

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council**

August 24, 2023

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**SUBJECT: Analysis of FY23 Budgeted Resource Improvements**

This budget response provides an overview of FY2023 budget resource increases for the Development Services Department. The City of Fort Worth has experienced unprecedented growth in the last decade including record permit volumes in 2020, 2021, and 2022. This led to a review of Development Services' staffing levels and service delivery goals. In FY23, the City budget included an increase in resources to meet the resource demands of 2019 in anticipation of the economy slowing and better automation in 2023 and 2024.

This report outlines the resources allocated and the respective service level improvement.

<b>DECISION PACKAGE</b>	<b>RESULTS</b>
Business Process Analyst II - GIS	This addition has enabled the team to (1) increase the number of cases processed and mapped each day, (2) improve customer service, and (3) begin creating GIS training resources for DSD staff for the upcoming GIS platform update. This addition has also enabled the group to undertake a major GIS data clean-up initiative and to create operational readiness within the team.
Accela Team Senior Business Process Analyst (1), Business Process Analysts (2)	The addition of 3 new positions and the creation of an Accela team has improved permit workflow-related issue resolution times for City staff in multiple departments who are involved in the development process and for customers. Resolutions within 48 hours have increased from 93% for 328 FY'22 tickets to 99% for 579 tickets in FY'23. In addition, this team facilitated the completion of 25 Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt improvement projects which resulted in improved efficiencies of workflow and task completion for City staff while streamlining the process for customers working with Accela.
Project Assistant – Transportation Impact Fees	This addition has enabled the team to (1) improve the timeliness of building permit reviews including the calculation and levying of Transportation Impact fees, (2) improve attendance at Pre-Development Conferences (PDCs), and (3) devote more time to research long-open credit agreements to understand the current situation and to more timely complete agreements, amend them to incorporate permits, and issue refunds.
Plans Examiner	Given the higher demand for project facilitation services, the position was reclassified to a Senior Development Project Facilitator. The position coordinates large and signature development projects submitted to the City through the city's development process. This addition has enabled the Project Facilitation team to deploy resources to small business coordination by reassigning an existing Development Project Facilitator to focus on local small business development projects.
Sr Customer Service Rep (1) Development Project Coordinator (1)	The addition of these 2 new positions has added oversight and coordination to the grading permit process and offers a single point of contact for PDCs and floodplain pre-submittal meetings. The staff has been able to create a database library of existing studies to allow development teams to directly access these studies. This database improves the customer experience and offers greater efficiencies to drainage study reviews and other related stormwater tasks. These additions have enabled the team to process 95% of grading permit reviews within the 10-day review timeframe goal.
Miscellaneous Projects Team (4): Sr. PE (2), Contract Specialist, and Engineering Tech	Two (2) of the four (4) authorized positions were filled in July. This is due in part to the delay in the procurement of on-call contractors as part of the transition of the Miscellaneous Projects function from the Water Department to Development Services and to engineering functions being very difficult to hire.

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Construction Supervisor (1) Construction Inspector (1)	The addition of these 2 new positions has enabled the Parkway Permitting team to (1) provide more comprehensive reviews and (2) reduce the number of inspections being rolled over to the next day to almost zero.
Professional Engineer (1)	This position has not been filled due to engineering-related positions being hard to fill. Therefore, the department has not realized the desired improvements. The Development Services and Human Resources Departments have contracted with multiple third-party recruitment firms for additional support in finding and hiring qualified engineering professionals.
Engineering Tech (1)	This position has not been filled due to engineering-related positions being hard to fill. Therefore, the department has not realized the desired improvements. The Development Services and Human Resources Departments have contracted with multiple third-party recruitment firms for additional support in finding and hiring qualified engineering professionals.
Sr Plans Examiner (1), Plans Examiner (1)	The addition of these 2 new positions has enabled the team to reduce the average commercial and residential building permit first review timeframes from seven (7) business days to two to three (2-3) business days.
Plans Examiner - Gas Well	This addition has enabled the team to (1) expedite plan and plat reviews and (2) increase gas well site visits to identify and require hazard abatement.
Sr Combination Inspectors (2)	This position has not been filled due to building inspector positions being hard to fill. Therefore, the department has not realized the desired improvements. Currently, the building inspection team has a 33% vacancy rate.
Administrative Services Coordinator	This addition has enabled the team to (1) provide guidance and training to new and existing managers in areas such as hard-to-fill positions, ADA accommodations, and disciplinary actions; (2) conduct and record training for staff on entering and correcting timesheets which has helped to reduce errors with payroll; and (3) work with staff to reduce the days a positions remain vacant by ensuring vacancies are posted as soon as resignations are received. This position is also assisting with the Development Services Structural Efficiency Study.
Development Services Support Team (12 FTE)	The addition of 12 new positions and the creation of a Division Support team has enabled Development Services Support to (1) reduce the permit application Electronic Document Review (EDR) time from 21 days to 24 hours, (2) the customer walk-in wait time from 00:20:30 to 00:02:47, and (3) the telephone hold time from nine-minute (9min) to less than three minutes (3 min). The department-wide training specialist included in this group has enabled the department to (1) conduct a department-wide training day and (2) partner with Human Resources to roll out the CFW Exceptional Customer Experience training as recommended by the GFWREC. By calendar year-end, this position will have coordinated with staff to deliver an employee training manual that is specific to all tasks and each position within the department.
Sr Planner - Zoning	This addition has enabled the team to work with the Diversity and Inclusion Department to create a uniform approach to evaluating zoning equity. In the coming year, staff will work with the Fort Worth Lab to ensure land use planning and equity zoning goals are aligned.

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Urban Forestry Team Inspector (1), Plans Examiner (1)	The addition of the Urban Forestry Inspector has enabled the team to (1) moved the responsibility of performing Urban Forestry inspections of installed tree protection, planted canopy, supposed/illegal tree removals, and 2/5-year warranty inspections from two Gas/Well Inspectors, and other UF Staff; and (2) perform final and warranty inspections required by Ordinance that were not previously completed due to resource limitations. The team anticipates being fully up to date on all inspections within 6 six to nine months. The Urban Forestry plans examiner was moved to support the Downtown Design team. This addition has enabled the Downtown Design team to attend Pre-Development Conference and increase the number of Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ), Mixed Use zoning (MU1), Urban Residential (UR), and Downtown plan reviews undertaken by the team.
Preservation & Design Planners (2)	This addition has enabled the team to (1) host more community engagement workshops and (2) undertake long-range planning projects that had been shelved such as the strategic update of the Preservation Plan, updates to Camp Bowie form-based code, and assistance with the Main Street program.
Sr Planner – Downtown (1)	This addition has enabled the team to (1) improve the coordination of the Downtown Design Review Board by creating and implementing standard operating procedures for the documentation process and case management, and (2) create training to help the community better understand the Downtown Urban Design Districts.
Sr Planner- MU/UR	This addition has enabled the team to (1) implement new strategies and create standard operating procedures for the MU/UR Districts, and (2) create training to help the community better understand MU/UR Districts. The position has also started to create an internal organizational structure to improve communication between the applicant and staff.
Subdivision Ordinance Consulting	This project is ongoing with the goal of gaining guidance in promoting infill-specific development in the City thereby making it easier to develop in our urban areas. Staff is currently working with a consulting firm and development community stakeholders on final recommendations for development-related ordinances and policy amendments.
Zoning Ordinance Evaluation Consulting	This project is ongoing with the goal of gaining guidance for promoting a diversity of housing typologies across the City in response to the rapid growth and increased demand for additional housing options. Staff is currently soliciting a consulting firm through the City's Request for Proposals (RFP) process.

If you have questions concerning this information, please contact D. J. Harrell, Development Services Director at 817-392-8032 or [d.j.harrell@fortworthtexas.gov](mailto:d.j.harrell@fortworthtexas.gov).

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