

CITY OF SAN DIEGO
M E M O R A N D U M

Date: September 18, 2007

To: Land Use and Housing Committee

From: Michael Galasso-LU&H Technical Advisory Committee Co-Chair

Subject: Technical Advisory Committee Update

On March 15, 2000, the Land Use and Housing Committee approved the appointment of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to advise and assist the City in improving the performance and customer service in the development review and inspection process. TAC's Mission Statement is:

To proactively advise the Mayor and Land Use and Housing Committee on improvements to the regulatory process through the review of policies and regulations that impact development; to advise on improvements to the development review process through communications, technology, and best business practices to reduce processing times and improve customer service; and to advocate for quality development to meet the needs of all citizens of San Diego.

TAC representatives include leaders from associations, organizations, and businesses with many years of experience in the development process. Members from the American Institute of Architects, Business Improvement District Council, Building Industry Association, Small Business Advisory Board, Economic Development Corporation, BIOCOM, San Diego Chamber of Commerce, American Society of Landscape Architects, and Consulting Engineers and Land Surveyors of California participate on TAC as well as developers, accessibility advocates, and permit consultants.

Since the creation of TAC, we have continued to help the Development Services Department (DSD) primarily in the areas of process improvement and customer service. Some of the outcomes of these initiatives are summarized below, followed by the TAC's efforts since the last LU&H update.

Process Improvements

TAC has helped DSD implement more than 20 process improvement efforts over the past few years. As a result, DSD has continued to experience improvement in the primary functions of plan review and inspection.

Over the past year, DSD plan reviewers have increased their performance in meeting department review goals. They have improved from meeting them 84 percent of the time in Fiscal Year (FY) 06 to meeting them 89 percent of the time in FY07. DSD's inspectors have improved their next day inspection standard during this same period from 92 percent next day inspections up to 97 percent. Customer wait times at department service counters have been reduced by an average of 1 minute during this same timeframe.

These performance measures that are tracked by DSD were developed in partnership with TAC. We worked with staff through a Balanced Scorecard methodology to arrive at the 20 performance measures the department now tracks. TAC will continue to help the department refine these measures as part of ongoing Business Process Reengineering (BPR) efforts.

Customer Service Accomplishments

TAC over the years has always placed a high emphasis on helping DSD to improve its customer service initiatives. Over this past year some of the improvements that DSD have made include:

- Third party survey by True North Research shows continued overall service improvements. The overall Customer Satisfaction rating for ministerial projects is 80 percent, and the overall Customer Satisfaction rating for discretionary projects is 70 percent.
- All staff being rotated through extensive customer service trainings. Approximately 50 percent of staff completed specialized courses in FY07.
- Customer Bill of Rights for DSD completed. Dialogue-style orientation and training class rolled out. Approximately 50 percent of staff completed this course in FY07. Bill of Rights posted on DSD web page.
- Extensive Customer Service section added to DSD web page, promoting ombuds and conflict resolution services.
- Added extensive informational sections on hot topics to the DSD web page, including FAA requirements, mini-dorms and updates to the Land Development Code. More than 500 updates and additions made to DSD web page in the past year.
- Improvements to staff attitudes have continued, driven by the department's greatly increased customer service standards, which are rewarded annually through the DSD Customer Service Awards. These "star" awards are coveted by staff and the winners receive prominent recognition. This customer service standard is highly promoted to customers via signage in the customer lobbies and features on the web page.
- Small Business Liaison program has been extremely successful and well-received by customers. The Small Business Liaison attends most San Diego Business Improvement District meetings and other community small business meetings, and provides individualized early assistance. The success of this program was

confirmed by Small Business Liaison Ron Halbritter being selected as the 2007 City Heights Business Association City Employee of the Year Award.

- Completed restructuring of support staff to better serve department functions.

TAC Efforts Since Last LU&H Update

Since February 2007 TAC has continued to work on several important improvement efforts and citywide policy changes. These include:

- Provided input on Potential Items for 6th Update to Land Development Code.
- Discussed outsourcing and self certification as a way to provide more staff capacity in the department.
- Reviewed and provided input on Linkage Fees
- Made recommendations on the proposed Lead Ordinance and associated fees.
- Provided guidance on the General Plan Update
- Actively participated in DSD's BPR effort and reviewed and approved the recommendations.
- Are helping DSD and City Planning and Community Investment develop parking regulation updates and advice on the work program to complete them.
- Recently reviewed DSD's implementation of FAA requirements and provided input on the process.

Over the upcoming year, TAC will continue to provide input on ongoing process improvement efforts by actively participating in DSD's BPR and customer service initiatives. We will provide a recommendation on the General Plan and continue to provide advice on changes to other City policies and code changes that fall within our mission. TAC appreciates the opportunity to continue to help the City in these very critical efforts and looks forward to updating LU&H in the near future.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Galasso
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Technical Advisory Committee Co-Chair