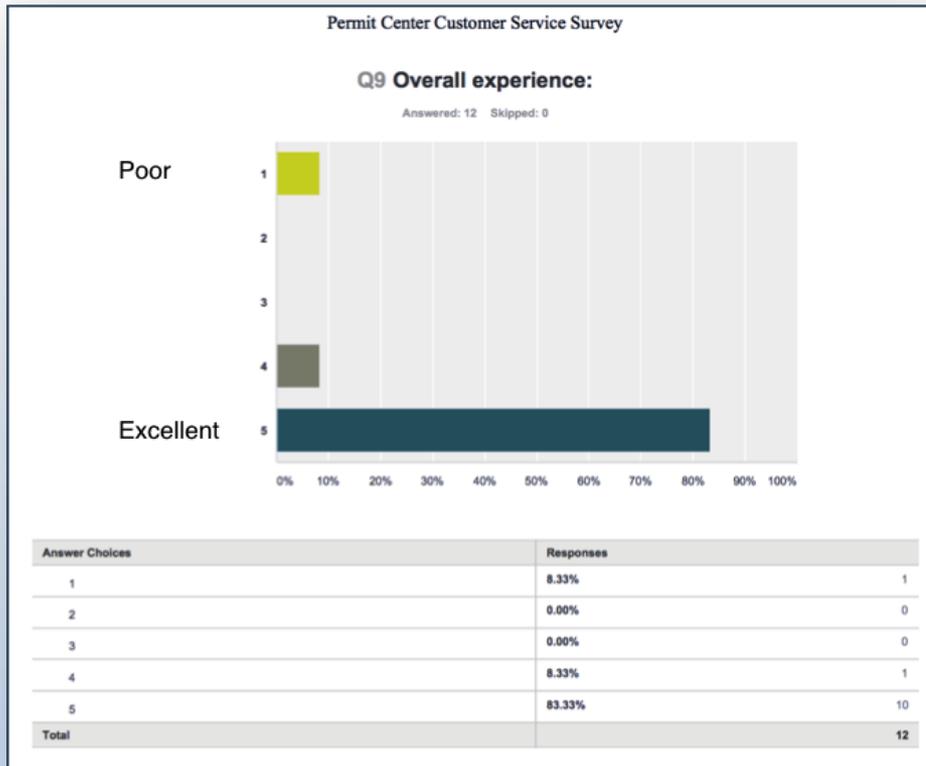
- Hiring a position dedicated to revamping the department website and publishing a monthly external newsletter
- Implementing a plan to initiate an annual survey

The screenshot shows the official website of the City of Austin, specifically the Development Services Department. The page layout includes a top navigation bar with links to various city services, a search bar, and a main content area with several sections: 'BUILDING A BETTER AUSTIN', 'Search Cases/Permits/Inspections', 'Austin City Code & Land Development Code', 'Building Plan Review', 'Forms and Applications', and 'Schedule a Building Inspection'. A '2015 ACTION PLAN' graphic is also visible on the left side of the page.



# Customer Service

## Continuous Improvement

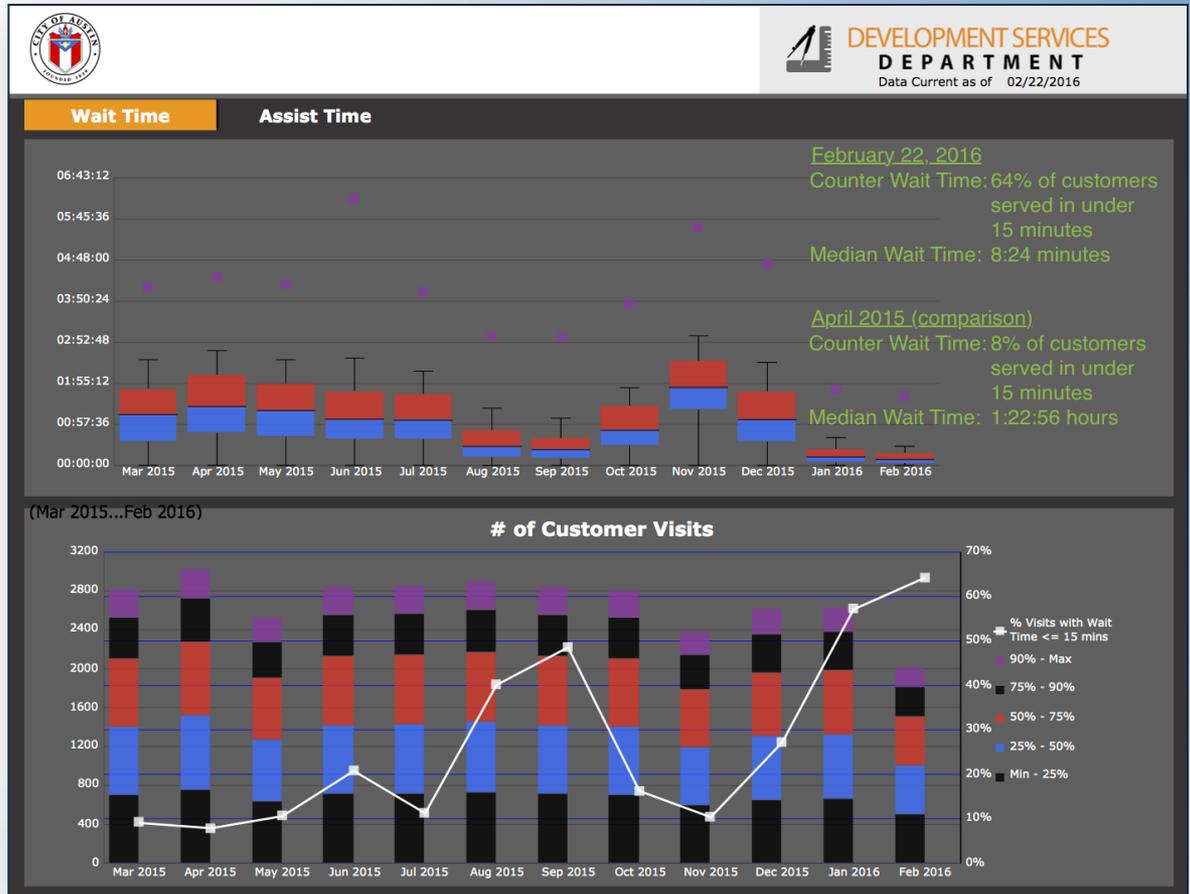


- Implemented exit surveys for Permit Center and Building Inspections divisions
- Rolling out an exit survey for Land Use Review
- Implementing a Solutions Team



# Technology

- Implemented business intelligence dashboards, utilizing MicroStrategy software



# Technology

- Automated mechanical, plumbing, and electrical permits to eliminate taxes

4998  
A-24-14  
7004

**REQUEST FOR PLUMBING PERMIT (FAX 512-974-6578 Permit Request Only)**  
 Visit our Web site: [www.ci.austin.tx.us/development/index.sp](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/development/index.sp)  
 Questions regarding fax, please contact staff @ 512-974-6348 or 512-974-2529  
 In order to process the permit, all permits are required.

**NOTE:** If the building permit has not been issued on this project, we will not issue the trade permit. Contact your General Contractor. \*\*\* City Code Chapter 35-12, Article 13: A permit expires on the 181st day if the project has not scheduled for required an inspection. A "Conditional" and/or "Public Works Performance" inspection results does not extend the expiration date. \*\*\*  
 \*\*\* Please fill out entire form completely or it will be delayed \*\*\*  
 (Do not leave any items blank. Write N/A if not applicable.)

Print clearly  
 Name of Master License Holder for Plumbing as it appears on license: George Christianen  
 Email address for Master License Holder: g@casamechanical.com  
 Plumbing Company Name: Cas Mechanical Services Name of Authorized Agent: Blaris Escobar  
 If not local, provide area code: Office # ( ) 534-7815 Fax # ( ) 214-0078 Mobile # ( ) NA

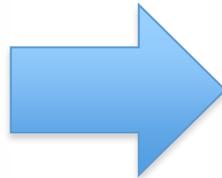
**Please check one:** Residential Usage in single family or duplex structures. Commercial Usage is implied in other 8 above.  
 Commercial or  Residential. Is this project  inside the City of Austin or  outside the City of Austin?  
 Based on commercial & residential as checked off above please describe the use of the building & or tenant (eg. office, bank, daycare, etc.): single family dwelling  
 Address of job with Suite and or Suite #: 10205 Oulveya W.  
 Building Permit # \_\_\_\_\_

Explain in detail the description of work: new 5' x 8' x 6' attached garage covered porch + patio  
 Installation work Total Square Footage of proposed new construction: 2800 sq ft.  NA  
 Remodel or Finish-out Work Total valuation of proposed remodel or finish-out work:  NA  
 If outside the City limits of Austin please provide:  
 (Commercial Projects & governmental projects)  
 A floor plan with square footage breakdowns is required for Residential & Commercial projects for new addition projects that are located outside the City limits of Austin.  
 Name of Electric Service Provider? NA Name of Water/Wastewater Service Provider? COA  
 Water tap # 2015-031927W Wastewater tap # 2015-031931W Septic # NA

Is this an emergency?  Yes or  No (Residential structure must be occupied. Misrepresentation will be considered a violation & an investigation fee will be charged.)  
 Full gas meter?  Yes or  No Gas inspection?  Yes or  No Structure occupied?  Yes or  No  
 Provide # of bedrooms? 2.5 Sewer replacement in the right of way?  Yes or  No  
 If you are part of the construction project for Heating, Ventilation and AC systems or Hot Water Heater please use new checkboxes then.  
 Is the Water Heater a replacement unit for that?  Yes or  No If not, is it a new water heater install?  Yes or  No  
 Install irrigation system?  Yes or  No (If you are installing Landscape or irrigation lines near lines contact Urban Permit Mgmt @ 512-974-5173) or (If you are in the right of way contact Dept of Water Affairs @ 512-974-1100)  
 Pay for a  pre-inspection,  investigation or  other hours? Please provide permit number & address (be specific if you are paying for all or only one (1) type: building, electrical, etc). You may pay using any site if you have registered on this.

**NOTE:** I affirm that the above information submitted is correct. I understand it is my responsibility as the permit holder to keep my permits active as noted in the header above. If I allow the permit to expire I will be required to purchase a new permit & pay new fees.  
 Signature of master license holder & or authorized agent: Blaris Escobar  
 Print name based on signature: Blaris Escobar

Revised 5-24-2011



**STEP 1 OF 7 - SELECT APPLICATION TYPE**

- [Residential - Electrical Permit Auxiliary Power](#)
- [Residential - Electrical Permit Upgrade](#)
- [Residential - Electrical Permit Repairs](#)
- [Residential - Electrical Permit Special Inspection Program](#)
- [Residential - Mechanical Permit Change Out](#)
- [Residential - Mechanical Permit Repairs](#)
- [Residential - Plumbing Permit Auxiliary Water](#)
- [Residential - Plumbing Permit Change Out](#)
- [Residential - Plumbing Permit Cutover/Tank Abandonment](#)
- [Residential - Plumbing Permit Irrigation](#)
- [Residential - Plumbing Permit Repairs](#)
- [Commercial - Electrical Permit Upgrade](#)
- [Commercial - Electrical Permits Auxiliary Power](#)
- [Commercial - Electrical Permit Special Inspection Program](#)
- [Commercial - Electrical Permits Repairs](#)
- [Commercial - Mechanical Permit Repairs](#)
- [Commercial - Plumbing Permit Auxiliary Water](#)
- [Commercial - Plumbing Permit Cutover/Tank Abandonment](#)
- [Commercial - Plumbing Permit Irrigation](#)
- [Commercial - Plumbing Permit Repairs](#)



# Technology

- Automated trees inspection request utilizing Integrated Voice Response system
- Implementing QLess virtual queuing system to reduce counter wait times

## Just-In-Time Customer Delivery

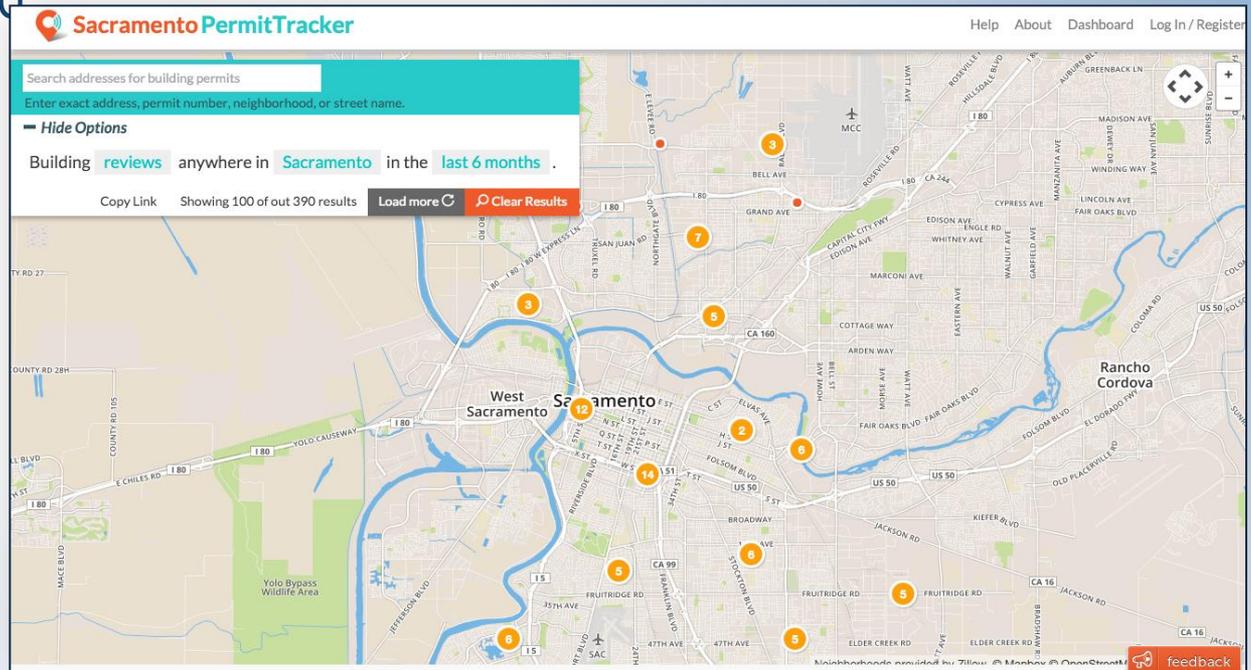
“ [One customer] received a text message letting him know that he had fifteen minutes until he reached the front of the line, but was stuck in traffic at the time. He was able to request more time by replying by text and was able to be served when he got to the office, not losing his place in line.

— Amy Meeker-Berg, Chief Deputy Treasurer, Johnson County Kansas



# Technology

- Utilizing Civic Insight to provide online mapping of plan review applications and permits issued



# Technology

## Continuing rollout of Electronic Plan Review

- Reduces cycle time to submit and review plans
- Improves customer service by enabling online submittal and reducing onsite visits
- Enhances workflow collaboration
- Reduces staff resources required to physically manage plans and reduce office space required to store plans

The logo for ePLAN Review is displayed within a white rectangular box with a thin black border. The word "ePLAN" is written in a bold, orange, sans-serif font, while the word "Review" is written in a brown, cursive script font.

# Technology

- Redesigning 100+ permit applications to provide consistency, simplicity, drop-down menus, and fillable data entry

**Reformatted, less space**

**Seal now in 1st page header**

**Section Blocks more visible, no borders = more space for fields**

**Larger text, increased line spacing = more legible, increased field height**

**Reformatted section for clarity, drop-downs add convenience**



# Coordinated Plan Reviews

- Zucker analysis of partnering City departments is complete
- Recommendation: Development Services Department to be the coordinator of all private development
- Memorandums of Understanding to be executed by April 2016 based on agreed upon recommendations

## Partnering Departments

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • Austin Code                              | • Neighborhood Housing and Community Development                |
| • Austin Energy                            | • Office of Real Estate Services                                |
| • Austin Fire Department                   | • Parks and Recreation Department                               |
| • Austin Transportation Department         | • Public Works Department                                       |
| • Austin Water                             | • Watershed Protection Department                               |
| • Communications and Technology Management | • Travis County Transportation and Natural Resources Department |
| • Economic Development Department          |   |
| • Health and Human Services Department     |   |
| • Law Department                           |   |



# On the Horizon



# On the Horizon

- Partner with the City's 3-1-1 program to offer customer service 24/7
- Modify fees to 2016 cost of service
- Change the department budget methodology toward an Enterprise Fund approach versus General Fund budgeting
- Implement an expedited permitting program consisting of two teams of plan reviewers



Potential Expedited Review Teams



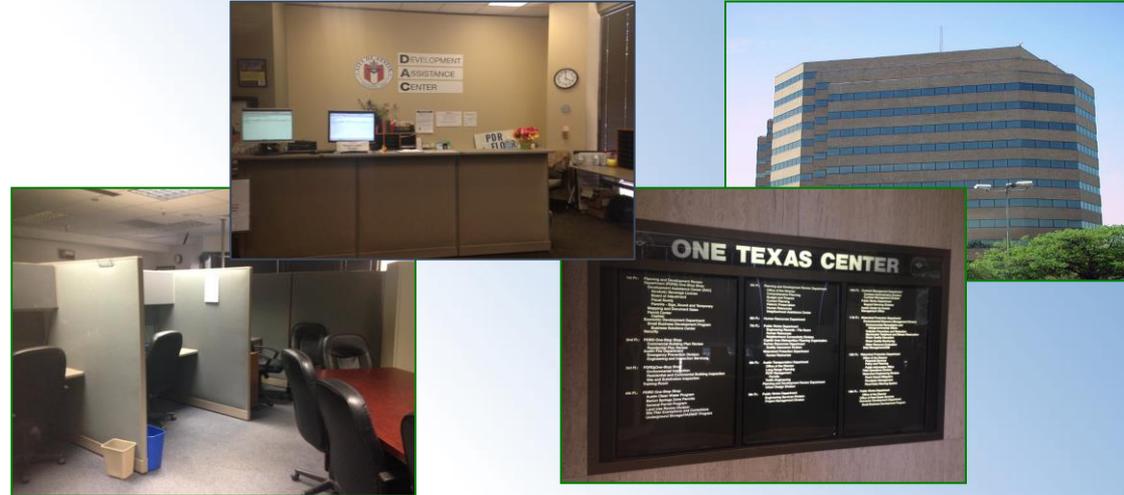
# On the Horizon

- Develop a proactive program for monitoring erosion and sedimentation control installations
- Modify review times to enact business days versus calendar days and place these times in an Administrative Rule versus City ordinance
- Review the appeals process and develop recommendations to gain staff efficiencies through consolidating or eliminating some appeal provisions
- Explore implementing a 10% variation rule to be utilized the City's Chief Building Official



# On the Horizon

- Continue working with Real Estate Services to relocate the Development Services Department
- Facility must be conducive to providing excellent customer service





# Next Steps

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- Provide a Council briefing every four months to report on progress in addition to concurrent updates through the City's data portal
- Begin quarterly industry organization stakeholder meetings
- Develop a budget proposal for Year 2 implementation of the Action Plan
- Participate in facilities planning discussions





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**Thank you!**