

City of Fort Worth Development Services Department to Streamline the Permit Application Process

As Fort Worth continues to expand, the City is thinking strategically about how to improve processes, rather than remaining with the status quo practice. To assist in that endeavor, the Development Services Department is working to streamline the permit and application procedures for customers, starting with the Certificate of Occupancy (CO).



Representatives from the Development Advisory Committee, Fort Worth Real Estate Council, Greater Fort Worth Association of Realtors, Society of Commercial Realtors, local consulting firms, and various other interested parties joined the City of Fort Worth Development Services Department in researching how the city can improve upon the current process for obtaining a certificate of occupancy in Fort Worth. The city consulted a professional in the Lean Six Sigma, who could help the group identify, define, measure, and analyze potential problems in the process, and optimize possible solutions. From this group, the [Certificate of Occupancy Process Continuous Improvement Initiatives plan](#) was created, outlining the strategy to address the identified issues.

“It was important to us to include all the voices of our customers when we are looking to make progress,” said D.J. Harrell, Director for the City of Fort Worth Development Services Department. “Getting such a varied group of people together gives us a much clearer, and wider, view of the wants and needs of our clients.”

The plan highlights several ways to address the current issues in the permit procedure, which will result in a higher level of service and synergy among customers and staff. The goal of the department is to see a 50 percent reduction in both the number of incomplete, and voided, CO permit applications, as well as, a 25 percent reduction in the number of zoning application holds by the end of the fiscal year 2022.

Commitment to improving the permit application process is a priority of the city’s development services department, and an ongoing one. To that end, the city is working on hiring a full-time staff member to specifically focus on improvements throughout all aspects of the development process.



“Ensuring our customer service is seamless and reliable is paramount,” Harrell said. “I am extremely appreciative of the hard work our Assistant Director, Jennifer Roberts, department staff, and other members of the group continue to do, because these changes and enhancements to the permit and application procedure is just the beginning - not the end.”