
Staff to Update Commission on Environmental Rules, Enforcement

In recent years, the Development Services Department (DSD) has taken several steps to improve effectiveness of its environmental inspections and enforcement activities. During the Dec. 1 meeting of the City [Environmental Commission](#), staff will update commissioners on recent improvements, including a review of the current process, statistics on citations and stop work orders, as well as additional improvements that are being considered. The update also will include an overview by Watershed Protection Department staff on the current [Environmental Criteria Manual](#), which provides direction regarding the use of erosion and sediment controls on construction sites.

Permitting and Development Center Honored by Local Organizations

Over the past two months, the [Permitting and Development Center \(PDC\)](#) has enjoyed recognition by two hometown groups: the Austin Business Journal (ABJ) and the Austin Green Awards.

The ABJ Commercial Real Estate Awards named the PDC the Best Civic Development of 2021, noting the building's sustainable design, welcoming atmosphere, and innovative public-private partnership to finance and construct the four-story structure. [The Austin Green Awards](#), a program that champions responsible environmental stewardship through design, recognized the PDC among six outstanding projects in 2021. Winners were recognized for sustainability of each development's site ecosystem services, water, energy, materials, health and wellness, operational strategy, economic performance, equity and engagement, community and place, and resilience elements.

Water Benchmarking Offers Conservation Opportunities for Developers

If you want to make your new development highly efficient in water use and save money while doing so, Austin Water's [Water Benchmarking](#) program can help.

Under the newly adopted [amendment to Section 25-9 of the Land Development Code](#), all new commercial, multi-family and mixed-use Site Plan Applications are required to submit a [Water Benchmarking Application](#), effective Dec. 1, 2021. This application guides applicants through possible water conservation measures for their site. Applicants receive a set of tailored recommendations to use water more efficiently and information about benefits, such as water utility bill savings and available rebates or incentives. Water Benchmarking is a strategy adopted in the City of Austin's [Water Forward Plan](#) to help reduce water demand in new commercial development projects. This approach encourages voluntary adoption of water efficiency strategies.

City to Retire Zoning Profile Tool, Rely on Property Profile for Zoning Info

Later this fall, DSD will retire the [Zoning Profile Tool](#), which provides online zoning information for Austin-area properties. Zoning information remains available on the [Property Profile](#), which is built on a newer platform and provides a variety of useful, searchable information about Austin properties. If you use the Zoning Profile Tool, please bookmark the Property Profile today for future zoning research. For more information

about residential and commercial zoning districts in the City of Austin, visit the [Zoning Districts webpage](#).

DSD Development Process Team Featured in CityView Episode

The [DSD Development Process Team](#) was featured in the most recent episode of [CityView](#). Cole Hubbard, one of two Small Business Development Services Process Coordinators, provided insight into the team's efforts to help homeowners and small business owners navigate the often-complex permitting process. If you know someone who would benefit from assistance navigating the process for an upcoming project at their home or small business, please encourage them to [schedule an appointment](#) for Development Process Assistance today.

Thank you for your continued interest in Development Services topics.

City of Austin Development Services Department
