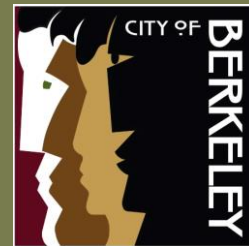


**BERKELEY PLANNING
DEPARTMENT
IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE**

City Council Worksession, June 27, 2017



Presenters:

Timothy Burroughs, Interim Director

Alex Roshal, Building Official

Steve Buckley, Land Use Manager

**Pam Johnson, Permit Service Center
Manager**

Jim Bondi, Associate Management Analyst



PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- Department snapshot
- Importance of customer service
- Zucker Report and recommendations
- Implementing customer service improvements
- Key takeaways and discussion



PLANNING DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

MISSION -

Enhance safety, livability and resilience in the built environment and to work together with the community to promote and protect Berkeley's distinctive neighborhoods, vibrant commercial areas, unique character and natural resources for current and future generations.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

- Land Use Planning
- Building & Safety: Permit Service Center, Plan Reviews, Building Inspections, Housing Inspections, Seismic Safety
- Office Of Energy & Sustainable Development
- Toxics Management



CUSTOMER SERVICE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Clear, easy-to-access
information about
what is required

Clear, consistent
expectations
about timelines
for review

A welcoming
environment with
professional staff



EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE IS CRITICAL

Permit Center is the face of the City for many community members

Permits are designed to ensure safety and livability

City wants to encourage new housing, businesses, and jobs

Need to maintain a positive work environment for staff



THE CURRENT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Zoning approval timelines

Zoning
Certificate:
2-3 days

AUPs: 2-8
months

UPs, DRC,
LPC, ZAB,
Appeals: 2-
24 months



THE CURRENT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Building Permit timelines

Over-the-Counter:
24 hours

Small Projects:
1 week

Moderate to Large Projects:
4-6 weeks

APPLICATIONS IN LAST YEAR:

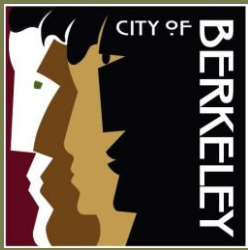
2,973

1,259

992

TOTAL PERMIT ACTIVITIES LAST YEAR:

12,140 Customer Contacts



ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS

- Reviewed FUND\$ and Accela permit records
- Observed Permit Service Center operations
- Conducted surveys and interviews with 50 staff from multiple departments
- Interviewed City Board/Commission chairs
- Conducted email survey of 1,330 clients
- Led customer focus group of 13 frequent clients



ZUCKER REPORT IDENTIFIED SEVERAL PLANNING DEPARTMENT STRENGTHS

All plans received electronically

Accela allows simultaneous plan review by multiple parties

Highly educated, knowledgeable staff

Well maintained Enterprise Fund

New Permit Service Center and offices

Fire and Public Works co-located at PSC counter

Appointments by phone or at PSC Welcome Desk



ZUCKER REPORT IDENTIFIED SEVERAL PLANNING DEPARTMENT AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Project approval times are very long

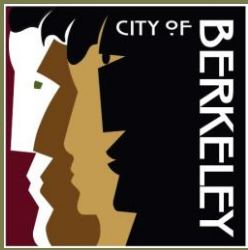
Confusing Zoning Ordinance and multiple Boards/Commissions add cost and time

Accela not fully configured and training not sufficient - need full adoption by other key departments

Fund balance well short of best practice of one year expenses

Comprehensive strategy needed for Planning, other City depts

Need consistency in Code interpretations - staff policies and procedures not captured in writing



IMPLEMENTING CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

- Clear Information for customers – Clarify what must be submitted to receive a permit, and how to submit it

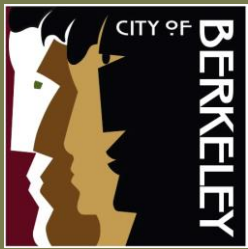
Example: Update submittal checklist and all project handouts

- Consistent Interpretation of zoning and building codes – Create manuals and improve training for all staff

Example: A Land Use Manual detailing all processes and code interpretations

- Zoning Ordinance – Simplify/Clarify for customers and staff

Example: “Definitions” have a separate Section, yet some terms are defined elsewhere.



IMPLEMENTING CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS, continued

- Process Timelines: Reduce backlog of plan reviews, reduce duration of all Land Use and Building processes.
Example: Cut AUP approval times by 50%.
- Performance Standards established and reported out. Set measures for every function, and track and report to the public.
Example: Time spent on PSC visits, time spent on plan checks
- Technology improvement: Realize full potential of Accela, train all City users.
Example: Land Use, Fire, and PW should all use Accela for all application reviews



EFFORTS UNDERWAY

- Recruiting to fill vacant position with Customer Service Plan implementation as primary job
- Have designated Zoning Administrator and set Land Use review performance standards
- Have begun updating submittal checklists and all City materials for clarity and easy access online and in the PSC
- Have begun work with consultant to revise Zoning Ordinance for clarity
- IT staff will be embedded in Planning to accelerate Accela improvements and training
- Training with all Planning staff will start in August to build full buy-in for the improved Customer Service recommendations



NEXT STEPS

Short-term:

- Fill vacant position on Director's Office staff with Customer Service Plan as primary duty
- Implement Tier 1 customer service improvement plan

Tier 2 and Beyond:

- In July 2018, assess short-term Tier 1 outcomes and make adjustments as needed
- Prioritize remaining recommendations from Zucker report and develop Tier 2 implementation plan
- Continually update City Council on progress and outcomes



QUESTIONS?