

**City of Fernley Development Review Operational Assessment  
Draft Implementation Action Plan**

**September 2021**

City of Fernley Development Review Operational Assessment  
Draft Implementation Action Plan

Management Partners

Rec No.	Memorandum Recommendation	Implementation Steps	Priority <sup>1</sup>	Person Responsible <sup>2</sup>	Comments
1	Hold development services staff accountable for improving customer service (including, employee responsiveness, helpfulness, and interpersonal treatment of customers).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and create customer service guidelines and share with staff</li> <li>• Provide customer service training to staff</li> <li>• Incorporate customer service evaluations into yearly staff performance reviews</li> </ul>	Priority 1	Deputy City Manager	Staff performance reviews should include an evaluation of their ability to anticipate problems and actively engage customers in problem solving, in balance with their role as impartial regulators.
2	Conduct regular training for staff about the various components of the development review process to promote higher level of customer service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop training materials to inform staff about the various components of the development review process</li> <li>• Create a schedule for regular, training for staff to promote a higher level of customer service</li> <li>• Survey staff after training sessions to assess their understanding of the development review process</li> </ul>	Priority 1	Deputy City Manager	Coordinate with Recommendation # 6
3	Survey stakeholders and customers biennially and assess areas of improved satisfaction and areas where improvement is needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research best practice survey questions for development review stakeholders</li> <li>• Create a survey using the identified best practice survey questions</li> <li>• Deploy the survey to customers on a biennial basis</li> <li>• Analyze the survey results to identify areas of customer satisfaction and areas where improvement is needed</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Building Official	Coordinate with Recommendation # 21
4	Provide detailed process information on the City's website in a manner that is consolidated, readily accessible, understandable, and current.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the process information that would be most helpful to customers</li> <li>• Develop forms, guidelines, and checklists for the identified processes</li> <li>• Post the materials to the city's website and inform applicants of its availability.</li> </ul>	Priority 1	Building Official	Coordinate with Recommendation # 29
5	Create process guides for development application types (commercial, residential, new and rehab/renovations) and publish with target cycle times for each phase of the review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify key application types and prepare narrative</li> <li>• Determine appropriate cycle time estimates for the commercial and residential application review processes</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Building Official	

<sup>1</sup> Priority 1: Important to accomplish without delay and/or easy to accomplish.

Priority 2: Second tier of importance to accomplish and/or may involve some complexity or time to complete

Priority 3: Least urgent to complete and/or may take longer to set-up or to execute

<sup>2</sup> To establish clear accountability there should be a single manager assigned responsibility for completing implementation of each recommendation. Where more than one manager is identified in this column, responsibility should be decided when the Final Action Plan is prepared.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create guidance documents to help applicants and staff understand the development review process steps</li> <li>• Inform applicants of the estimated cycle time at the time of application submittal</li> <li>• Post the guidance documents, estimated cycle times along with the forms, regulations, and checklists to the Fernley website</li> </ul>			
6	Conduct biennial process improvement workshops to identify and implement customer-focused improvements, including reviewing and updating existing process maps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review new land use/land development regulations and development review procedures enacted over the past two years</li> <li>• Identify and prioritize development review processes that are ripe for improvement</li> <li>• Survey applicants at the conclusion of the process to assess how well the review process works</li> <li>• Conduct the process improvement workshops biennially to identify customer-focused improvements</li> <li>• Modify processes based on workshop results</li> <li>• Update process maps, forms, guidelines, checklists and other documents to reflect the modified process</li> <li>• Notify customers of improvements</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Deputy City Manager	
7	Develop an interdepartmental working group charged with oversight of development review and permitting business systems and reporting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify appropriate staff to form an interdepartmental working group charged with oversight of development review and permitting business systems and reporting</li> <li>• Charge the group with advising the city manager about needed upgrades, the procurement of new software and hardware, and reports that can be used to track performance</li> </ul>	Priority 1	Deputy City Manager	The group should meet at least quarterly, and participant assignments should be tracked and completed in a timely manner.
8	Involve key external reviewers in business system improvements and explore how the system can better support outside reviews.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure external reviewers (Fire Marshal) not included in the interdepartmental working group are included in discussions about system improvements and to learn about how the system can better support outside reviews</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Deputy City Manager	
9	Create an administrator/permit coordinator position to manage the use of the SmartGov system, and act as liaison for training and an ombudsman for permitting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a job description and classification for the position, in consultation with Human Resources</li> <li>• Obtain City Council authorization</li> <li>• Advertise the position</li> <li>• Review and interview top applicants</li> </ul>	Priority.1	Deputy City Manager	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer position and finalize paperwork</li> <li>• Organize training for onboarding employee</li> </ul>			
10	Fund annual training of staff on the land management business system and workflow management practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify funding in the budget for annual staff training on the land management business system</li> <li>• Ensure the identified funding is included in the budget annually</li> </ul>	Priority 1	Deputy City Manager	Coordinate with Recommendation # 32
11	Connect the development review and permitting business system to an ERP backbone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage a third-party consultant to ensure SmartGov and the City's ERP are digitally connected</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Building Official	Coordinate with Recommendation #26
12	Used a phased approach to implement electronic plan submittals and develop a firm deadline to go paperless for development and permitting applications and supporting materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine how long it will take for the City to eliminate paper processes in development review</li> <li>• Set a firm deadline for going paperless</li> <li>• Re-integrate BlueBeam software into the SmartGov system</li> <li>• Ensure staff have the appropriate hardware to conduct digital plan review</li> <li>• Identify order of permits to implement in phased approach</li> <li>• Identify which areas of application will need to change for electronic submission (i.e., contact information)</li> <li>• Train staff on how to use BlueBeam and the electronic workflow process in SmartGov</li> <li>• Communicate the change to customers and provide information on what customers must do to comply with digital submissions</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Deputy City Manager	
13	Develop management reports that analyze performance throughout the development review and permitting process and review them on a regular basis with staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on best practices, determine which performance measures will be tracked (i.e., workload, efficiency, and effectiveness measures)</li> <li>• Review the list of performance measures with department heads</li> <li>• Align SmartGov with the established performance measures</li> <li>• Set up mechanisms/systems to track and report performance measures</li> <li>• Provide a briefing for the City Manager about the system of performance measures which have been identified</li> <li>• Provide a briefing for affected staff in the various departments</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Building Official	

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14	Monitor and report cycle time performance for development review applications (by type of project, zoning classification, assigned staff and other metrics).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a mechanism for monitoring plan review activity, to ensure established turnaround times are followed</li> <li>• Set a regular schedule to review and monitor actual turnaround times, compared with adopted targets</li> <li>• Prepare a quarterly report for the Director to assess turn-around times</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Building Official	
15	Ensure all plan review staff enter comments directly into SmartGov.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform plan review staff that all comments must be entered into SmartGov</li> <li>• Periodically review SmartGov to ensure that plan review comments are entered</li> <li>• Identify and work with staff that are not routinely adding comments to SmartGov</li> </ul>	Priority 1	Deputy City Manager	
16	Delegate applications for review within 24-hours of receipt by the department.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a policy that all plans should be assigned to a reviewer upon receipt of a completed application</li> <li>• Inform staff of the policy</li> <li>• Periodically review SmartGov to ensure that plan review comments are entered</li> </ul>	Priority 1	Deputy City Manager	
17	Invest in technology to automatically fold letters and stuff envelopes for notices to residents and property owners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research hardware for folding and stuffing envelopes for notices to residents</li> <li>• Identify the hardware best suited for Fernley</li> <li>• Procure the hardware</li> <li>• Train staff on how to use the hardware</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Building Official	
18	Produce a detailed process map for each type of development permit or entitlement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify staff to create detailed process maps for each development permit type or entitlement</li> <li>• Prioritize the process maps to be created</li> <li>• Allow staff the time necessary to document the process steps</li> <li>• Provide the final process maps to staff and customers</li> </ul>	Priority 3	Building Official	Coordinate with Recommendation #20
19	Train/cross-train staff on internal development review processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify dedicated time for training</li> <li>• Train all development review staff on the Planning, Engineering and Building process steps for general knowledge</li> </ul>	Priority 1	Deputy City Manager	Coordinate with Recommendation #2

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20	Reorganize the customer counter to make intake more user-friendly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review potential front-line staff changes to determine modifications to be more customer service oriented</li> <li>Obtain approval from city leaders for front counter changes</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Building Official	
21	Educate customers about the development review processes using existing and new handouts and the city website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine if the development review handouts have the appropriate information to assist customers</li> <li>Ensure the creation of handouts is coordinated among the entire development review team</li> <li>Create a handout with Code and other information for applicants to access the portal</li> <li>Ensure process documents and requirements are available and easy to access on the city's website</li> </ul>	Priority 1	Building Official	
22	Implement a technology fee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine appropriate methodology for establishing the fee</li> <li>Identify costs for ongoing administration and training</li> <li>Identify appropriate development review hardware and software (i.e., e-plan review)</li> <li>Obtain council approval for the fee</li> <li>Inform customers of the new fee</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Deputy City Manager	
23	Accept E-Checks to pay for fees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research how to implement the acceptance of e-checks to pay for fees</li> <li>Coordinate with the Finance Department to ensure integration with general ledger codes</li> <li>Inform applicants they can pay for fees with e-checks</li> </ul>	Priority 3	Deputy City Manager	
24	Standardize file naming and document archiving protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a naming convention for files</li> <li>Develop documentation for applicants to provide correctly named files</li> <li>Create a file archiving policy</li> <li>Delete files that do not require archiving</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Building Official	
25	Hire or promote a SmartGov administrator/permit coordinator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare a job description and classification for the position, in consultation with Human Resources</li> <li>Obtain City Council authorization</li> <li>Advertise the position</li> <li>Review and interview top applicants</li> <li>Offer position and finalize paperwork</li> <li>Organize training for onboarding employee</li> </ul>	Priority 1	Deputy City Manager	

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26	Re-Implement SmartGov and provide robust SmartGov training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire SmartGov to re-implement the technology system</li> <li>• Hire SmartGov to provide on-site training for all development staff</li> <li>• Develop training for different user groups</li> <li>• Use SmartGov Administrator/ Permit Coordinator to continue training</li> <li>• Determine the number of authorized users for SmartGov and add users as needed</li> </ul>	Priority 1	Deputy City Manager	Coordinate with Recommendation #11
27	Create templates for letters, permits and certificates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify language for templates</li> <li>• Create templates and integrate into SmartGov</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Building Official	
28	Program SmartGov to create system generated letter of deficiencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a list of standard comments to be integrated into SmartGov</li> <li>• Develop a template letter of deficiencies</li> <li>• Update the functionality of SmartGov</li> <li>• Ensure applicant contact information is added to SmartGov</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Building Official	
29	Ensure the SmartGov portal shows permit review status and estimated times for completion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update portal to include necessary information</li> <li>• Educate the customer on how to access the portal and ensure the applicant has the code they need to access the SmartGov portal</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Building Official	
30	Ensure information entered into SmartGov includes a correct list of inspections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add a building review workflow step for repeat residential permits</li> <li>• Determine who is responsible for ensuring inspection information is correct in SmartGov for each permit</li> <li>• Update SmartGov</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Building Official	
31	Develop a process to ensure permits are closed out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a list of all conditions of approval needed for planning</li> <li>• Implement a Planning Certificate of Completion</li> <li>• Formalize the role of Planning and Engineering in the completion of projects</li> <li>• Include planning reviews to the list of final inspections</li> <li>• Communicate which approvals are needed to the customer before a Certificate of Occupancy can be issued</li> </ul>	Priority 1	Building Official	
32	Cultivate employee development and skillsets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review job descriptions and job functions within the development review team</li> <li>• Identify and provide professional development opportunities</li> </ul>	Priority 2	Deputy City Manager	

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33	Obtain commitment from leadership to ensure all applicants and employees are treated equitably.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure leaders confer with staff prior to responding to applicants regarding timelines and approvals</li> <li>• Ensure development review staff communicate any potential conflicts with applicants to leaders</li> </ul>	Priority 1	City Manager	