

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN OF CITYGATE STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Priority A/B/C/D	Status	Progress	Next Steps
STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS				
<p>Strategic Recommendation No. 1: Establish leadership stability for the long term; develop a Succession Plan for the Director position; create an Economic Development Manager position.</p>	A	Complete	Megan Hunter was hired on September 8, 2015 and Andy Myrick was appointed Economic Development Manager under the City Manager’s Office. The Community Development Director has been working on building leadership skills of key Permit Center staff.	
<p>Strategic Recommendation No. 2: Reinforce the Department’s ability to anticipate and plan for its future; reinforce both a “sense of urgency” and a “sense of possibilities”; get the Department’s “house in order” so it can expect more from interdepartmental services and from applicants for the good of the community.</p>	A	Ongoing	Re-organized the Community Development Department creating new Divisions to better support the core functions of the Permit Center. Brought in new leadership in Engineering and Code Enforcement and increased capacity of Engineering, Fire, Code Enforcement, and Permit Services through the hiring of key personnel. Development Review Committee (DRC) continues to meet weekly to coordinate projects among departments. In September 2016, a weekly Permit Center Staff Meeting was added to identify improvements to operations to foster better customer service and productivity.	Create a new Permit Center Action Plan based upon those areas of improvement identified during weekly coordination meetings. Identify ways to further reduce duplication of services to reduce personnel related costs by at least \$15,000 next fiscal year.

<p>LEGEND</p> <p>A Recommendation mandatory or critical B Strongly recommended C Not critical, but will improve operations D Recommended, but additional study required</p>

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<p>Strategic Recommendation No. 3: Employ “investment thinking” rather than “reactive thinking”; get out ahead of demand; reach out to developers and builders to fine-tune permit activity projections; develop an “18-month Rolling Revenue and Expenditure Forecast.”</p>	A	Ongoing	<p>Developed permit activity projections as part of the 2017 budget process and continuously review the projections in relation to activity. Worked closely with the Revenue Officer to better track revenue and collect unpaid fees and fines. Continuously share information across departments on potential pipeline projects and provide multiple opportunities (Public Counter, Development Review Committee) for developers to receive guidance on potential projects confidentially.</p>	<p>Continue to work with the Development Community, Finance, and other Divisions in Community Development to improve permit activity projections.</p>
<p>Strategic Recommendation No. 4: Increase expectations and resources simultaneously; invest in the future, not the past.</p>	A	Ongoing	<p>Adopted a new planning fee schedule in November 2015 and have been working with Finance to increase fees July 2017 based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Hired Lisa Brinton, Senior Planner who leads a new Plan and Project Implementation Division responsible for monitoring implementation of the Economic Development Element and focusing staff on facilitation of economic development.</p>	<p>Lead a review of development fees in FY 17/18 to strike a balance for greater cost recovery with facilitating economic development. Work with the Chamber and Development Community to establish new performance target that incentivize performance.</p>
<p>Strategic Recommendation No. 5: Lift the hiring freeze for positions that can be justified based on cost savings; maintain “scalable” resources to meet spikes in demand.</p>	A	Complete	<p>The hiring freeze was lifted in 2015 and Community Development has been able to fill new positions. At mid-year, City Council approved the re-classification of Kristy Parker as a Community Development Administrative Supervisor, changed a Permit Clerk position to Building Permit Specialist, and added an Administrative Aide.</p>	<p>Work with HR to complete the re-classification process and plans to open the Building Permit Specialist position later in May. In the 2017/2018 budget, the Department is requesting 2 new code enforcement officer positions and a full-time Administrative Secretary.</p>

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<p>Strategic Recommendation No. 6: Incentivize the Department such that staff can “run it like a business”; immediately establish a Development Services Fund; evaluate all permit fees biennially to ensure full cost recovery.</p>	A	Ongoing	Implementation of New World accounting system has allowed closer financial management. After discussions with business community in Fall of 2015, it was determined that full cost recovery for Planning is infeasible. Cost recovery of planning services improved from 20% to approximately 43% last year. We have also worked with Finance to establish a Development Enterprise Fund for FY 17/18 beginning with the Permit Services Division.	Gradually add other Permit Center functions to the Development Enterprise Fund and work with the Development Community to increase cost recovery while improving service.
<p>Strategic Recommendation No. 7: Eliminate service requests and complaint end-runs through City Councilmember’s; reinforce a functional chain-of-command involving all departments.</p>	A	Complete	Protocol established to have all Councilmember inquiries, complaints and meetings go through the City Manager/Department Heads. Permit Center complaints have significantly declined and are usually resolved at the managerial level.	Continue to ensure protocol is being followed.
<p>Strategic Recommendation No. 8: Consider integrating Fire Inspection, Code Enforcement, and Building Inspection Services into a combined Safety Services Bureau division.</p>	A	Ongoing	Completely re-organized the Code Enforcement Division and greatly improved effectiveness. Re-positioned the Code Enforcement Division to act as the lead in coordinating a multiple department/division response to problematic properties. Last year, Code Enforcement worked closely with Legal to institute receivership cases on multiple nuisance properties. Code Enforcement is working with the Police Department to assume responsibility for some abandoned vehicle enforcement.	Continue to increase Code Enforcement work on nuisance properties. Review inspection services across departments and determine if some activities can be combined. <i>(This was already completed with Fire and Building Inspections on residential properties and solar permits.)</i> Work with the Police Department on the possible shift of abandoned vehicles to Code Enforcement with approval of two new code enforcement officers.

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Strategic Recommendation No. 9: Utilize Determinate Processing Agreements for high priority projects and for customers that have a history of performance issues.	A	Ongoing	Informal “agreements” have accelerated processing for Haciendas Senior and Haciendas Phase III. More recently, agreements for Northridge Mall and FGA plans have been established.	Evaluate the use of these agreements both informally and formally on poor performers.
Strategic Recommendation No. 10: Redesign the Permit Center counter area and work stations to enhance customer experience.	A	Complete		
OTHER IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATIONS				
Recommendation No. 11: Establish a Senior Supervisor-Greeter position to lead the front counter service area.	A	In Progress	We currently employ part-time employees who serve as greeters. After interviewing several regular Permit Center customers and staff, it was determined that we also need to hire a technical navigator who can connect applicants with the appropriate staff, answer questions, and process low-level permits. At mid-year, City Council approved the re-classification of Kristy Parker to Community Development Administrative Supervisor and conversion of a vacant Permit Clerk to a Building Permit Specialist. We expect to complete this process by the end of the fiscal year. We will retain the part-time greeters.	Complete reclassification and hiring process.

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<p>Recommendation No. 12: Distribute customer satisfaction cards to all customers; monitor and discuss returned cards on an ongoing basis.</p>	A	Complete	<p>We worked with the Chamber to design and implement online surveys and widely promote the link on emails and comment cards. We also re-started more simple paper comment cards. Unfortunately, most customer feedback is provided by the paper comment cards.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor and discuss customer feedback. Start meeting with the Chamber Business Development Committee (BDC) in July 2017 to identify ways to encourage customer feedback and to identify specific ways to improve performance.</p>
<p>Recommendation No. 13: Establish a Leadership Support Team with quick weekly meetings and an agenda.</p>	B	Complete	<p>We currently hold weekly Permit Center Coordination meetings with key managerial staff. We also hold bi-monthly departmental meetings comprised of Division Heads to better coordinate amongst each other.</p>	<p>Continue regularly scheduled meetings</p>
<p>Recommendation No. 14: Retain only “can-do” employees that find solutions and commit to and deliver excellent customer service.</p>	A	Ongoing	<p>Customer service performance is used to evaluate employees. Managers use probationary periods to address performance and customer service issues and only retain highly rated employees. In April 2016, we established working groups related to customer service, permit center coordination, and training to create new action plans developed by employees at all levels to empower employees to find and implement solutions.</p>	<p>Ensure all employees receive annual evaluations and improvement action plans are created for poor/fair performers. Work with HR to discipline or terminate poor employees when appropriate. Continue using working groups and innovation teams to foster an entrepreneurial spirit and make positive change within the department.</p>
<p>Recommendation No. 15: Establish a “one-bite-at-the-apple” administrative policy.</p>	B	Ongoing	<p>Development Review Process integrates interdisciplinary review of projects. Standardized procedures are in place, along with extensive use of Trakit software to ensure all reviews are completed concurrently.</p>	<p>Establish new metrics to minimize plan check revisions and continue close coordination with other departments to limit duplicative work.</p>

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<p>Recommendation No. 16: Involve Department Heads on the Development Review Team (DRT) on a monthly basis to ensure cooperation and resources; set goals; involve Assistant City Manager, if needed.</p>	B	Ongoing	Weekly City Manager/Department Head meetings ensure consistent communication between departments and follow-up meetings are scheduled as needed.	
<p>Recommendation No. 17: Conduct a training needs assessment and establish a Training Improvement Team.</p>	A	Ongoing	A Training Improvement Team/working group was established in April 2016 and has developed an action plan. Permit Center Managers work together to discuss and plan annual training and whenever possible to encourage training across disciplines. Kristy Parker is working with other departments to conduct additional training on Trakit.	Continue to work with the Training Improvement Team to implement action plan.
<p>Recommendation No. 18: Contract with other cities and the County for peak workload and expertise assistance.</p>	B	Complete <i>(continue to re-evaluate)</i>	Outreach to neighboring cities and the county was conducted, but at this time there is no interest. As needed, contractors have provided additional capacity. We have been able to hire a Senior Plan Check Engineer with a structural license to minimize dependency on contract staff.	Initiate review of model Permit Centers to determine best ways of providing consistent staffing with the ebb and flow of workload.

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<p>Recommendation No. 19: Restructure the Vendor Renewal Program to streamline permits and improve compliance in the field.</p>	B	In Progress	<p>Staff has begun to work with Engineering and the Legal Department to revise the Vendor Ordinance to improve code enforcement for non-compliance. Because these issues are largely concentrated in East Salinas, we decided to align the engagement process with the Alisal Vibrancy Plan. It is expected that the new ordinance will be presented to City Council at the end of 2017 for consideration. In the meantime, Code Enforcement has increased its enforcement of vendors resulting in greater compliance with the existing ordinance.</p>	<p>Continue work with Engineering and Legal on development of the ordinance. Initiate community input process regarding ordinance in conjunction with the Alisal Vibrancy Plan. Continue coordination between Engineering, Planning, and Code Enforcement in the issuance of vendor permits and enforcement.</p>
<p>Recommendation No. 20: Continue to develop in-house expertise on State regulations (storm water, CEQA, etc.).</p>	B	Ongoing	<p>Staff expertise has improved with increased training over the last year few years. Training is focused on learning about the most up-to-date State regulations.</p>	<p>Continue to assess training needs through the Training Improvement Team/working group.</p>
<p>Recommendation No. 21: Institute an “Unanticipated Service” program.</p>	A	Ongoing	<p>Through better tracking, the City is able to better measure customer service metrics. The City has implemented the eTrakit Program and is using iPads for building and code enforcement inspectors.</p>	
<p>Recommendation No. 22: Fill the vacant Plan Checker II position or create a Plan Check Engineer position.</p>	B	Complete	<p>We were able to create a new Senior Plan Check Engineer position for the Permit Services Division and hired Angeline Sickler who started April 2017.</p>	

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Recommendation No. 23: Create a written Policies and Procedures handbook for the Plan Check staff.	B	Ongoing	We have created a procedures and policy manual for the Permit Center and through ongoing weekly meetings have gradually refined existing procedures/policies or added new ones.	Continue work through weekly meetings to improve procedure and policy manual. Reach out to other jurisdictions regarding model procedures or policies.
Recommendation No. 24: All plan check comments/corrections should be made available to the applicant at the time they are generated by staff.	A	Complete	Once all the reviews are complete, an email/fax is sent to the applicant with all comments or approvals at one time. Applicants also may sign up for direct access to Trakit to follow progress on permits.	Identify new ways to enhance Trakit to promote a transparent permitting process. On complex projects, improve the consolidation of comments across departments to expedite response times and ensure guidance is not contradictory.
Recommendation No. 25: Place the cell phone numbers for the Inspection staff on their business cards and on the City website.	A	Complete	Customers may now call inspectors directly on cell phones. Cell numbers are included on business cards.	
Recommendation No. 26: Establish a web-based inspection request page.	B	Complete	Inspection scheduling can be conducted online.	
Recommendation No. 27: Hire at least two full-time Combination Building Inspectors.	B	Complete	Although a challenge to find qualified personnel, the City was able to complete the hiring of two full-time inspectors. Due to increase caseload, the City has retained one contract inspector.	
Recommendation No. 28: Purchase shirts, jackets and hats with the City logo for the Inspection staff.	B	In Progress	The Department recently filled the remaining inspector position and until then, it was not feasible to institute a uniform policy. Now that hiring is completed, staff can begin discussions regarding implementation.	Work with staff, HR and union to create standard uniform policies.

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Recommendation No. 29: Establish a weekly “in-house” training program for Building Inspectors.	A	Ongoing	Senior Inspector is conducting weekly training sessions. Senior Inspector is working with Hartnell College on internship program to build pipeline for future building inspectors. Inspection and Code Enforcement staff are working more closely together and have begun some cross-training.	Continue training and assessment of training needs.
Recommendation No. 30: Create a written Policies and Procedures handbook for the Inspection staff.	B	Ongoing	We have created a procedures and policy manual for the Permit Center (Plan Check, Inspection, Code Enforcement, Engineering, and Planning) and through ongoing weekly meetings have gradually refined existing procedures/policies or added new ones.	Continue work through weekly meetings to improve procedure and policy manual. Reach out to other jurisdictions regarding model procedures or policies.
Recommendation No. 31: Building Inspectors should be cross-trained to perform minor plan checks in all categories such as electrical, plumbing, structural, etc.	B	Complete	Both inspectors have certification in plumbing, electrical, and mechanical. The Senior Inspector is able to provide minor plan check support.	
Recommendation No. 32: Create a once-a-month Ride-Along program with all of the elected officials and Building Inspectors.	B	Complete	A few elected officials have participated and this offer has been extended to new Council Members.	Next fiscal year, the Director will shadow inspectors to evaluate possible efficiency improvements.
Recommendation No. 33: Modify the Trakit permit software so that the monthly plan check and permit activity reports can be produced rapidly.	A	Complete	Activity reports are regularly being generated to review progress.	Continue work with Trakit to enhance reporting features and possibly create an online version for the public. Offer enhanced training to Trakit Administrators.

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<p>Recommendation No. 34: Establish a policy that requires each division (Fire, Engineering, Code Enforcement, Building) to have technical support available at the front counter at all times when the counter is open to the public and to respond to the counter for assistance within 5 minutes, when requested.</p>	A	Complete	All departments have staff available for counter interaction at scheduled hours and generally are able to respond within 5 minutes. More recently, instituted a pager system to improve response times.	Continue to track and evaluate wait times. Focus on more cross-training so that front line staff can answer basic questions regardless of the department.
<p>Recommendation No. 35: Establish a “make it up” policy whereby staff will expedite the second plan check if the first plan check exceeds the guaranteed time frame.</p>	B	Complete		Continue to make sure plan check time frames are being met. Develop new protocols for dealing with “poor performing” architects, designers, and contractors.
<p>Recommendation No. 36: Increase counter hours from 10 am – 5 pm to 8 am – 5 pm</p>	B	Complete	Permit Center is now open Monday – Friday from 8 am to 5 pm.	Consider the re-establishment of appointment hours to facilitate back-checks and improve plan check productivity.
<p>Recommendation No. 37: Keep the web page up to date with current documents and provide all the contact information for every staff member in the Permit Services program.</p>	B	Complete	Boots Road Group updated the entire City website including a Permit Center page. CDD has appointed a content manager and key information is now available.	Continue to update webpage with current documents and contact information.
<p>Recommendation No. 38: Establish a weekly “in-house” training program for Permit Technicians.</p>	A	Ongoing	Regular weekly meetings have resulted in better informed and trained Permit Clerks.	Continue regular meetings with “in house” training.

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Recommendation No. 39: Modify front counter “sign-in sheet” in order to offer express service for drop-offs and mini-questions.	A	Complete	Procured electronic customer log-in program.	Re-evaluate program to determine if there is a better tracking system that can provide more refined data analytics.
Recommendation No. 40: Purchase shirts, jackets and hats with the City logo for all of the Code Enforcement Officer staff.	B	Complete	Code Enforcement staff have been wearing uniforms since May of 2016.	Continue to monitor the uniform policy and provide uniforms as required in the SMEA MOU.
Recommendation No. 41: Place the cell phone numbers for the Code Enforcement Officers on their business cards and on the City website.	B	Complete		
Recommendation No. 42: Create a written Policies and Procedures handbook for the Code Enforcement Officers.	B	Complete	We have created a procedures and policy manual for the Permit Center (Plan Check, Inspection, Code Enforcement, Engineering, and Planning) and through ongoing weekly meetings have gradually refined existing procedures/policies or added new ones.	Continue work through weekly meetings to improve procedure and policy manual. Reach out to other jurisdictions regarding model procedures or policies. Continue to implement and refine Kaizen Action Plan (<i>Kaizen has allowed staff to fully evaluate the code enforcement complaint response process to eliminate duplication/unnecessary steps in order to improve efficiency.</i>)
Recommendation No. 43: Fill the vacant Senior Code Enforcement Officer position.	A	Complete	Hired a new Senior Code Enforcement Officer, Lorenzo Sanchez. Mr. Sanchez has extensive experience especially in residential inspections.	Re-classify this position as a Chief Code Enforcement Manager given the expanded responsibilities.

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<p>Recommendation No. 44: Establish a weekly “in-house” training program for Code Enforcement Officers.</p>	A	Ongoing	Regular weekly meetings have resulted in better informed and trained Code Enforcement Officers. Code Enforcement Officers are using mobile technology in the field to improve efficiency.	Continue training of code enforcement on basic building code violations to facilitate enforcement of dangerous buildings.
<p>Recommendation No. 45: Create a once-a-month Ride-Along program with elected officials and Code Enforcement Officers.</p>	B	Complete	A few elected officials have participated. Director and City Attorney staff have gone out on inspections with Code Enforcement staff. Director invited new Council Members on a ride-along.	
<p>Recommendation No. 46: Stagger the workweek so that at least one officer is working on Saturdays.</p>	B	Complete	Through the use of full-time and part-time officers, the City is conducting Saturday and Sunday enforcement.	Request two new code enforcement officers for abandoned vehicles and to allow for greater weekend and after-hour enforcement.
<p>Recommendation No. 47: Increase the involvement of Permit Center staff in the policy decision-making process.</p>	A	Ongoing	Permit Center staff have been involved in policy decision making and implementation of recommendations. The Director created working groups in April 2016 or “strategic thinking teams” to assist in making continuous improvements beyond the Citygate recommendations. More recently, we have been able to identify new critical initiatives through our weekly meetings.	Continue to track and highlight progress of the various action plans.

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<p>Recommendation No. 48: Create a “Guarantee of Service” document that establishes the time frames for all levels of service that the public can expect to receive.</p>	B	Complete	If a plan review date is missed by more than a few days, the outstanding reviewer is contacted by staff, then the second round is completed ahead of time resulting in “on-time processing” (see SR #35). Planning & Building have exceeded the goal of meeting prescribed times frames by over 90%.	Continue to track and improve progress. Work closely with Public Works to improve Engineering plan review time frames. Work with Development Community to establish a new “Guarantee of Service”, which could involve a refund for non-performance.
<p>Recommendation No. 49: Re-evaluate/modify the job description/duties of the Permit Services Deputy Director position to emphasize “Manager” and “Building Official” functions; fill this vacant position.</p>	A	Complete		Regularly evaluate performance of Permit Center Manager/Chief Building Official and ensure appropriate training.
<p>Recommendation No. 50: Develop a strategic Code Enforcement Program to shift from “complaint based” to “pro-active” enforcement.</p>	B	In Progress	Completed a major re-organization of Code Enforcement and have filled critical vacancies. Complaints have significantly increased largely due to improved performance. Staff has initiated pro-active enforcement of nuisance properties and slowly begun limited neighborhood enforcement.	The shift to proactive code enforcement has begun, but with current staffing and workload, it still remains largely complaint driven. Through the Kaizen process, we have an action plan, but it will take more time to complete the shift.

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<p>Recommendation No. 51: Integrate all City development-related activities into the Permit Center, including Engineering and Business Licenses.</p>	B	In Progress	Engineering was transferred to Public Works, but located at the Permit Center. There continues to be close coordination between Engineering, Planning, Building, and Fire. Business licensing staff also closely coordinate with the Permit Center.	Discuss the possibility of shifting business licensing to the Permit Center with appropriate staffing.
<p>Recommendation No. 52: Recruit/fill Associate Planner position to improve current planning service capacity.</p>	B	In Progress	This position was filled, but Associate Planner, Jill Miller was recently promoted to a vacant Senior Planner position in Advanced Planning. We are currently working with HR to fully the newly vacant position.	Complete the hiring process to fill the newly created vacancy.
<p>Recommendation No. 53: Project major planning initiatives and special project needs at least three years ahead and allocate resources accordingly.</p>	B	Complete	Hired Senior Planner, Lisa Brinton who is actively tracking these initiatives through the EDE process.	Continue to work with Department Directors to track progress on these planning initiatives and special projects and ensure the adequate allocation of resources.
<p>Recommendation No. 54: Emphasize special projects and long range planning as crucial for meeting economic development goals; hire an additional planner in the Special Projects Division.</p>	A	Complete	The Special Projects Division was renamed Advanced Planning through the recent re-organization. A Senior Planner was hired in 2014 and unfortunately resigned in March. We promoted Jill Miller to fill this vacancy, but created a new vacancy in Current Planning as detailed above.	Continue to evaluate performance and provide necessary professional training.

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