

# Final Report Presentation for the Management Study of the Development Review Process

---

City of Lawrence, Kansas

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

matrix#  
consulting group

# Project Scope of Work

---

- ◆ Document current workload and service demands.
- ◆ Evaluate service levels.
- ◆ Evaluate the role of the various departments, current practices and activities, and emerging issues.
- ◆ Evaluate the organization of the departments and the staffing requirements.
- ◆ Comparison of existing services to “best practices” and to comparable communities.

# Project Methodologies (1)

---

- ◆ All staff involved in the development review process were interviewed.
- ◆ Existing development review services were documented.
- ◆ Focus group meetings were held with customers.
- ◆ Services provided were compared to 'best management practices' and to comparable communities.

# Project Methodologies (2)

---

- ◆ The project team reviewed interim findings and results with the project steering committee consisting of representatives of the:
  - Affected Departments
  - City Commission
  - Planning Commission
  - County

# Strengths of Development Review Process in Lawrence (1)

---

- ◆ Utilization of an inter-departmental review committee.
- ◆ Concurrent plan review of planning permits.
- ◆ Use of case managers to coordinate permit applications and projects.
- ◆ Utilization of Planner of the Day.
- ◆ Utilization of application handouts for the public outlining submittal requirements.

# Strengths of Development Review Process in Lawrence (2)

---

- ◆ The utilization of combination Building Inspectors (for residential).
- ◆ Utilization of the internet for application materials and guides, regulations, and ordinances.
- ◆ Ability for contractors to utilize the internet and IVR (interactive voice response) systems to schedule inspections and receive inspection results.

# Recent Improvements in the Development Review Process

---

- ◆ Several changes have been implemented recently to improve the process including:
  - Addition of a new planner position (Planning Department)
  - Changes in duty assignments for development review staff in Public Works.
  - Addition of position in Utilities for development review.
  - Implementation of IVR (interactive voice response) system (Neighborhood Resources)
  - Implementation of Permit Technician position and dedicated Plans Examiner position (Neighborhood Resources)

# Improvement Opportunities: Automated Permit Info System (1)

---

- ◆ Upgrade the automated permit information system to enable all departments involved in development review to track and manage work activities.
  - ➔ Develop RFP and seek proposals to evaluate all automated permit information systems that are available.
  - ➔ Make decision whether to implement a new system or upgrade existing HTE software (implementing the Planning and Engineering modules, and expanded use of Click2Gov module to provide services over the internet.)

# Improvement Opportunities: Automated Permit Info System (2)

---

- ◆ Enhance the utilization of the automated permit information system in the following areas:
  - All departments involved in processing, commenting on, and approving development review applications should utilize the system;
  - Tracking of critical dates to enable monitoring of the service levels being provided;
  - Storing all plan check comments, annotations, and comments digitally attached to the database record for that application.

# Improvement Opportunities: Neighborhood Resources (1)

---

- ◆ Establish plan check targets tied to the complexity of the project:
  - Large Projects: 4 weeks
  - Small Projects: 3 weeks
  - Tenant Finish, Minor Additions: 1-2 weeks
  - Misc. Small Permits: Over the counter
- ◆ Increase the time in the field for Building Inspectors by relieving them of some office or administrative functions (such as plan checking) through the addition of two Plan Examiner positions.

# Improvement Opportunities: Neighborhood Resources (2)

---

- ◆ Utilize the Internet to issue single trade building permits on the Internet (target 10%).
- ◆ Adopt the most current ICC building codes.
- ◆ Develop a codes interpretation manual to provide information to customers and increase inspection consistency. Publish this manual on the Internet.
- ◆ Publish plan check checklists and common plan check corrections on the Internet.
- ◆ Expand the use of the combination Building Inspector approach.

# Improvement Opportunities: Neighborhood Resources (3)

---

- ◆ Expand the number of building permits issued over-the-counter to include single-family additions and interior work; outdoor spas; new roof framing; interior finishes for minor office and retail projects. (Target: 50%)

# Improvement Opportunities: Planning (1)

---

- ◆ Establishment and publication of timeframes for review of permit plans submitted such as:
  - Design Review 30 days
  - Variance 45 days
  - Use Permit 45 days
  - Conditional Use Permit 120 days
  - Development Review 120 days
  - Preliminary / Final Plan 120 days

# Improvement Opportunities: Planning (2)

---

- ◆ Establish standard conditions of approval for all departments to enhance consistency and publish these to the Internet.
- ◆ Add two Planner positions to enable the department to handle workload and consistently meet timeframes.
- ◆ Develop an interpretations manual for the new Zoning ordinance published to the Internet.
- ◆ Clarify the role and responsibility of the Planning Commission.

# Improvement Opportunities: Planning (3)

---

- ◆ Upgrade two existing positions to Senior Planner to enhance supervision of advanced and current planning, and enable two management positions to focus on policy issues and management of the department.

# Improvement Opportunities: Utilities

---

- ◆ Consolidate responsibility for plan review functions in one position to streamline the process and eliminate four different staff plan checking the plans.
- ◆ Locate this position in the One-Stop Shop.

# Improvement Opportunities: Public Works

---

- ◆ Consolidate plan review functions with one position to streamline the process and eliminate multiple staff plan checking the plans.
- ◆ Locate this position in the One-Stop Shop.
- ◆ Consolidate traffic plan checking performed by both the Traffic Planner and the Traffic Engineer in Planning with the Traffic Planner.

# Improvement Opportunities: Plan of Organization (1)

---

- ◆ Locate all staff involved in development review in a One-Stop Shop. This would include:
  - Planning
  - Neighborhood Resources
  - Fire (currently co-located with Neighborhood Resources)
  - Utilities
  - Public Works

# Improvement Opportunities: Plan of Organization (2)

---

- ◆ Consolidate Planning and Neighborhood Resources departments into one department - a Community Development Department - with one department head responsible for managing the entire development review process.
- ◆ Discuss with Douglas County the co-location of its Building and Zoning Enforcement staff in the City's One-Stop Shop
- ◆ Discuss with Douglas County the provision of additional services cooperatively (such as Building Inspection).

# Project Conclusions (1)

---

- ◆ The City is currently providing a good level of service to the public and development community.
- ◆ Recommendations are focused on enhancing that level of service, simplifying and streamlining the process, expanding services provided over the Internet, and ensuring consistency and transparency in the process.

# Project Conclusions (2)

---

- ◆ The major opportunities for improvement include:
  - Expanded use of automated permit information system by all departments involved in development review function
  - Upgrading the automated permit information system
  - Enhanced accountability for service delivery
  - Co-location of development review services in a One-Stop Shop
  - Increased and reorganized levels of staffing
  - Discussions with County regarding co-location and possible increase in the cooperative provision of services.