



Joseph M. Centorino, Inspector General

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commissioners
FROM: Joseph Centorino, Inspector General

DATE: November 22, 2021
PROJECT: Building Permitting Process Review
OIG No. 21 - 41
PERIOD: October 1, 2020 - September 30, 2021

An agenda item sponsored by Commissioner Ricky Arriola entitled "Discuss Auditing Permitting and Inspection Process for Efficiencies" was heard at the January 13th, 2021 City Commission meeting. During the ensuing discussion, several City Commissioners reported that constituents frequently express frustration and complaints regarding the Building Department's permitting and inspection process.

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) received a referral from the City Attorney, on behalf of the Mayor and City Commission, on February 1st, 2021, to (1) review its permit and inspection procedures for efficiencies, (2) to identify ways to enhance the consumer's experience, and (3) to review the software utilized by the City's Building Department for permitting and inspections, to confirm it meets the needs of the City and its residents.

This request posed a significant task for the OIG, as its Audit Division team does not possess the requisite technical expertise to evaluate processes primarily driven by information technology. The OIG considered retaining a private consultant to assist in the project, but elected not to do so, based on four factors: (1) The City's prior audit of these processes, conducted by Matrix in 2019 at considerable cost, became outdated soon after its completion due to technology program changes; (2) The fact that ongoing changes in building permitting would impede the creation of a stable data base for a traditional audit; (3) The need to avoid incurring unbudgeted costs during the COVID-19 pandemic and a challenging budget year; and (4) It was anticipated pending legislation (House Bill No. 1059) scheduled to take effect on October 1st, 2021 could create serial disruptions in the permitting process due to the setting of arbitrary State-imposed deadlines, leading to issues and complaints unrelated to the City's processes.

Consequently, OIG staff sought and received authorization from the City Administration to work collaboratively with Building Department and Information Technology (I.T.) Department staff to review the permit application process and its customer interface and to develop possible solutions to address software and other concerns that have been raised. OIG staff met jointly and independently with Building and I.T. Department staff in a series of meetings over the course of several months to discuss these issues.

This report represents a status update of the changes made between October 1st, 2020 and September 30th, 2021. This cutoff date was used because of the House Bill No. 1059 legislation that took effect on October 1st, 2021. The OIG will continue to monitor ongoing issues and changes and will evaluate their effectiveness in approximately twelve months.

As the Building Department's permitting process is dynamic and evolving, this report constitutes a review rather than a formal audit. Therefore, it is primarily informational and provides a summary of the changes made during the 2020/21 fiscal year and their short-term effectiveness, based on responses received in customer surveys administered by the Building Department. As a result, this report does not contain specific recommendations, or management responses, as found in most OIG Audit Division reports.

This report also identifies technological deficiencies impacting the permitting process, but the OIG does not take a position regarding any major corrective action at this point. These are complex issues requiring careful study and analysis, while the landscape is shifting. Change for the sake of change is not appropriate. Any significant change should be thoroughly vetted by the City Commission and the City Administration before being implemented.

BACKGROUND (IN EFFECT FROM OCTOBER 1ST, 2020 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30TH, 2021)

Chapter 553 Part IV, Florida Statutes (Florida Building Code) regulates building permits in local government. Section 559.79 (14) provides that a building permit for a single-family residential dwelling must be issued within 30 working days of application therefor unless unusual circumstances require a longer time for processing the application, or unless the permit application fails to satisfy the Florida Building Code or the enforcing agency's laws or ordinances.

Section 553.792 provides that within 10 days of an applicant submitting an application to the local government, the local government shall advise the applicant what information, if any, is needed to deem the application properly completed in compliance with the filing requirements published by the local government. If the local government does not provide written notice that the applicant has not submitted the properly completed application, the application shall be automatically deemed properly completed and accepted. Within 45 days after receiving a completed application, a local government must notify an applicant if additional information is required for the local government to determine the sufficiency of the application and shall specify the additional information that is required. The applicant must submit the additional information to the local government or request that the local government act without the additional information. While the applicant responds to the request for additional information, the 120-day period described in this subsection is tolled. Both parties may agree to a reasonable request for an extension of time, particularly in the event of a force major or other extraordinary circumstance. The local government must approve, approve with conditions, or deny the application within 120 days following receipt of a completed application. This applies to the following building permit applications: accessory structure; alarm permit; nonresidential buildings less than 25,000 square feet; electric; irrigation permits; landscaping; mechanical; plumbing; residential units other than a single-family unit; multifamily residential not exceeding 50 units; roofing; signs; site-plan approvals and subdivision plats not requiring public hearings or public notice; and lot grading and site alteration.

Alternative Plans Review and Inspection FS 553.791

The Legislature enacted provisions for alternative plans review and inspection, commonly known as private providers. The fee owner of a building or structure may choose to use a private provider to provide building code inspection services with regards to such building or structure and may

make payment directly to the private provider for the provision of such services. All such services shall be the subject of a written contract between the private provider and the fee owner. It is the intent of the Legislature that owners and contractors pay reduced fees related to building permitting requirements when hiring a private provider for plans review and building inspections. The Building Department has to be notified by the owner or the owner's contractor at the time of permit application or two business days before the first scheduled inspection by the local building official.

The Building Official has no more than 20 business days after receipt of a permit application from a private provider to either issue the requested permit or provide a written notice to the permit applicant, identifying the specific plan features that do not comply with the applicable codes, as well as the specific code chapters and sections.

If the local building official provides a written notice of plan deficiencies to the permit applicant within the prescribed 20-day period, the 20-day period shall be tolled pending resolution of the matter. If the permit applicant submits revision, the local building official has the remainder of the tolled 20-day period plus 5 business days from the date of resubmittal to issue the request permit or to provide a second written notice to the permit applicant stating which of the previously identified plan features remain in noncompliance with the applicable codes. If the local Building Official does not provide the second written notice within the prescribed time period, the permit shall be deemed approved as a matter of law, and the local building official must issue the permit on the next business day. The applicant may choose to dispute the deficiencies.

Permit Application Review Restrictions FS 553.792

Certain types of structure and buildings have accelerated permit review restrictions. These time frames are meant to identify those structures that the legislature believes should have shortened review timeframes. Only ten days are given to determine if the applications are complete. If the local government does not advise the applicant of what is required to be complete, then the application is deemed complete and accepted. Local government has an additional 45 days after receiving a completed application, to notify the applicant if and what additional information is required for the application. The applicant can either submit the additional information or request the permit without the additional information and while the applicant responds to the request for additional information, the 120-day period described in 553.792 (2) is tolled. Both parties can agree to an extension of time especially under extraordinary circumstances. The local government must approve, approve with conditions, or deny the application within 120 days following receipt of a completed application.

The accelerated timeframes for permit processing apply to applications for accessory structures, alarm permits, nonresidential buildings less than 25,000 square feet, electric, irrigation permits, landscaping, mechanical, plumbing, residential units other than a single-family unit, multifamily residential not exceeding 50 units, roofing, and signs. The processing acceleration does not apply to site-plan approvals and subdivision plats not requiring public hearings or public notice and lot grading and site alteration associated with the permit applications above. The processing requirements do not apply to permits for any wireless communications facilities or when a law, agency rule, or local ordinance specify different timeframes for review of local building permit applications.

PREVIOUS INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS' ANALYSES

The Building Department's permitting process can be a complex process that varies based on the permit type needed and often requires the assistance of several City departments, e.g., Building, Planning and Fire. As a result, some customers hire permit runners or expeditors, individuals

more familiar with the process, to facilitate obtaining the required permits from the City. However, this practice also increases the cost of the customer's project and may be unavailable to those unable to afford such special assistance.

For those small property and business owners who do not hire these facilitators, and infrequently make property repairs for which permits are required, the permit process can be taxing. The Building Department has made a significant amount of information available on its website, in YouTube internet presentations, and other methods, but one must utilize it and spend time reviewing it, to determine its applicability to specific projects. The Building Department has also committed designated staff members to answer customer phone and email inquiries to make the process less daunting.

Despite the Building Department's efforts, OIG staff was informed that customers often complain to City Commissioners that the permitting process takes too long, that it is too complex and needs to be simplified, and that City staff do not timely respond to inquiries. These concerns and others have existed for years and have resulted in a growing frustration with the Building Department and its established processes. OIG staff has found that these complaints are not always tracked by the Building Department, making it challenging to determine the needed corrective action.

The OIG expects to create its own survey within the next 12 months that will be disbursed to applicants who have recently closed out permits, to allow for the adjustment period related to the new state legislatively imposed deadlines on permitting taking effect October 1st, 2021. It is believed that the implementation of House Bill No. 1059 will change the landscape of the permitting process, and will most likely create some temporary adjustment problems that would not be helpful to have included in a survey, due to the possibility of skewing the results. Once finished, the results obtained from the OIG survey will be compiled and reported to the City Commission.

Over the years, the City has hired various independent contractors to review the Building Department's permitting process and to recommend improvements. For example, the City entered into a contractual agreement with TCBA Watson Rice LLP (Watson Rice) to conduct a Building Department Organizational Review and Analysis on August 13th, 2008. The accompanying report contained 25 observations, findings, and recommendations that were presented to and reviewed by the Finance and Citywide Projects Committee on May 5th, 2009.

The corresponding June 3rd, 2009 Commission Memorandum stated, *"The Building Development Task Force Departments (Building, Planning, Fire and Public Works) have met with Watson Rice and reviewed all of the recommendations. In general, the Departments agreed with the recommendations and initiated steps to implement many of them, and in some cases, have fully implemented them. This exercise has yielded well-coordinated efforts, and the department did not wait until the final report was issued to begin addressing the concerns raised by Watson Rice."*

OIG staff contacted the Building Department and City Clerk's Office, requesting a copy of the Watson Rice report, but it has not been located as of the date of this report.

More recently, the City issued Request For Qualifications (RFQ) No. 2018-074-KB to conduct a review of the organization, requirements, and processes associated with issuing planning approvals and building permits. Upon the completion of the City's procurement process, the Matrix Consulting Group, Ltd. (Matrix) was hired effective November 6th, 2018, to provide consulting services for a review of the City's regulations and processes relating to private development projects. After finishing its analysis, Matrix issued a comprehensive report on May 10th, 2019, entitled "Review of the Regulations and Processes Relating to Private Development

Projects Report”. Several key themes emerged in that report related to current Building Department operations, including the following:

- The building permit review process is the main mechanism for a variety of disciplines to review and approve development projects.
- Review disciplines are unnecessarily specialized. Cross training would simplify the review process and eliminate conflicting feedback to the applicant from multiple disciplines.
- While the building review process serves as a “funnel” to ensure compliance with a broad range of requirements (e.g., flood, forestry, fire, parking, etc.), the staff members who receive and accept permits are not cross trained to understand the basic role of non-building disciplines. Overall, these clerical positions should be elevated to permit technicians, cross trained, and serve as the gatekeeper of the process to assure that applications and re-submittals are complete and reviewable.

In response, the Building Official stated, “Our permit counter staff is trained to understand the basics of the other departments; however, this would not be solved with a permit tech as the urban forestry and planning apply to this City only. We read the report and increased training because of this. We have worked to encourage staff to become certified and created a path for raises and advancement due to the certification. Because there has not been a large response from staff, have included permit tech training in our permit services weekly trainings.”

- Applicants should be clearly informed that re-submittals must be complete and must address all comments from all reviewers. Re-submittals should not be accepted if deemed not complete. The City should aim for two to three re-submittals for all project types, except for the most complex projects.
- The current walk-through permit review process allows for a same day application review and permit issuance, but is a time-consuming endeavor for the applicant. Also, it is inefficient for the multiple reviewers involved in the process.

These key themes were either rebutted or implemented by the Building Department following the issuance of the Matrix report according to the Building Director. In addition, Matrix reported key technology findings including the following:

- Miami Beach should transition and accept digital application submittals for all building permit types. This would include applications that are typically classified as walk-through permit applications (simple permits) and drop-off applications. Over the long-term, this would reduce the need for a third-party digitization contract.
- New staff should receive standardized training on the permitting software. Additionally, ongoing training should be provided to all employees who utilize the permitting software, especially after new software updates.
- The website for the Building Department should be consolidated and simplified.

This report was completed under the legal and regulatory framework in effect at the time. No one would have forecast that the COVID-19 pandemic would occur approximately one year later, rendering the report essentially obsolete. For example, the Building Department stopped accepting walk-ins during the pandemic, and customers had to use telephones and computers to navigate the permitting process. These types of changes placed a much greater focus and strain

on the existing technology and staff assignments, which caused new and unforeseen difficulties, since it could not initially handle this increased traffic effectively.

Furthermore, the I.T. Department has reservations concerning the Building Department's desire to continuously rotate some employees, and expanding the cross-training recommendation in the Matrix report. Each time an employee is assigned to a new position, the I.T. Department must be promptly notified to revise his/her access roles and system permissions accordingly. If not performed timely and properly, segregation of duties issues may arise, potentially allowing individuals improper access to system features and the ability to circumvent implemented internal controls.

In addition, the Building, Structural, Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing, and Roofing disciplines require different licenses and experience and prohibit cross-training as recommended by the Matrix report. However, the Building Official did combine the Building and Flood disciplines for review to shorten the review time and backlog.

Although the Matrix report was deemed to be of limited value, the OIG requested that the affected City departments, Building and Planning, self-report on their implementation of the report's recommendations in January 2021. Exhibit B, located at the end of this report, contains the responses received. No testing was performed by OIG staff to verify the accuracy of these responses.

PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS

Tyler Technologies Inc.'s EnerGov system, implemented by the City in July 2016, is the software used by Building and other departments for managing City business related to Permits, Licensing, Code Enforcement, Certificates of Use, etc. The EnerGov system has continued to evolve over the past five years based on the needs of its customers, which has caused some growing challenges, as any upgrades implemented also affect other related City software systems, and Building Department customers may also need to be notified of the changes.

In July 2020, after the COVID-19 pandemic, the I.T. Department implemented the following Tyler Technologies Inc. (Tyler) modules: Citizen Self Service Portal (CSS) and EnerGov system's eReview (Electronic Plan Review). CSS is the website available to City customers making payments or applying online for permits, and eReview allows the Building Department to move quickly into a digitized plan review and permitting process.

Through the issuance of Building permits, the local government ensures that a project is built properly and adheres to existing building codes. There are many different types of building permits, and a project may require more than one permit, depending on the nature of the work being done. A master permit is required to apply for sub-permits.

The Building Department currently offers the applicant the ability to apply online for any one of 27 different permit types. A building permit will require basic information about the property and the work to be completed. The documentation required will depend on the permit type, but will typically require drawn plans to show the work that will be done and how, as well as proof of ownership of the property.

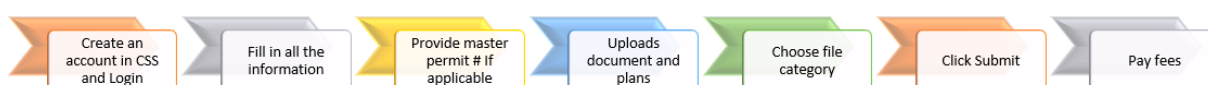
City residents can complete the permit application through the online permitting system, submit any required drawings and documents, and pay for the permit fee. Applicants must obtain all the necessary approvals and permits before starting construction, or may be subject to significant

finer by the City. Once the permit is approved, the resident can download the approved set of plans along with the permit card.

To apply for an online permit, applicants must have a CSS account that can be opened at <https://eservices.miamibeachfl.gov/EnerGovProd/selfservice/MiamiBeachFLProd#/register>. To create this account, a signed and notarized permit application and cost affidavit must be uploaded.

Once the registration is completed, and the account is created, the applicant must “Log In”, click “Apply”, select the permit type, and then follow these steps: (1) enter a complete description of the work to be done, square footage of work area (not all permit types will require this), and the job value; (2) enter all contacts associated with the permit; and (3) for any specific permit type, applicant must attach the signed and notarized permit application and cost affidavit, plans and supportive documents. Finally, the applicant must review that all information entered is correct and submit the application. Application review commences to ensure the application package is complete before the plan review commences.

Building Online Application-Specific Permit Type



If the permit type sought is not listed or applicants are unsure, applicants have the option to select the Building Process Initiation (BPI) category. The BPI was formerly known as the BOA or Building Online Application. It is a pre-permit application used to gather basic data on the project. Once the online application is complete, a BPI pre-permit application number will be displayed. Within five days, permitting staff will convert the BPI number into the actual permit type sought. Then an email will be sent to the applicant requesting pertinent information, and will include an invoice for the upfront permit fee. At this point the applicant must upload plans, and documents.

Building Online Application-BPI category



The purpose of the BPI is to help reduce the likelihood that an applicant will select the incorrect permit type. As there are more than 150 possible permit types for Miami Beach customers, the wrong permit type is often selected. When this mistake occurs, the permit may be delayed up to the five days that Building Department staff takes to review the selection; the entire transaction is voided; and any fees paid by the customer are refunded. Consequently, the applicant is, in effect, having to re-start the process, so the creation of the BPI permit type has added value.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT SURVEYS

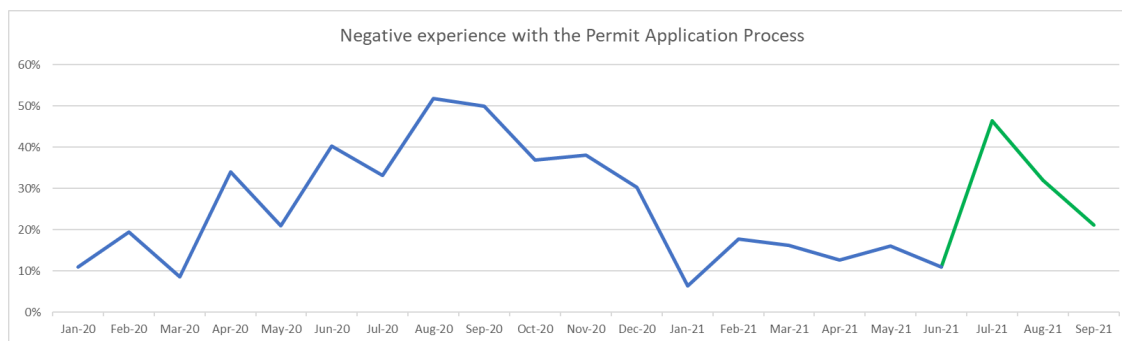
The Building Department has been issuing customer surveys for more than three years upon the completion of building permits. The email marketing company, Constant Contact, was hired to administer the Building Department’s surveys through June 2021, before the department switched to SurveyMonkey. Although customers’ answering options have varied over the years, the Building Department has typically limited the number of survey questions to ten. Some of the

questions have several subsets, and the last question (number ten) allows customers to provide open-ended suggestions on ways to improve offered services.

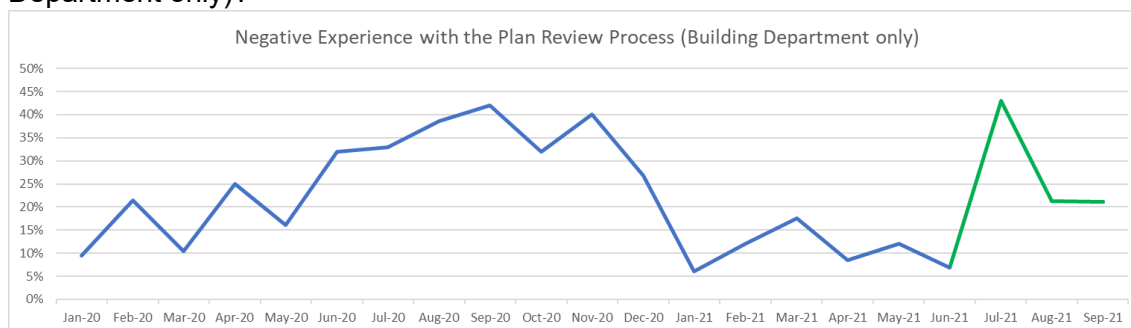
The Building Department's Special Projects Coordinator creates monthly reports that summarize the survey results and communicates the results to Building Department management. Upon request, monthly reports dating back to 2019 were provided to OIG staff. The available data was compiled for January 2020 through September 2021 to group similar complaints together to report their frequencies. The OIG noted that although the Building Department sent an average of 1,100 surveys every month to all applicants issued permits during that month, only 2% to 4% of applicants responded.

OIG staff tabulated and combined the average negative survey responses from Constant Contact (January 2020 – June 2021) and Survey Monkey (July 2021 to September 2021) into the below graphs to identify trends. For example, the spike in the permitting process in July 2020, can most likely be attributed to the launch of the online permitting process. A peak can also be observed in July 2021, for which the cause could not be determined. However, it coincides with the beginning of Survey Monkey which differs slightly from the previous survey provider.

a) How would you rate your experience with the Permit Application Process?



b) How would you rate your experience with the Plan Review Process (Building Department only)?



c) What is your level of satisfaction with the time it took for your permit to be issued?



In addition, OIG staff combined all the Constant Contact and Survey Monkey responses to question ten, *Do you have any suggestions for improving our services?*, from January 2021 through September 2021. Any positive responses were eliminated, as the objective of this analysis was to identify and determine the frequency of any received negative responses or complaints. As such, the top ten most frequently received complaints are presented below in descending order (refer to Exhibit A to read the actual responses received from customers).

Ten Most Common Complaint Topics

Ranking #	Type	Definition	Occurrences
1	Timeliness	Time taken to get a permit	27
2	Follow up	No call return and/or no email responses	22
3	Online process	Customer's frustration with the online application system	13
4	Review process	Complaints about feedback on reviews and consistency between reviewers	13
5	Call Center	Complaints related to being unable to contact someone at the City	11
6	Permitting System	Complaints about the system not being user friendly	10
7	Employee knowledge	Employees being unable to answer customer's questions	10
8	Communication	Lack of accuracy or clearness of City employees when answering customers	9
9	Customer Service	Kindness on how customers are treated	7
10	Training to customer	Customers requesting training to go through the permitting process	5

ANALYSES PERFORMED AND CALCULATED RATIOS

OIG staff gained access to the Building Department's EnerGov system's primary data and performed the below analyses.

Number of Times a Permit Fails until Approval

This analysis shows the average number of failures during the review process before the permit is approved. Although these failures may be attributed to multiple internal and external factors unrelated to the Building Department, they may indicate areas where improvements could be implemented to expedite the corresponding permit type.

Permit Types	Number of Issued Permits During Reviewed Period	Average # of Times Failed Until Approved
Bldg – PR – Building – Residential – New	25	4.0
Bldg – PR – Building – Commercial – Marine	11	3.0
Bldg – PR – Building – Commercial – Alteration	563	2.7
Bldg – PR – Building – Commercial – Interior Alteration	61	2.7
Bldg – PR – Pool – Commercial – New	9	2.7
Bldg – PR – Generator – Residential – New	38	2.6
Bldg – PR – Building – Commercial – Demolition	13	2.4
Bldg – PR – Building – Commercial – Concrete Restore	41	2.3
Bldg – PR – Building – Residential – Alteration	119	2.3
Bldg – PR – Building – Condo – Interior Alteration	222	2.2
Bldg – PR – Building – Residential – Carport/ Trellis/Pergola	12	2.1
Bldg – PR – Building – Residential – Demolition	43	2.0

Average time to completion (days and months)

This analysis shows the average number of days specific permit types spent with the City, compared with the time spent with customers, before its issuance. On average, obtaining a permit can take up to 4 months, consistent with the top-ranked complaint, timeliness. However, the Building Department should not be held responsible for the time spent in other City departments or the customer's time to respond to a deficiency or make the required payment once the permit is approved.

Permit Type	Average Days With the City	Average Days With the Customer	Average of Total Days	Average Total in Months
Pool – Commercial	30	88	118	3.9
Generator – Residential	34	74	108	3.6
Pool – Residential	25	73	98	3.3
Building – Condominium	31	53	84	2.8
Building – Residential	27	54	81	2.7
Building – Commercial	26	51	77	2.6
Photovoltaic – Residential	22	42	64	2.1
Generator – Commercial	12	41	53	1.8
Revision	21	29	50	1.7
Roofing – Residential	17	32	49	1.6

Comparison of time spent in the City and the customer by permit type

This analysis ranks and compares permit types based on the percentage of time spent with the City or the customer for the 15 permit types that have the most time spent with the City. It shows that a permit typically takes more time with the customer responding to deficiencies or pending payment by the customer once the permit is approved than with the City.

Permit Types	Average of Time Spent With the City %	Average of Time Spent With the Customer %
Building Special Event (Temp Structure)	55%	45%
Revision	55%	45%
Shop Drawing	49%	51%
Roofing – Residential	48%	52%
Roofing – Commercial	47%	53%
Building – Residential	44%	56%
Photovoltaic – Residential	44%	56%
Generator – Residential	44%	56%
Building – Condominium	44%	56%
Building – Commercial	43%	57%
Generator – Commercial	31%	69%
Pool – Commercial	31%	69%
Pool – Residential	30%	70%
Electrical – Residential	20%	80%
Electrical – Commercial	11%	89%

Comparison of time spent in the City and the customer by permit type (Commercial/Residential)

This analysis shows that both commercial and residential permit types spend longer with the customer than with the City, on average for the more than 150 possible permit types.

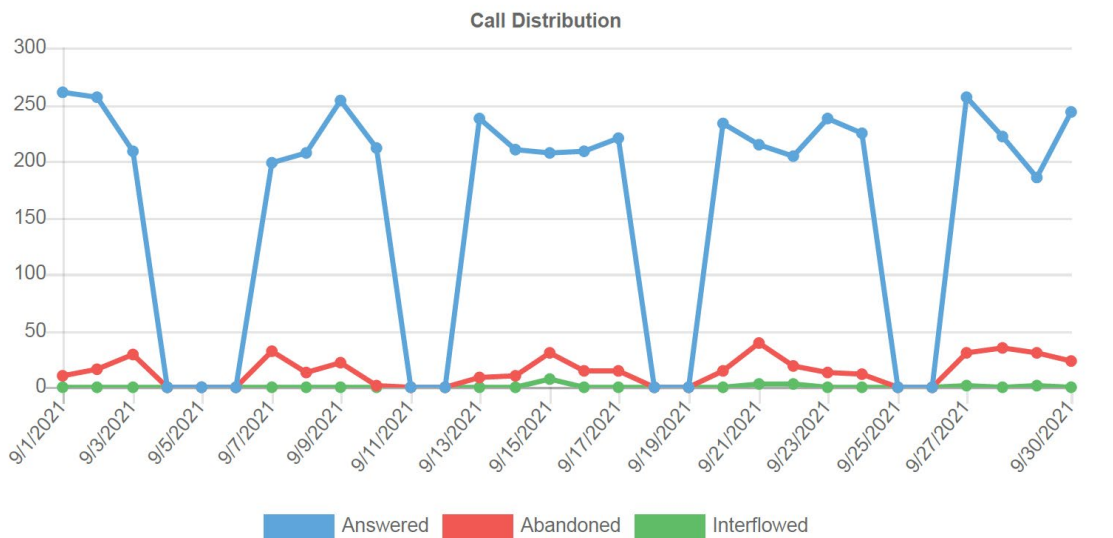
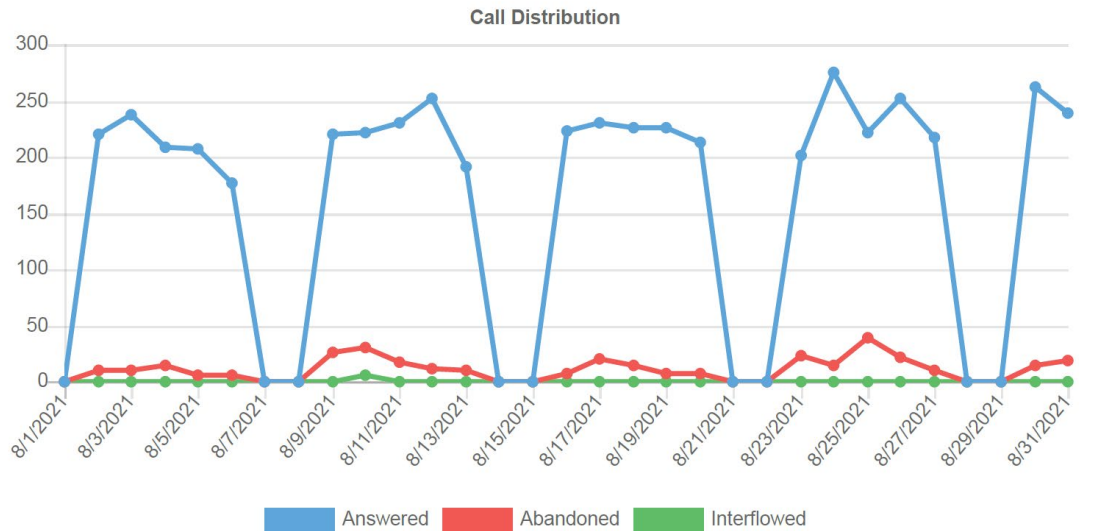
Permit Types	Average Time with the City %	Average Time with the Customer %
Commercial	23%	77%
Residential	30%	70%

BUILDING DEPARTMENT IMPROVEMENTS

The City's current Building Official has reported making the following process improvements during the past year:

- The Customer Call Center was expanded to eight call takers with a Supervisor and a Specialist.
- New online direct permit application types were added, customer notifications were provided, and customer training was furnished, thereby allowing a direct upload of plans.
- Additional training of in-house staff was provided.
- A new type of permit inspection for interior work was created and extraneous inspections from existing permit types removed. A structural reviewer will add inspections as needed.
- The As-Built permit drawing submittal requirement was simplified.
- A list of permit types with shorter processing timelines was created.
- Standardization of inspections was implemented.
- The City went live with Cisco's Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) system on May 3rd, 2021. It has been helpful in improving the Building Department's Customer Service Call Center, as it provides the following enhanced features: (1) routes callers to one of the available agents; (2) provides on hold informative messaging that may help the caller; and (3) provides useful statistics to management that can be used to improve productivity and identify areas of concern.

The corresponding statistical reports have been available since August 2021, and are helpful in identifying the daily call volume, the Building Department's response rate, how to allocate staffing, etc. For example, the statistical reports showed that the Building Department received 5,308 calls in August and 5,139 in September 2021. The following graphs show that the percentage of calls successfully answered was 4,956 (93%) and 4,701 (91%), respectively.



Definitions:

Answered- Available as a queue or queue group statistic, this represents the total number of calls answered through the queue.

Abandoned- A call that the caller disconnects before receiving an answer.

Interflowed- Occurs when a call exceeds the threshold for waiting in the queue and moves to another answering point; typically, the call is placed into a higher priority queue. The total number of interflowed calls is available as a queue and queue group statistic.

- The creation of a dedicated email address (HomeOwnerBuild@miamibeachfl.gov) for homeowners to reach departmental staff dedicated to assisting them and providing prompt responses regarding any questions or concerns about the building permitting process. After an interview with Building Department staff, the OIG was informed that 28 emails had been received through this email address as of September 16th, 2021, and some were duplicates received from the same homeowner.
- The following additional email addresses have been created to facilitate the communication regarding the building permitting process:
 - (1) BuildingInfo@miamibeachfl.gov for all general building questions;
 - (2) BuildingContractor@miamibeachfl.gov for all contractor registration related matters including updating licenses and insurances; and
 - (3) BuildingInspection@miamibeachfl.gov for all inspection related questions. The Building Department's Special Projects Coordinator informed OIG staff on September 16th, 2021 that approximately 2,000 emails per month are received through these three venues.
- The Building Department hosted a webinar series that highlights the different building department trades. Each trade chief presented on his/her specialty with an overview of the common questions and mistakes they see and how to mitigate any issues. The sessions took place on the following dates:
 - ✓ Mechanical Trade was held on June 16th, 2021
 - ✓ Plumbing Trade was held on July 14th, 2021
 - ✓ Electrical Trade was held on August 4, 2021
 - ✓ Building Trade was held on September 15, 2021
- Phase 1 of the appointment system was implemented on July 8th, 2021, enabling customers to schedule virtual appointments on the website.
- Virtual meetings with the public were hosted on July 9th, 2021 and July 13th, 2021 to explain the recertification process and its requirements.
- The Building Department acquired a new cell phone number on August 30th, 2021, that was created exclusively for City Commissioners' referrals. The employee tasked with answering this dedicated phone number informed OIG staff that no calls had been received as of September 16th, 2021. However, City Commissioners' referrals had been received via emails during this same period.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Qmatic Appointment System (with Teams integrations) was recently upgraded and went live in July/August 2021. The Qmatic Appointment System (Qmatic) is a solution that City departments have used for many years. The Building Department and the Finance Department's Customer Service Division have used the traditional core solutions of Qmatic to enhance the in-person queuing of customers as they wait in their respective lobbies. It provides a unique queue number and overhead audio and visual representation of the available clerk with whom the customer engages.

The I.T. Department's Project Management Office worked with the Building Department for over 18 months to enhance the current solution and account for internet-based queuing (application and mobile phone) and intelligent routing for in-person meetings and Teams based meetings. These enhancements would align with the post-COVID-19 virtual design of the Electronic Plan Review processes. This solution is fully cloud-hosted.

The group discussions throughout this discovery process determined that other technologies were key elements for enhancing current customer engagement strategies. These are:

- a. Call Center – Call Back feature (Cisco)
- b. Customer Relationship Management (Contact Management)
- c. Tyler EnerGov CSS Decision Engine
- d. Tyler 311

a. Call Center Call Back Feature (Cisco)

The Building Department's call-back feature (Cisco) is a Phase 2 implementation and has not yet been implemented. The Building Department wants this feature to facilitate contacting the customer because recorded customer messages left may be rushed or inaudible.

For the call back feature to be implemented, the I.T. Department would need to re-evaluate the current site licensing and, if possible, separate the Building Department from other City departments. It is not a native feature of Cisco's solution, as the company is not necessarily focused on this feature, nor is there a high level of support for it. Furthermore, no other City departments have expressed a desire to use this feature, as they prefer to use the voicemail feature. It will likely require a third-party solution to provide the rich feature set that the Building Department may require.

The first step was Phase 1 ACD Design, Testing, and Training outlined in the Project timeline. The first phase went live on May 3rd, 2021. Now that ACD is in production, other enhancements can be considered.

b. Customer Login

The I.T. Department pointed out several common causes from a Customer Login perspective on the CSS portal during the collaborative meetings held with Building Department and OIG staff. One cause raised was that customers get frustrated when creating an account, but the associated historical data does not follow. This problem may be due to a person who has not logged in since CSS was put into place, as they had Citizen Access Portal (CAP) accounts created under the previous web portal.

Another cause is that one can create an account with an open text field "Username", and then customers don't remember their designated "Username". In other cases, they may use an abandoned email account and then use a new one. Subsequently, these identified causes and others have created duplicate accounts in the "Global Contacts" database.

The I.T. Department estimates that the "Global Contacts" database used by all City departments has more than 250,000 contacts, many of which are unnecessary. These contacts include a combination of contacts imported from the Permits Plus system (the City licensing and permitting system prior to the EnerGov system), the old CAP system, and current duplicates.

The I.T. Department has strongly recommended that the City pursue an Enterprise solution to compile all City contacts from diverse systems and departments. Suggesting the following key systems as a good starting point:

- EnerGov – Building, Planning, Code Compliance, Public Works, Elevator, Fire Prevention
- Munis – Finance, Human Resources, Procurement
- RecTrac/WebTrac – Parks and Recreation reservations and member management system

- CityWorks – Public Works, Property Management, Convention Center management
- Aegis GIS – Public Works (specific to parcels with business and residential properties)

Along with the collection and aggregation of City contacts, the I.T. Department recommends creating a standard for what a contact comprises. Examples include:

- Primary email – should be the key identifier as this has become a global standard for user (customer) identity.
- Alternate email
- First name
- Last name
- Home address
- Business address
- Primary telephone
- Alternate telephone
- (perhaps a unique identifier – a reference number for easy data manipulation)

The I.T. Department has also recommended developing a standard for contact categories. What type of contacts is the City engaging with, and how we identify them will be critical for this initiative? Examples of some standard categories include:

- Customer
- Visitor
- Citizen
- Citizen homeowner
- Citizen business owner
- Vendor
- Contractor
- Architect

If the City Administration agrees with these recommendations and decides to move forward and select a solution to centralize this key information, it would be a significant step in development of its connections with daily contacts. Once compiled and accessible, it will open avenues for new integrations (software applications), which will enhance the technologies already owned and could lead to future solutions to help the City drive the different business units.

The I.T. Department has also recommended that the City pursue the appropriate funding to obtain a Contract Resource Management (CRM) solution. Its vision is to begin with all customer facing departments such as the Finance Department's Customer Service Division and the Building Department's Call Center. Although there are many providers of this type of service, the I.T. Department believes that the optimal product is the Microsoft Dynamics CRM solution.

However, it must be emphasized that sorting through the 250,000 contacts and eliminating duplicates is a time-consuming task that must be completed before implementing any new CRM system. Various I.T. Department personnel have started this process, but there is still a significant amount of work remaining.

c. **Tyler EnerGov (CSS) Decision Engine**

The Decision Engine is a new enhancement to the EnerGov suite of products. With this tool, the Building Department could leverage automation from the CSS portal to guide customers towards the appropriate Permit Applications. It would also allow customers to self-navigate with requests related to land development, property approvals, securing a license, scheduling a meeting with City Hall, or planning a special event.

Camino is another Decision Engine software previously evaluated by the Building Department that provides a similar interface with customers by guiding them through the City's Building Department's permitting process. The OIG was informed that the most significant drawback to the usage of Camino is that it would require Miami Beach customers to login to a different platform, enter the corresponding information, and then login to the City's CSS portal, and re-enter the information obtained from Camino. This input duplication is required because Camino does not directly connect customers with the City's CSS portal.

Another software called OpenCounter also helps an applicant answer pre-application questions such as whether their projects are allowed in certain areas, which permits they need, and how much they cost without having to ask City staff, thereby helping to improve the citizen experience with government.

Although the Decision Engine software chosen is not very expensive (the OIG was told that the software costs approximately \$10,000), it must be programmed by City staff, which is time-consuming to implement. In addition, the Building Department and other departments will need to review and streamline their processes prior to the software being implemented.

d. **Tyler 311**

Tyler 311 is a web-based solution that effectively manages a municipality's non-emergency inquiries, complaints, and service requests. Local governments can set up common service requests with a pre-defined workflow, ensuring that citizen reports and requests are properly routed and resolved as quickly as possible. It also allows citizens to submit their requests and check incident histories via a mobile app or a public portal. Other benefits include reducing citizen usage of the 911 emergency call systems for non-emergency calls, and reporting for management to track, monitor, and analyze the handling and processing of requests.

Tyler 311 would represent a patch, defined as a set of changes to a computer program or its supporting data designed to update, fix, or improve it. Its implementation would also include fixing security vulnerabilities and other bugs. A bug is defined as an error, flaw, or fault in a computer program or system that caused it to produce an incorrect or unexpected result or behave in unintended ways.

The I.T. Department sees an opportunity to improve the overall customer experience, while simultaneously optimizing the daily operations in the Building Department by blending the native architecture and design characteristics of the City's systems with operational staffing re-organization. This will require close collaboration between the I.T. and Building Departments, as well as other City departments. There will also be a need to strengthen communication from management to the staff, focusing on continuing education and training for each internal team. If the City proceeds to enhance and augment its current tools with the solutions outlined above, it could offer a world-class service to residents and business partners.

TECHNOLOGY DEFICIENCIES

- Once the customer's permit application is submitted, it cannot be modified or amended. For example, any application containing incomplete or erroneous data, recorded at intake, requires the permit processing team to void the application, and the Finance Department to refund all monies previously paid by the customer. An inadvertent mistake will also increase the time needed to complete the permitting process, since the Building Department will have to void the transaction, request a refund to the Finance Department and instruct the applicant to re-enter the permit. Then the applicant will have to re-enter the corrected application and wait approximately three weeks for the refund or pay for the new fees associated with the permit. As per the Building Department Assistant Director, this may result in intake mistakes by both applicants and City employees.
- The EnerGov system's eReviews is not customizable and does not have the capability to add a verification step prior to submittal of the application.
- Bluebeam Revu (Bluebeam) is a PDF markup and editing software designed specifically for the Architecture, Engineering and Construction industries that allows for greater collaboration and efficiency. It is marketed primarily for architects, engineers, general and specialty contractors, estimators, and superintendents. E-reviews integrates with Bluebeam, a separate company, that allows multiple users to mark up plans and collaborate on the same documents in real time, or any time.

As per I.T. Department personnel, security upgrades were made to the software during the early months of 2021, and now the two systems are no longer synchronized, which creates delays in the review process. Although workarounds exist, such as using the City's M drive, they slow down the permitting process and require additional work from Building Department staff.

OIG staff contacted Tyler Technologies Inc. (Tyler) support personnel to inquire about the timeline for restoring the synchronization between EnerGov and Bluebeam, which resulted in the following response from Tyler, *"Tyler did have a lot of issues with Bluebeam regarding some changes that they made at the beginning of the year that completely changed how the integration with our software worked. Since then, we have already resolved the issues with the integration and the eReviews functionality within the EnerGov Software is back to fully functioning in a newer version of the software than the City of Miami Beach is currently on. For Specifics, there is a full code fix in our 2021.1.2 version (which is available, but a bigger version jump) that we are hoping to get installed this year. There are also workarounds and manual fixes that can be provided in the latest 2020.1.2 build as well (which would be an easier upgrade to test, but still a newer version than the City is on) that we are trying to get installed in a shorter term"*.

On October 19th, 2021, the I.T. Department's Interim Chief Information Officer informed the Inspector General that the problem with Bluebeam should be solved by the implementation of a patch completed on October 20th, 2021. It was recently confirmed with the Building Official that as per the I.T. Department, the Bluebeam issue has been resolved.

- Another issue that delays the permitting process is that the CSS system does not identify whether the files uploaded by the applicant are the ones required. For that reason, an application can be submitted without the complete required documentation so that after the initial review, it must be returned to the applicant due to incomplete documentation.

The Building Department's Assistant Director explained to the OIG that if deficiencies are identified during the single-family residential review process, they suspend the initial counting of the 30-day period until they receive the documents to address the deficiencies and start the count again. Florida Building Code, Chapter 105.3.4 states that *"A building permit for a single-family residential dwelling must be issued within 30 working days of application."*

- The EnerGov system does not recognize when Building Department employees are out on vacation or are no longer employed by the City. Consequently, it will automatically assign the same project repeatedly to such an employee, which requires a Building Department supervisor to daily review the received projects and manually re-assign these projects to current employees whenever this occurs.
- When a sub-permit is linked to a Master Permit, the EnerGov system cannot automatically populate the customer information regarding contractor licensing, property records, etc. Therefore, the customer must re-enter all the information, which is time-consuming and increases the likelihood of input errors.
- The permit fee is based on the value of the project; however, the EnerGov system does not have the capability to perform mathematical functions. It also cannot determine whether the job value stated in the application is within the range established for labor and material construction that would result in underpayment of permit fees by customers.
- Employees can edit most things in the Review stage in EnerGov system, as the information is free flowing and not locked. Although one can subsequently check the system's audit trail to determine what was changed and by whom, one must know how to look for the information. This deficiency can create issues for those relying on the presented data and/or when a staff member is in court testifying.
- There has apparently been an increase in EnerGov system problems over the past 18 months for various reasons according to the Building Official. For example, she claimed that the EnerGov system typically slows down daily between 9:30 and 10:00am, and that it often crashes when staff try to bring up all documents related to a permit.

In addition, the Munis and EnerGov systems do not link well, and the City is currently using older versions of both, as recent upgrades have not been installed. The I.T. Department plans to upgrade both systems by summer 2022, which requires the cooperation of the affected City departments. City staff will also require training on the new versions to fully maximize its added features.

The EnerGov system must be upgraded first, estimated to occur in November 2021, as Microsoft will no longer support the usage of Silverlight 5 after October 2021. Silverlight 5 is a free plug-in, powered by the NET framework and compatible with multiple browsers, devices, and operating systems. Furthermore, there is a need to implement Electronic Plan Reviews, which is a feature of the new EnerGov system upgrade. Meanwhile, the I.T. Department is planning to upgrade the Munis system during the spring of 2022.

It is important to note that EnerGov and Munis system upgrades are a difficult process with many moving parts. For example, the Request module used by the Code Compliance Department must also be reconfigured, since the EnerGov system's data is used to feed the Request module.

- The Building Official also states that the EnerGov system does not provide more automations, and in fact, requires more human action.

HOUSE BILL NO. 1059 EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1ST, 2021 (HB1059 2021)

Florida law requires the Florida Building Commission to update the Florida Building Code every three years, and the 2020 Code update process involved at least 33 technical advisory committee meetings, over 1200 proposed code modifications, and approximately 352 public comments. The Florida Building Code, 7th Edition (2020), took effect on January 1st, 2021, containing significant changes from the prior edition, including noticeable changes to roofing and wind load requirements, as well as energy conservation.

Although Florida Building Code changes containing stricter or new requirements may increase the cost of construction, they are a crucial tool during the insurance claims process, since it governs a property owner's obligations to meet minimum threshold requirements. It also affects an insurance company's duty to issue payment for these increased costs to comply with such provisions in the event a property is damaged by a covered peril.

Furthermore, HB1059 2021, which is specific to single-family residences, went into effect on October 1st, 2021. The bill made various changes to the ways in which local enforcement agencies receive and process building permit applications. Specifically, the bill requires local enforcement agencies to:

- Allow building permit applications, including payments, attachments, drawings, and other documents, to be submitted electronically.
- Post the current status of every building permit application received on its website.
- Post the agency's procedures for reviewing, processing, and approving building permit applications on its website.
- Review additional information for an application for a development permit or development order within a certain time-period.
- Allow building permit applicants ten business days to correct an application for a single-family residential dwelling that was initially denied by the local enforcement agency.
- Reduce permit fees by specified amounts after failing to meet statutory deadlines for reviewing certain building permit applications.

Finally, HB1059 2021 prohibits government entities, which enforce the Building Code, from requiring a copy of a contractor's contract with owners, subcontractors, or suppliers to obtain a building permit for projects on commercial property. It gives the residential homeowner the ability to opt into an accelerated permit process, which means that the permit could be issued more quickly, assuming that all the requirements are met, or they will be entitled to varying percentage refunds of any amounts paid based on the corresponding number of days after the permit deadline has passed. If the homeowners do not meet all the requirements after two attempts, then they forfeit the down payment (20% of the permit). Conversely, if the homeowner opts out of the accelerated process, then the permitting rules in effect prior to HB1059 2021 still apply.

The City Manager's Memorandum dated September 20th, 2021, addressed to the Neighborhood and Quality of Life Committee, identifies the following new requirements of HB1059 2021:

- a. All City departments have worked together to create a list of every permit type with information on documents required for permit issuance. This comprehensive list with information from all departments has been compiled and will be made available online as

- a checklist for each permit type. Applicants must adhere to the list in order for the application to be deemed complete and plan review to begin.
- b. Reports were created to identify the longest plan that is waiting to be reviewed by type (residential/commercial) and trade or department as well as the number of plans awaiting review. This report will help departments/sections identify potential issues with staffing and need for possible overtime to provide the proper turnaround times as mandated by the State.
 - c. Two new permit types were created; a residential revision and residential shop drawings to comply with the state timelines on all residential permits.
 - d. Worked with the City Attorney's Office to ensure that the letter of the law is followed, and documents and notices clearly inform the customer (user) of their legal requirements with respect to timelines and permit corrections.
 - Customers on residential permits will need to provide complete corrections within 10-days of notifications.
 - Residential permit applicants will be allowed two cycles of plan review and if the submission is not complete or deficient will be required to reapply for permit.
 - e. Worked with the permitting software to address several items.
 - Reconfigure the timelines for residential permits.
 - Updating the application to include the opt in and opt out options on all permits.
 - Adding a permit status of "Denied" for applicants that opt in and do not meet the state mandated timelines or failure to correct the submission.
 - Creating additional reports to identify permits that are reaching their review timeline.

HB1059 2021 creates new and different challenges for both City staff and permit applicants, so there is an expected learning curve for all involved. Building Department and other City employees involved in the permitting process attended training in advance of October 1st, 2021, to help ensure that they knew the changes. Internal checklists have been created for all permit types.

The Building Department proactively requested Legal Opinions from the City Attorney's Office on several identified questionable areas concerning HB1059 2021. For example, one identified question was whether the 30-day period starts when the single-family residence owner submits their BPI or when the application is assigned the appropriate permit type. As per the Building Department Deputy Director, the Legal Opinion concluded that the time does not start until the permit application package is complete and the plan review starts.

Furthermore, the Building Department proactively educated the public about the change's forthcoming with HB1059 2021. Community Outreach webinars were held on Friday September 24th, and Monday, September 27th. These sessions were recorded, and the recordings are available online to help customers navigate these new changes.

OMBUDSMAN POSITION

The OIG issued its Building Department Expenditures Audit Report on March 4th, 2021. One of the recommendations in the report involved the creation of an independent Building Department Ombudsman as a pilot position, one that would report to an authority outside of the Building Department. Its duties would include the compilation and evaluation of complaints about efficiency, fairness, and integrity in all phases of permitting and Building Code enforcement.

Some members of the City Commission have shown an interest in creating a similar position. While not favoring an independent position, the Building Department Director did appoint Leonor

Hernandez as Special Projects Coordinator during the summer of 2021. She has been assigned as the point person for the permitting process complaints referral in the Building Department. Although she is not independent, as she reports directly to the City's Building Department Director/Building Official, the OIG believes the position may help to improve customer service.

OIG staff had a TEAMS meeting with Ms. Hernandez on September 16th, 2021. She was assigned an unpublished phone number on August 31st, 2021, to be used exclusively by City Commissioners to refer complaints for prompt corrective action directly. Additionally, her staff of eight call-takers receives approximately 2,000 monthly emails of permit questions/complaints.

Ms. Hernandez agreed with an OIG verbal recommendation to maintain an Excel spreadsheet logging all complaints received, effective September 17th, 2021, as well as any corrective actions taken, to make the impact of her position more measurable. The data may be prospectively reviewed by the OIG to assess the value of her position in improving the process of timely addressing and resolving complaints.

The Ombudsman position is not necessarily new to the City. OIG's research indicates that the City created a high-level customer advocate (Ombudsman) position in 2009, responsive to customers interacting with building/development process departments. The position of Inspection Services Coordinator was established and served as the Department's Ombudsman and Quality Control Inspector. At that time the responsibility was assigned to Mr. James Leggett, who has since left the City's employment and did not respond to OIG's inquiries.

Then in 2011, as part of the Watson Rice study, a Customer Advocate/Ombudsman position was created to assist customers with permit application, plans review and inspection complaints or problems. OIG staff had a September 29th, 2021 phone conversation with Barbara Hawayek, a former Customer Advocate/Ombudsman employee. She served as a resource to all Building Department customers, assisting them with navigating the department's processes.

In addition, Ms. Hawayek assisted customers who had questions regarding the plan review process and in trying to timely move plans through the review process to meet the departmental goal of having plans reviewed and comments issued within 30 days. At the time, she was responsible to respond to all inquiries submitted via the internet "Contact Us" link or referrals by the City Commissioners or the City Administration. Ms. Hawayek also worked with other departments in the Building Development Process (Fire, Planning and Public Works) to resolve issues raised by customers. She reported to the Finance Department and explained that at the time she experienced some resistance from the Code Compliance and Building Department (which were combined at the time). In a subsequent email sent to the OIG, Ms. Hawayek recommended the following:

1. *Building Department can do quarterly workshop to let residents know how the permitting process works in the City*
2. *When new owners are getting their parking permit, they can also get the permitting process information to avoid future misunderstanding and delays of this process.*

FUTURE OUTLOOK

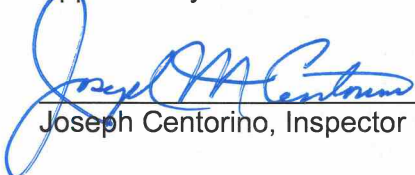
The Building Department Director has briefed the OIG on ongoing and upcoming developments in her effort to improve the permitting process, which may include the following options:

- a. Pre-submittal of plans for new businesses, especially those out-of-state, done in conjunction with the City's Economic Development Department. The Building Official

informed OIG staff that it is especially helpful during the design phase and has already worked successfully for at least four businesses.

- b. The Florida Building Codes Act defines a virtual inspection as an inspection that uses visual or electronic aids to allow a building official or inspector to perform an inspection without having to be physically present at the job site during the inspection. The Building Department is currently allowing virtual inspections for certain inspection types. The virtual inspection is conducted by using a video call on a smart phone or tablet to interact with the Regulatory & Economic Resources (RER) inspectors. The permit holder will have to schedule the inspection online.
- c. Appointment scheduling software allows the Building Department to manage development services appointments and bookings online.
- d. Increasing the usage of body cameras by Building Department staff to help resolve complaints, to perform audits, etc. Currently, the Building Department has five body cameras which are worn primarily by the Chiefs and by staff for certain inspections.
- e. Drones can be utilized to complete steep slope roof inspection which will make the inspection as effective but, more importantly, much safer. The inspector can perform final inspections on tile and metal roofs without the potential of damaging the finished product. The City's Building Official mentioned that currently they only have one employee with the required license to operate a drone.
- f. TEAMS meetings are held, as needed, with applicable architects and engineers to help expedite the process.
- g. Online Assistance via the chat feature can be used to guide and educate customers on the online permitting process.
- h. At the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee (FERC) meeting held on October 22, 2021 the Interim Chief Information Officer, reviewed the Tyler contract with the Committee and suggested that no changes should be made in the immediate future pending action being taken to improve the system. He requested that the Committee approve the City Administration recommendation to wait nine months before re-evaluating the Tyler contract. The Committee agreed to his request.

Approved by:


Joseph Centorino, Inspector General

11/21/2021
Date

Reviewed by:



Mark Coolidge, Chief Auditor

11-22-2021
Date

Completed by:


Norman Blalotta, Deputy Chief Auditor

11/22/2021
Date


Jessica Romero, Auditor

11/22/2021
Date

cc: Alina T. Hudak, City Manager
Eric Carpenter, Deputy City Manager
Mark Taxis, Assistant City Manager
Lester Sola, Assistant City Manager
Ana Salgueiro, Building Department Director
Frank Quintana, Interim Chief Information Officer
Ozzy Macias, Senior Manager, Enterprise Systems
John Woodruff, Chief Financial Officer

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL, City of Miami Beach
1130 Washington Avenue, 6th Floor, Miami Beach, FL 33139
Tel: 305.673.7020 • Fax: 305.206.5509 • **Hotline: 786.897.1111**
Email: CityofMiamiBeachOIG@miamibeachfl.gov
Website: www.mbinspectorgeneral.com

Exhibit A

Date	#	Answers to Question (10) Do you have any suggestions for improving our services?	Type
Feb-21	1	The customer service phone number, never help you, always claim that they just answer the phone, the City needs people more prepare and professional to answer the customer service line for building dept.	Call Center, Employee Knowledge
Feb-21	2	Hiring more clerks to help with the phones. We have questions and unfortunately cannot go in person to ask due to the pandemic. Not having people answer our calls makes it that much more difficult to work with you.	Call Center
May-21	3	It would be nice to be able to reach someone when you need to.	Call Center
May-21	4	Answer the phones.	Call Center
Jun-21	5	Process time in and process time out. 3 hours to get called, 30 min to finish with reviewers, including closing for lunch 2.5 hours to be called for finals and permit issuance.	Call center, Timeliness
Feb-21	6	As a homeowner I was told I could submit my own drawings to re-tile my bathroom and fix a shower leak as long as I met certain criteria which I did. The questions back from the reviewer were anything but homeowner level forcing me to use an architect. Either don't lead homeowners to believe they can do it themselves or provide the requirements.	Communication
Feb-21	7	Communication between the departments and the public is lacking. The loss of synergy due to due to Covid, should be offset by e-plans. 20 years ago, we could go in person and explain and resolve an issue with a simple visit, or a call. Now its emails.	Communication
Apr-21	8	The building department treats residents as if they work for the building department when in fact the building department works for and is paid by the tax paying people. You're not doing the public a favor; you're doing your job.	Customer Service
Mar-21	9	Insanely high fees. Way too much red tape. Nitpicking at semantics. Can't speak directly to plan reviews. Unhelpful directions. It almost seems that they are encouraging people to not waste time trying to do things right and get permits.	Employee knowledge
Apr-21	10	Intake clerks need to be able to review files submitted better so that comments are not repeated with no need.	Employee knowledge
May-21	11	Better clerical section training. Permit Intake should be addressed at the time new workflow is opened.	Employee knowledge
Feb-21	12	Customer service to apply for a permit is a joke. Not including the experience from today. That was pleasant but poor knowledge of the application process. My previous interaction has been catastrophic. I can believe how unprofessional are them.	Employee knowledge
May-21	13	Employees must get better training for consistency amongst themselves. Also, please fix the website (CSS). It has countless bugs, problems and all sort of issues, which the employees don't seem to know or understand about it.	Employee knowledge

Mar-21	14	Full disclosure of fee schedule need improvement. I do not understand why Fire review can cost \$700 for every resubmission. Seems like it should be on a sliding scale from higher for first review, lower for each subsequent review. It is also not clear if pulling permits for full remodel that sub-permits are also needed – seems like double fees!!	Fees disclosure
Jan-21	15	Employees aren't doing their jobs. Our last instance, we submitted all paperwork to obtain permit, including NOC. Received permit with the City of Miami Beach stamp of approval even on the NOC. Now, we're trying to request inspection & there's a hold on permit saying that we're missing NOC. We emailed to remove hold 3 days ago, still to no avail.	Follow up
Feb-21	16	My project dragged on for a year because the permit could not be issued for reasons which couldn't be resolved within a week or two. But we kept getting different requirements depending on who was processing our requests. Also, when the y switched to a fully computer format, no one was able to be reached to solve a problem with the City's website.	Follow up, Timeliness
Jan-21	17	Be more clear about what is required and answer email at least within 24 hours.	Communication, Follow up
Jan-21	18	If someone calls and leave messages numerous times, please take the time to return a phone call.	Follow up
Feb-21	19	I submitted a permit request and received a parcel # with status "Finaled". I don't believe that I requested permit correctly because it did not ask me to pay anything. I have emailed thru the city site asking for help, to no avail.	Follow up
Mar-21	20	Answer phones!!!! Waiting on email responses is not as efficient at times. Plan reviewers never available or upset that they have to talk to you. Stop complaining about work. We all have to work, no need to take out on the customer. Rant over!	Call Center, Follow up
Mar-21	21	Weeks pass by without an email or call getting return. In order to understand certain requirements/criteria, we need clarifications in different matters. When emails or calls do get return, there is no resolution on the matter/issues inquired. This issue needs to improve as time is critical (\$\$\$) to the development of projects	Communication, Follow up
Mar-21	22	More communication from staff members when asking questions. I have to send multiple Emails over weeks waiting for a response. Unfortunately, I have to send Emails to supervisors and managers just to get some kind of response.	Communication, Follow up
Mar-21	23	Answer phones. Respond to emails in timely manner, not after 10 days. Educate staff, so that everyone has the same answers to same question. Eliminates confusion and extra money. I'm very dissatisfied and disappointed. Things keep getting worse instead of better. Worst building dept at the moment, in 15 years.	Follow up, Employee Knowledge
Mar-21	24	If you send an email and ask a specific question your response is how to follow the guidelines. Even when a simple response would be appreciated you don't ever (until recently) get anyone to answer the phone.	Follow up
Jun-21	25	Make the permit process user friendly, require the reviewer return phone calls, make the reviewer available to meet with in person. Make sure calls are returned.	Online Process, Review process, Follow up

Apr-21	26	Reply to emails. Read the entirety of emails received and respond answering everything!!! It's like dealing with a third world country building department. PERMIT PORTAL IS TRASH! Implement the systems that other City's like Miami, Pompano Beach, Davie has in effect.	Follow up, Permitting System
Mar-21	27	PLEASE take a look at the uploading process of CSS system. Not able to upload, I have reached out to every email available to me. The CSS system does not automatically show the box to upload for submittals (please fix). Also, emailing reviewers would be greatly appreciated a response, at times the email will solve the problem.	Follow up, Permitting System
Jun-21	28	Inspections and approach as to what is being inspected tends to be subjective and is different with different individuals, that needs to be rectified. Additionally, the tendency for upper management to not want to over-ride field inspector decisions if needed creates a very linear approach to resolutions of issues, consider a peer review approach	Inspection Process
May-21	29	The plan review / permit approval process seems like a wack-a-mole: when one problem solved another one (or two) pops up: there is no common sense applied to the process. Do I need a FORESTRY survey to remove a wall inside my property? Or to build one? Some inspectors are fair and balanced, and some come LOOKING FOR reasons to fail.	Review process, Inspection Process
May-21	30	Online permit process has been a failure. Please reopen the walk-through process and please improve communication abilities with reviewers and permit applicants.	Online process, Communication
Mar-21	31	This Building dept. and their online process was the most frustrating and disgusting customer service, knowledge the lack Thereof and the lack of professionalism. If we ran our company like yours, we would not be in business. Thoroughly dissatisfied!!	Online Process, Customer Service, Employee Knowledge
Mar-21	32	I wish we could upload individual discipline reviews, instead of having to reroute to all disciplines like other building departments allow which would make life a lot easier for many of us as we usually have some disciplines ready much sooner than other disciplines and the reviews would save us a lot of time.	Online Process
Apr-21	33	Eliminate archaic requirements like having to call fire planning zoning to close out a door permit and then calling them again separately to close out other sub permits and one more time to close out a master. It is inefficient & costing taxpayer as well as the contractor. In 40 years of construction I have yet to find a good reason for it.	Streamline the process
Jun-21	34	The permit application process is very slow. Please go back to allowing people to run three permits at a time. I work for a large GC and the number of shop drawing permits we are running at a time is large. We are waiting a lot of time and money if we are forced to process only one permit at a time.	Timeliness, Online Process
Jan-21	35	It would help if plan reviewers stuck to the task at hand. Having the design professional act as a detective for past work on the projects is out of the scope of the plan reviewer. They should stick to the code only.	Review process

Jun-21	36	Reviews are often past due and only completed after repeated requests to complete them. Reviews are widely inconsistent from one reviewer to another. Plan routing process for corrections never match requirements. Disconnects between clerks, reviewers, directors cause process breakdown and inconsistencies. Requirements are a moving target.	Review process
Jun-21	37	There is no organization between specific review where's once you get comments it's really not fair it's an awful archaic system	Review process
Jan-21	38	When submitting digital plans there should be a description box to be able to describe the paperwork you are submitting. For example, "first submission", "corrections", "corrections 2"	Permitting System
Jan-21	39	CSS is a not user-friendly interface. It has so many glitches. The main issue is after you have submitted plans and documentation, the system locks all files, understandably. But after any reviewer makes a comment, the files remain locked without the ability to upload the revised file. Every single time I had to call to request and wait 3 weeks	Permitting System, Timeliness
Feb-21	40	Using the online system, there needs to be better communication. Also, the system shouldn't lock you out from uploading plans as they arrive as opposed to having to wait an entire cycle to add more plans	Communication, Online Process
Apr-21	41	Having to use Windows Explorer 11 to view plan review comments is really archaic and you need to come into the 21 st century.	Permitting System
Apr-21	42	The web site is impossible to deal with quickly and is not user-friendly. Re-do web site! Does not follow logical series for getting a permit.	Permitting System
Apr-21	43	The portal is not a good system. It has flaws such as locking the ability to upload documents. You have to email the reviewer to unlock the ability to upload. It's a waste of time for everyone. Took months to get permit. Not a user-friendly experience with the system.	Permitting System, Timeliness
Feb-21	44	This system needs to change. The employees that have been there for years are been bombarded with all the mistakes the new employees make and everything is taking 3 times longer is really ridiculous is affecting contractors, workers and owners.	Permitting System, Timeliness
Jan-21	45	It took 14 months to receive my building permit from application and another 4 months for the demolition permit of same property, + over \$45,000 in fees. Totally outrageous.	Timeliness
Jan-21	46	Answer and respond to ALL emails, phone calls, etc. Train building department permit clerks to understand ALL aspects of submittals. I ran behind on our timeline because 3 different people told me 3 different things to address my issue and they were ALL incorrect.	Follow up, Timeliness, Employee Knowledge
Feb-21	47	I purchased a condo in 7/20 here we are 3/21 and just got final permits. New to this process and unsure why it has taken so long. How do I think you can improve process keeping owners in the loop?	Timeliness
Feb-21	48	My contractors permit request was failed multiple times for tedious clerical preferences	Timeliness
Mar-21	49	Horrible experience, 8 Months to obtain a simple permit.	Timeliness

Mar-21	50	Faster turnaround time for permits. While it's important to have a thorough process, there are unnecessary obstacles in the way which often leads to a longer time to obtain a permit as well as causing the homeowner to incur additional costs. The process can definitely utilize more common-sense tactics and less bureaucracy for certain matters.	Timeliness
Mar-21	51	Stop penalizing homeowners when they want to get a permit and do things the right way. It shouldn't take a permit, hours in line for no answer and blank stares, the building inspector 3x of coming out to close a permit that he forgets to do. It shouldn't take a year for a permit. I am in process to change my windows since last year and no news	Timeliness
Mar-21	52	Make it more simply and more friendly, since you went online the perception is that everything is taking forever. What the building department still closed to the public? Everything else is open, kids are at school.	Timeliness
Apr-21	53	The process of submitting the plans plus the time they take to review is very long. At Miami Dade County a project like this takes 30 to 45 days maximum, maybe less.	Timeliness
Apr-21	54	The electronic system to obtain permits needs to be modified, I recommend the customer friendly system used by Miami Dade county building department. I have been trying to obtain a permit since November 2020 without success. Shorter plans revision times and easier communication between plan reviewers and clients is a priority.	Online Process, Timeliness, Review Process
Apr-21	55	Reduce review time	Timeliness
Apr-21	56	Unbelievable, I started the permit process for 2 bathrooms in July 2020, and just last week (April 2021) got the permits. Ridiculous even pandemic	Timeliness
May-21	57	Can understand why it take 3 to 5 days to answer email. I can't understand why everything take so Long to Complete.	Timeliness
May-21	58	Securing a permit takes 8 weeks, that is extremely long. Having 5 inspections for a balcony door and windows seems high, can this be streamlined?	Timeliness
Apr-21	59	A video or a document outlining instructions or step by steps to help guide anyone accessing the website/ the new online portals [across all departments] to fulfill their needs, especially when applying for permits.	Training to customer
Mar-21	60	Instead of continuously requesting revisions to prints, therefore adding delays on top of delays, why not just publish a sheet with standard requirements. Request that the customer abide by those requirements and be satisfied. Online permitting does not work.	Training to customer
Jul-Sept 21	61	A call center that can only redirect your issue or question with no follow up is not useful. Not being able to work directly with someone who can solve a problem and be in charge of it until satisfied has no purpose. Too many cooks in the kitchen that do not have the authority or ability to answer and correct questions. There has been no return follow up once customer service call center forwards your request.	Call Center, Follow up
Jul-Sept 21	62	Better follow up on requests by all departments	Follow up
Jul-Sept 21	63	Better response to email or returning phone calls	Follow up

Jul-Sept 21	64	Others ignore your messages, emails and never follow up. The system doesn't help and as I always say is "USER UNFRIENDLY".	Follow up, Permitting System
Jul-Sept 21	65	Different type of permitting system	Permitting system
Jul-Sept 21	66	Everything about the process to obtain a permit discourages both homeowners and contractors to properly get the required permit. The entire system is designed to make it frustrating to the point where homeowners and contractors actively avoid permits, which is bad. As someone who strives to do things correctly, it's discouraging that such a system is set up. Why would clients choose to get a permit if it's both cheaper and much faster to do work without? Costs are prohibitive for even the most simple tasks. I would guess that an overwhelming majority of work done in the City is without permits. And it's not only just costs. The process isn't even streamlined in the least. If a random owner had to go online and attempt to find how it works, it's already a maze of bad UI design on the website with confusing links and procedures. Even some of the most basic questions are not available and I've had to call in and wait 30 mins for something procedural. The system comes off as something designed to just take money away, instead of something designed to keep owners safe.	Online Process, Call Center
Jul-Sept 21	67	Expediting reviews by providing more context on what needs to be changed on the plans. Possibly even highlighting the areas on the plans that needs to be modified.	Review process
Jul-Sept 21	68	Have everyone work the same way. For the same plans on 3 projects I have one permit approved and 2 others pending. Nobody reviews the same way. Train everyone so there is no variation between reviewers.	Review process, Training to customer
Jul-Sept 21	69	Increase turn around speed if possible.	Timeliness
Jul-Sept 21	70	Inspector interaction with customer/contractor	Inspection Process
Jul-Sept 21	71	It is very difficult to get someone on the phone in the building department, and when you get someone, they make you feel like you are bothering them. I feel better pulling a permit if all the process will be online because I don't have to deal with someone on the phone and I think that should not be correct. When you reach someone you are asking for a service or information that you don't know/have, and shouldn't be treated as you need to know everything, especially with all the changes in the last year due to Covid. If you have a telephone in front of you, to provide a specific service, you should provide it cordially and clearly, not just "it is there on the website".	Customer service
Jul-Sept 21	72	Make the process simple. Trim line the process	Online Process
Jul-Sept 21	73	Please think about the Building Department and other City Agencies the most important and principal reason of existence is serve to the people and make the best way to find this goal, with professionalism, respect and honesty.	Customer service

Jul-Sept 21	74	Please improve the time to obtain the permit in the permit counter, they take more than 2 or 3 days, when before it was done on the same day. Also, the way to upload the plans by specialty is not convenient because the county asks you for the same plans but upload them sheet by sheet, double work. Regarding CU, the process is too long. After planning check the use and approved the cu then we need to go to building to getting to municipal form signed by building reviewer. My suggestion is that zoning should sign that form and give us all approved in one shot	Online Process
Jul-Sept 21	75	Respond to emails in a timely manner with professionalism. Often times the responses I get are vague with little information or assistance.	Follow up
Jul-Sept 21	76	The plan reviewers, most of the times now, are requesting items that are already on the drawings. Please instruct them to read the drawings.	Review process
Jul-Sept 21	77	there is no way to contact the clerks when they have a comment. When we applied for a process and its assigned to somebody that has comments (clerks) we should be able to contact that person directly to solve whatever the issue is	Call center, Permitting System
Jul-Sept 21	78	there is no way to contact the clerks that are processing the paperwork. Time frame for obtaining a process # has gone to the worst and we can't excuse the pandemic anymore. Reviews have gone to 21 days even for building which never was like that before	Call center, Timeliness
Jul-Sept 21	79	They could invite us to training for contractors that allow us to learn more about their processes and improve the management of permits on their portal	Training to customer
Jul-Sept 21	80	Treat the homeowners and contractors like customers not objects. They are the ones you serve and by treating them in a haphazard fashion turns people off and they therefore do not want to engage with the Building Dept. There is a lot of incompetence among the lower level employees, and more training is necessary. To sum it up, a lot of Building Department employees hinder rather than help in order to create more work for themselves at customer's expense. This is exemplified by the fail and reject now and prove why you should pass inspections and reviews mentality. The general mantra and mentality of the building department should be we will pass you unless we find something to fail. See the difference? This negative energy is a total turnoff and makes the building department public enemy number one among the residents of Miami Beach rather than the building department being viewed as a valuable service to keep us all safe and protect the consumer from shoddy work and unscrupulous contractors. This is the truth.	Customer service, Training to customer
Jul-Sept 21	81	Unfortunately, the Timeliness in responding a customer thru the general email address is bad. The replies take forever and are closed minded short answers in order to push you aside and on to the next. A simple fix becomes an avalanche and is stretched out in days when it would take less than a minute at a walk-up counter. Whoever answers those general inbox emails must be thorough and should consider an open communication with the costumer.	Follow up

Jul-Sept 21	82	When you make an observation, you must indicate what is the problem and how we can fixed, you just said No is not good: you have to say why, and give the solutions and changes, same in the inspection, that way you reduce the time and the process. You are the authority you know all the, problems and mistakes, you should address, the same day you see the problem and how to fix it.	Review process
Jul-Sept 21	83	You need to improve the approval of permits. If you look at the data, it takes Months to get a permit	Timeliness
Online Survey	84	I would like to be able to speak to a live person when I have an issue with either a permit or an inspection. This back and forth with emails is a bit frustrating.	Communication
Online Survey	85	I tried to schedule a telephone appointment to discuss my particular needs – documents to be upload; the max time permits are valid, etc. given the constraints of the COVID19 pandemic. Employee refused to help or schedule an appointment. Instead she directed me to the website, even though I explained I had already reviewed the information.	Customer Service, Employee Knowledge
Online Survey	86	The permit application process is a disaster.	Online process
Online Survey	87	It's impossible to get a question regarding an open permit either by phone or by email. It's impossible dealing with the department for items that are old. Very frustrating!!!	Follow up
Online Survey	88	City employees need to pick up the phone and answer questions. COVID has allowed the employees to insulate themselves from the public. It's horrible and hope it ends soon. The online review system is very inefficient. Emailing plan reviewers is inefficient. The solution is to open the City so people can have access.	Call Center, Online Process, Review process.
Online Survey	89	Allow permitting and personal meetings on site, the online application process is a disaster that delays smooth flow of permitting considerable. As a 30-year tax paying resident of the Beach I really think you need to provide personal full service, even if you have the online option for those that want to put up with it.	Online Process
Online Survey	90	According to your literature it should take 30 days to review plans for permit. It is taking me between 2 to 7 months. Reviewers do everything they can to slow down the process and consequently slow down the construction site. Instead of helping, they are looking for small details to reject the review and it take another 2 months again.	Timeliness, Review process
Online Survey	91	New buildings are different than old ones that's common sense. When a permit is being applied for that should have consideration. It should never take 5 years to replace two voltage room doors. That's when the permit dept should become hands on with guiding building.	Timeliness
Online Survey	92	Please provide thorough and timely reviews and inspections. The public needs to be able to rely on strict enforcement of the building codes.	Review Process, Inspection Process
Online Survey	93	Make alerts to homeowner when permit applications are not complete so they and the contractor can work on resolution. I let this process sit for 5 months assuming my contractor was correct that they had done everything on their end, and they had not. As a homeowner that has not done this process, we don't know when the process is delayed.	Timeliness, Communication

Online Survey	94	Electronic signature procedures are unclear and getting clarifications by email took weeks and effort due to staff delayed response. In person drop off is only available days ahead even though the office is empty. The check in doesn't work and requires a smartphone. Employees are aloof and disinterested in helping	Follow up, Timeliness, Customer Services
---------------	----	---	--

Exhibit B

#	Recommendation	Department	Staff Recommendation	Status	Action Required	Action Plan	Timeline / Date Effective	Update	Notes	Column1
1	Cross-train reviewers to review similar but multiple disciplines. Reducing the number of individual departments reviewing permit applications.	All	Where Feasible	Continuous	Administrative	The Building Department has begun cross training amongst reviewers in the building flooding and roofing disciplines.	Estimated cross training completed October 2019	Cross training amongst Building, Roofing, and Flood disciplines has been completed.		
2	Cross-train administrative staff responsible for the intake and routing of applications and plans so that they have an understanding of the disciplines involved. Expand their responsibilities to include conducting completeness checks at the intake of both initial applications and resubmittals.	Building	Agreed	Continuous	Administrative	Clerical staff is responsible for intake and routing and is currently trained in a cursory review of the applications and plans. However that level of staff is not formally trained in reviewing plans and therefore any misinformation provided on applications and plans would be caught by plan reviewers. We do provide permit tech training to continue to improve the competencies of our team.	In action in perpetuity	All administrative staff and clerical staff is trained and receives periodic refresher trainings on permit intake and routing of plans and applications		
3	Cross-train reviewers to review similar but multiple disciplines. Reducing the number of individual departments reviewing building permit applications.	Building	Agreed	Continuous	Administrative	The Building Department has begun cross training amongst reviewers in the building flooding and roofing disciplines.	Estimated cross training completed October 2019 Building and Flood Reviews ongoing cross training	Same as above, Cross training amongst Building, Roofing, and Flood disciplines has been completed.		
4	Transition to digital application and plan set submission for the Drop-off Building Permit Process.	Building	Agreed	Completed July 27, 2020	Administrative	Currently configuring and testing online applications and plans submission	Estimated October 2019 <u>November 2019</u> to start transitioning drop-off permit types to online app and plan submittal Estimated Complete Date <u>October 2020</u> Completed July 27, 2020	A pilot online application and plan set submission for permit type Interior Remodel have been configured. Once this one is smooth we will configure additional permit types for online plan submission. This has been tested and was fully implemented.	The 2020 pandemic catapulted the transition to digital submissions into a completely digital submission system. Since late March when the Building department began to have to accept all submissions online, we have worked with it on several versions of the permitting system and processes on how to most effectively receive digital submissions. There are still some areas of the new system that need to be smoothed out, including upgrading of the current version of EnerGov and customer training on using CSS. We anticipate to have these areas smoothed out by the end of 2021.	The areas I am referring to as needing to be smoothed out is Bluebeam Sessions and the finalization of the plans.
5	Transition the current walk-thru permitting process to an electronic application submission that is reviewed the next business day.	Building	Agreed	Completed July 27, 2020	Administrative	We will explore the possibility of having dedicated staff that will review online submission with a one day turn around time. Currently we are configuring and testing online applications and plans that do not require plan review.	June 2019 - December 2019	1/20/2021 - While we continue to explore the possibility of having dedicated staff that will review online submission with a one day turn around time we have transitioned to a 24 hour walk-through process effective October 15, 2019. This process allows applicants to drop off plans that fall within the walk through process and return the next business day to pick up finalized plans or plans needing corrections. We are also configuring and testing online applications that do not require plan review (sub-permits) that would allow applicants to instantly receive a permit. On July 27th we fully transitioned to an online process and at present are processing the smaller revisions and projects in 5 days one assigned to the reviewer.	At this point all processes are online. There is no longer "walk-through" and "drop-off". However, in order to make-up for the expedited walk-through or 24 hour processes, we have identified permit types and criteria that would allow for a shorter turn around time. Submission that meet that criteria have due dates for staff review of 5 days from the received date.	
6	Examine ways to reduce the number of temporary certificate of occupancies applied issued.	Building	Agreed	Implemented	Administrative	We have begun to require a letter from the owner or contractor on projects that have gone beyond three TCO renewals. We will also explore a fee increase on subsequent renewals after the first.	Effective May 1, 2019	Action plan in place and ongoing.		
7	Update policies and procedures to require all comments to be readdressed at the time of resubmittal.	Building	Agreed	Implemented	Administrative	A requirement to address all comments before re-submittal was incorporated into the resubmission checklist.	Effective May 17, 2019	Ongoing		
8	Require the applicant to resubmit a complete plan set upon each resubmission.	Building	Agreed	In-Progress	Administrative	This will be the standard requirement once plans begin to be submitted electronically	Comp July 27, 2020	Ongoing		
9	Permit Clerks should be allowed to process credit card payments at their terminal after receiving proper training.	Building	Agreed	Implemented	Administrative	iPad for payments have been installed at each permit counter.	Estimated start July 2019	Implemented July 2019. During COVID adjusted to online via CSS		

10	Ensure proper policies are in place related to the determination of fees, especially for private provider permits for smaller scale project where minimum fees are assessed.	Building	Agreed	Continuous	Administrative	Department SOP's are constantly being developed and revised as needed.	Ongoing	All fees are per Appendix A of the City Ordinance. A fee schedule with descriptions and explanation of the assessment of fees is posted on the Building website.		
11	The Building webpage should be streamlined to provide relevant information through less searching. An overview of the application and review process should be provided through a graphic.	Building	Agreed	Continuous	Administrative	The Building department is constantly looking to innovate and improve. A graphic for the process is being developed. The graphic was developed and there is an interactive guide as well as training videos.	Ongoing	The Building department is constantly looking to innovate and improve. The website now includes graphics along with an interactive guide and training videos.		
12	Require all reviewers to sign off or indicate not applicable on all plan sheets.	Building - Lead, All	Agreed	Implemented	Administrative		Effective 6/6/19	The electronic review has simplified this process.	In the current environment of electronic submissions, plans come in a single combined set per discipline. If a set needs corrections, plan reviewers electronically stamp the set DISAPPROVED. If set does not need corrections, then the reviewer electronically approves and the set.	
13	Reviewers should sign each plan sheet versus completing the approval cover letter for walk through permits. Maintaining integrity throughout the review and construction process.	Building - Lead, All	Agreed	Implemented	Administrative		Effective 6/6/19		Similarly to above, the plans are now electronically resulted per set.	
14	Create the position of Permit Coordinator to provide oversight of the entire development review and permitting process. The Permit Coordinator would also serve as a liaison to the development community to resolve issues.	City Manager	Agreed	Pending	Legislative	Further analysis is required post adoption of the FY 2019/2020 budget.		Not funded in the FY 2020 or 2021 Budget		
15	Conduct public hearings for land development regulation text amendments to once per quarter (initially) versus the current philosophy of conducting hearings at will throughout the year. Three year goal is to conduct public hearing for land development regulation text amendments to twice a year.	Planning	Agreed	To Be Implemented After Code Rewrite	Legislative	Pending Code Rewrite	Pending Code Rewrite			
16	Other review departments should receive notice regarding projects being reviewed by the four Planning Boards and be provided an opportunity to "opt in" to commenting or providing recommended conditions of approval.	Planning	Agreed	Implemented	Administrative	The Development Review Committee was established May 9, 2019. The first meeting for the DRB and HPB was held in July. All Boards will be incorporated by August/September. The DRC does not apply to applications to the BOA.	Jul-19			
17	Expand participation in pre-application meetings and use them as an opportunity for broad input from the City on all issues potentially affecting a project. Do not require applicants to identify what board their project is subject to before attending the preapplication meeting.	Planning	Agreed	Implemented	Administrative	The Development Review Committee was established May 9, 2019. The first meeting for the DRB and HPB was held in July. All Boards will be incorporated by August/September. The DRC does not apply to applications to the BOA.	Jul-19			
18	Consider requiring staff-issued Planning permits for some complex projects that don't require Board approval but that do require staff review to ensure that all site issues are addressed prior to architectural review.	Planning	Not Recommended	N/A	Legislative	No Action At This Time	N/A			
19	Transition to electronic packets for all land use boards.	Planning	Agreed	Pending	Legislative	This requires the purchase, training and deployment of electric devices to board members. Further analysis and discussion with the Boards is required post adoption of the FY 2019/2020 budget.		Pilot program being developed for the Planning Board		
20	Conduct public hearings for land development regulation text amendments at the first reading of the ordinance.	Planning	Not Recommended	N/A	Policy	No Action At This Time	N/A			

21	Rewrite the land development regulation portion of the adopted City codes and ordinance to incorporate best practices.	Planning	Agreed	In-Progress	Legislative	A RFQ for the Resiliency Code Rewrite was issued June 7, 2019 with a close date of July 23, 2019 (RFQ2019-209-ND). A time line for the completion of this recommendation will be established after the procurement process.	In Procurement Process	10/16/2019 - The City Commission accepted the recommendation of the City Manager, authorizing the administration to enter into negotiations with Perkins & Will Architects Inc., as the top ranked proposer for the Resiliency Code Rewrite.		
22	Modify the approval authority for single family homes constructed pre-1942 and not located in a local historic district. Staff should have the authority to review and approve these permit types.	Planning	Agreed	No Longer Moving Forward	Legislative	Staff will be presenting an ordinance to accomplish this recommendation.	Earliest adoption by Fall 2019	10/16/2019 - Ordinance withdrawn by sponsor.		
23	Conduct a review of project types to identify more projects that can be approved at the staff level without Board review. Single family residences in particular should be fast tracked with staff review if possible.	Planning	Agreed	In-Progress	Legislative	Staff will be presenting an ordinance to accomplish this recommendation.	Earliest adoption by Fall 2019	10/16/2019 - Ordinance referred back to Land Use Committee for further discussion.		
24	Consider moving the authority for issuing variances to the city Board of Adjustment so that the Land Use boards responsible for determining compliance with regulations are not also responsible for issuing variances.	Planning	Not Recommended	N/A	Legislative	No Action At This Time	N/A			
25	Ensure that all planning staff involved in development review is included in the development and review of proposed land use text amendments.	Planning	Agreed	Implemented	Administrative	All Planning Technical Staff is involved in the development and review of proposed land use text	Implemented			
26	The Planning webpage should be expanded to provide more relevant information on the webpage versus a link to the municipal code. Additional information should be provided for each land use boards and review authority and approval.	Planning	Agreed	In-Progress	Administrative	The Planning Webpage is currently being updated to provide relevant information and process instructions.	Fall 2019			
27	Create a manual or series of handouts detailing specific historic design standards.	Planning	Agreed	In-Progress	Administrative	Manuals and hand outs are being created/updated for both historic and nonhistorical design standards.	Fall 2019			
28	Exclude interiors from Historic Preservation Board review and transition to staff review.	Planning	Not Recommended	N/A	Legislative	No Action At This Time	N/A			
29	Reduce the timeline for conducting a public hearing for land use boards between 4 and 6 weeks after application is received.	Planning	Generally agreed	No Longer Moving Forward	Legislative	Further research is required for this recommendation. Staff will be proposing an amendment to the notice requirements, this will help to reduce the application review time, but additional modifications to the application process may be required.	Fall 2019	10/16/2019 - Ordinance withdrawn by sponsor.		
30	Ensure holistic approach to resiliency standards including discordance between elevated and non-elevated building in or near historic areas.	Planning	Agreed	Continuous	Legislative	The LDRs have been updated over time to achieve this goal. However, this goal will also be incorporated into the code rewrite.	See Recommendation 21			
31	In conjunction with streamlining regulations to reduce the use of variances, HPB's jurisdictions should be to determine historic appropriateness only.	Planning	Not Recommended	N/A	Legislative	No Action At This Time	N/A			
32	Include other review agencies in the Planning review, and where possible identify and ensure resolution of issues that would otherwise potentially delay or derail a project once it reaches the building permit stage.	Planning - Lead, All	Agreed	Implanted	Administrative	See Recommendation 17	See Recommendation 17			
33	Implement a Development Review Committee of staff responsible for transportation, public works, floodplain management, urban forestry to participate in pre-application meetings and review projects before they are seen by the community's Land Use board.	Planning - Lead, All	Agreed	Implanted	Administrative	See Recommendation 17	See Recommendation 17			