

**Management Study of the
Development Review Process**

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS



2470 El Camino Real, Suite 210
Palo Alto, CA 94306
v.650.858.0507 f.650.858.0509

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Section	Page
1.	INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
2.	PROFILE OF THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS	15
3.	SUMMARY OF THE EMPLOYEE SURVEY	38
4.	SUMMARY OF THE FOCUS GROUPS	53
5.	RESULTS OF THE COMPARATIVE SURVEY	61
6.	BEST PRACTICES ANALYSIS	70
7.	ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY	80
8.	ANALYSIS OF THE BUILDING PERMIT PLAN CHECK PROCESS	96
9.	ANALYSIS OF THE DISCRETIONARY PERMIT PROCESS	114
10.	ANALYSIS OF THE BUILDING INSPECTION PROCESS	135
11.	ANALYSIS OF THE PLAN OF ORGANIZATION	148
	ATTACHMENT A – RESULTS OF THE EMPLOYEE SURVEY	165
	ATTACHMENT B – RESULTS OF THE COMPARATIVE SURVEY	171

1. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This initial chapter of the report introduces the approaches utilized in this study and summarizes key findings, conclusions and recommendations to be found in this report.

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

The Matrix Consulting Group was retained by the City of Lawrence, Kansas to conduct a review of the Development Review Process, including a review of the permit, plan check, and inspection processes. In reaching the conclusion of the study, the project team has assembled this final report, which summarizes our findings, conclusions and recommendations. As part of this study, the Matrix Consulting Group analyzed the following specific areas, as well as other related topics:

- The range and extent of services provided by the Planning, Neighborhood Resources, Utility, Public Works, and related departments relative to the development review processes;
- The staffing needs and assignments within the departments;
- The organization and operation of the employees and positions within the development review functions located in the various departments;
- The extent of cost recovery within the development review process and the workloads associated with City versus County development projects;
- How these services and workloads compare to other comparable communities; and
- How current services in the City of Lawrence compare to 'best practices' in the development review process.

2. DESCRIPTION OF STUDY METHODOLOGY

As part of this study of the City of Lawrence's Development Review Process, project team conducted the following activities:

- Detailed interviews with all staff involved the development review process including employees in the following Departments: City Manager's Office, Planning, Neighborhood Resources, Public Works, Utilities, and Fire Medical Services;
- Conducted data collection to gather relevant information regarding the services provided, the volume of work staff has to manage, and the time frames in which the work is completed;
- Conducted five focus groups with representatives of various community interests including residents, developers, and neighborhood associations to elicit information regarding their perceptions of the development review process;
- Conducted a confidential employee survey to provide another opportunity for staff to provide feedback and input into the study;
- Performed a comparative assessment comparing the City of Lawrence with comparable communities throughout the region;
- Completed a best practices comparison that gauged the current practices in the City of Lawrence against a set of "best management practices" for development review activities.

These activities enabled the project team to analyze the current performance of duties, the duties assigned and allocated to staff, and the organizational structure. The analysis conducted led to the recommendations that are contained in the later chapters of this report.

3. THE STUDY FOUND A NUMBER OF POSITIVE FEATURES WITHIN THE CITY OF LAWRENCE'S DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

While a study of this nature tends to focus on the opportunities for improvement, it is also important to identify and note those strengths that currently exist within the organization and the processes utilized. During the course of this study, the project

team noted many strengths in the existing development review process. Examples of these strengths include the following:

- The Neighborhood Resources Department, with the implementation of the IVR system, enables requests for inspections to be requested until 7:00 a.m. of the day of the requested inspection which provides a high level of service to the construction community;
- Combination Inspectors are utilized for residential inspections;
- Building Permit Plan Reviews are done concurrently by Neighborhood Resources and Fire Medical Department staff;
- The City has recently updated and adopted a policy regarding the setting and assessment of fees to cover administrative costs associated with processing the applications;
- The City utilizes an inter-departmental review committee where representatives from each department gather to discuss applications and submit conditions of approval;
- The newly adopted Planning Ordinance provides greater authority for Planning Staff to administratively approve many types of minor permits and site plans;
- A single planner is assigned to coordinate each submittal and is responsible for the coordination and follow-up with other departments on plan review comments;
- A preliminary completeness review is conducted for discretionary and administrative permits to ensure that basic necessary information is contained in the application;
- The Planning Commission conducts periodic work sessions with the City Commission to discuss major policy issues; the Planning Commission has adopted by-laws and utilizes a consent agenda in an attempt to streamline their meetings;
- A Planner of the Day is assigned to assist walk-in traffic with questions regarding the City's requirements and application procedures;
- A variety of application handouts are available to the public for various permit types outlining the requirements for submittal;
- All applications submitted to the Planning Department are distributed for concurrent review to other Departments, including: Utility, Public Works, Neighborhood Resources and Fire Medical; and

- The departments and divisions that participate in the discretionary and administrative permit process have access to GIS, including the assessor parcels, zoning districts, aerals, flood and drainage data, utilities, etc.

These are illustrative examples of some of the more significant strengths of the existing development review processes.

During the time period that the audit was being conducted, several additional improvements were implemented by the City of Lawrence, specifically in the Neighborhood Resources Department, that were identified as opportunities for improvement. These changes are positive improvements to the process. The project team concurs with the changes that were implemented and typically they are not reflected as a specific recommendation in this report unless further clarification or improvement opportunity still exists. Examples of these changes include::

- Implementation of the IVR System for handling voice activated inspection requests and inspections results;
- Implementation of a Permits Technician position to improve the application review and processing;
- Reorganization of supervisory responsibilities to focus an individual on Plan Reviews.

The next section of this initial chapter provides a summary of the recommendations found in this report.

4. SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table provides a summary of the key findings and recommendations contained within this report. Recommendations are listed in the order they appear in the report. The suggested timeframe for implementation takes into consideration the relative priority of the item and the ability to implement. Some items,

while perhaps higher priority for improvement, can only be implemented after certain other recommendations have been implemented.

Section	Recommendation	Management Responsibility	Suggested Timeframe	Estimated Cost
7.1	The City of Lawrence should implement a comprehensive software package for the Development Review Process. All Departments involved in the Development Review process should be required to utilize the selected system for scheduling, processing, and reporting on work activities.	City Manager	1 st Quarter, 2007	Depending upon bids and software selected. Estimated at \$250,000 to \$700,000.
	The City of Lawrence should form a steering committee made up of city employees, industry representatives, customers, and other stakeholders to guide the definition of system needs, review various software packages, and guide the implementation of the selected product.	City Manager	1 st Quarter, 2007	
7.2 (a)	The City should modify its approach to data collection in the HTE building permits module to capture additional information regarding processing times.	Neighborhood Resources Director	1 st Quarter 2007	
7.2 (b)	If an alternative software is not chosen, the City should acquire and install the HTE Planning and Engineering module.	City Manager	1 st Quarter 2007	\$75,000 to \$150,000
7.2 (c)	Utilize The Click2Gov Module From HTE To Provide Public Access for Building Permits	Neighborhood Resources Director	1 st Quarter 2007	
7.2 (d)	Acquire and Utilize The Click2Gov Module From HTE to Provide Public Access for Planning and Engineering Permits.	City Manager	1 st Quarter 2007	\$20,000
7.2 (e)	The City should acquire and utilize the Click2Gov wireless module from HTE for building inspectors to record inspection results and print correction notices.	City Manager	1 st Quarter 2007	

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Section	Recommendation	Management Responsibility	Suggested Timeframe	Estimated Cost
7.3	All of the departments and divisions should utilize the HTE automated permit information system for all aspects of the development review process.	City Manager	2nd Quarter 2007.	
	Modules, applications and reports should be developed within the HTE automated permit information system to support the work of these departments and divisions.	City Manager	2nd Quarter 2007	
7.3 (cont)	Training should be provided to staff as appropriate in the use of the HTE automated permit information system.	City Manager	2nd Quarter 2007	Can be performed in-house.
8.1	The Neighborhood Resources Department should modify the dates maintained in the HTE building permit module to include the dates that each division and department completes their plan check – 1 st check, 2 nd check, 3 rd check, etc. – the date the applicant is notified that their plans are ready to be picked up after each plan check – 1 st check, 2 nd check, 3 rd check, etc., and the date(s) the applicant submits and re-submits the building permit plans.	Neighborhood Resources Director	1 st Quarter 2007	
8.2	The City should revise the building permit plan check timelines.	Neighborhood Resources Director	1 st Quarter 2007	
8.3 (a)	Responsibility for plan checking residential plans and commercial remodels should be reassigned from building inspectors to the plans examiners.	Neighborhood Resources Director	1 st Quarter 2007	
8.2 (b)	The City of Lawrence should authorize two additional Plans Examiner positions	City Manager	1 st Quarter 2007	\$108,000

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Section	Recommendation	Management Responsibility	Suggested Timeframe	Estimated Cost
8.3(c)	Utilize the newly reclassified position of Plan Check Technician to ensure that building permit applications and plan submittals are complete prior to review by Plans Examiners.	Neighborhood Resources Director	1 st Quarter 2007	
8.4	The Neighborhood Resources Department should increase the number of building permits issued over-the-counter to 55% to 60% of all building permits issued.	Neighborhood Resources Director	3rd Quarter 2007	
	The Plan Check Technician should be utilized to provide over-the-counter plan checking of minor and miscellaneous building permits.	Neighborhood Resources Director	3rd Quarter 2007	
8.5	The City should adopt the most current version of the International Code Council building codes.	Neighborhood Resources Director	3rd Quarter 2007	
	The City should continue its efforts to fully implement the entire ICC building codes rather than continuing the use of a blended code.	City Manager	2007	
8.6	The City should expand the use of HTE to enable applicants for single trade permits to complete a permit application online.	Neighborhood Resources Director	3rd Quarter 2007	
	The City should adopt an objective of issuing 10% of its building permits online.	Neighborhood Resources Director	3rd Quarter 2007.	
8.7	Post common plan check corrections on the City's website to provide guidance to architects in the construction requirements in Lawrence.	Neighborhood Resources Director	1 st Quarter – 2007	
8.8	The plan check checklists developed by Neighborhood Resources Department should be posted on the Department's website.	Neighborhood Resources Director	Immediately	

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Section	Recommendation	Management Responsibility	Suggested Timeframe	Estimated Cost
8.9	Develop standard building permit plans for use by the public in minor residential improvements.	Neighborhood Resources Director	1 st Quarter – 2007	
	Develop a “Home Improvement Center” web page on the City’s website to assist the homeowner navigate through the building permit plan check and inspection process.	Neighborhood Resources Director	1 st Quarter – 2007	
8.10	The Neighborhood Resources Department should develop a comprehensive manual of code interpretations. The manual should be utilized for internal staff training and be posted to the website for use by the development/construction communities.	Neighborhood Resources Director	3rd Quarter – 2007	
8.11	Selected types of building permits should be routed to the Planning Department, Engineering Division, and the Utilities Department for plan checking.	City Manager	3rd Quarter – 2007	
	The City should develop and adopt a policy regarding the distribution of the different types of building permit plans to the various divisions and departments involved in the development review process.	City Manager	3rd Quarter – 2007	
9.1 (a)	The Planning Department should establish guidelines for reviewing departments to respond to all submissions by applicants and establish clear timelines at each step.	Planning Director	4 th Quarter, 2006.	
9.1 (b)	The applicant should be informed regarding the name of the project manager assigned to their permit application within five working days of submittal of the application and be provided with contact information.	Planning Director	Immediately	

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Section	Recommendation	Management Responsibility	Suggested Timeframe	Estimated Cost
9.1 (c)	The project manager in the Planning Department should be responsible for the communication among the multi-disciplinary team, and the resolution of conflicting conditions of approval or competing code requirements.	Planning Director	4 th Quarter, 2006	
9.1 (d)	The authority of the project manager should be clearly spelled out in a written policy by the Planning Director, and approved by the City Manager.	Planning Director / City Manager	Immediately	
9.2 (a)	The Assistant Director should plan and schedule the analysis of permit applications submitted to the Planning Division.	Assistant Planning Director	Immediately	
9.2 (b)	The timelines for processing permits by the Planning Department should be revised.	Planning Director	2007	
	The timelines for processing of permits by the Planning Department should be published on the Department's website.	Planning Director	2007	
9.3 (a)	The standard conditions of approval utilized by all of the divisions and departments in the review of discretionary and administrative permits should be documented.	Planning Director	1 st Quarter, 2007	
	The adopted standard conditions of approval should be posted to the Planning Department's website.	Planning Director	1 st Quarter, 2007	
	The Planning Department should take lead responsibility in facilitating the development of these written conditions of approval by all of the divisions and departments.	Planning Director with assistance from Directors of Utilities, Neighborhood Resources, Public Works, and Fire Medical.	1 st Quarter, 2007	

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Section	Recommendation	Management Responsibility	Suggested Timeframe	Estimated Cost
9.3.(b)	The Planning Department should document interpretations of the new zoning ordinance and make these available to the public on the Department's website.	Planning Director	Immediately and on-going	
9.3 (c)	The Planning Department should develop a procedures manual.	Assistant Planning Director	1 st Half, 2007	
9.3 (d)	The Planning Division should develop and utilize checklists for the review and processing of discretionary and administrative applications by its own staff.	Assistant Planning Director	1 st Quarter, 2007	
	The checklists should be posted to the City's website for use by those individuals submitting plans to review requirements that will be required and reviewed by staff.	Assistant Planning Director	1 st Quarter, 2007	
9.4	The Planning Department should conduct training sessions over the next few months to familiarize staff with the new zoning ordinance.	Planning Director	Immediate	
	A separate training budget should be established for the Planning Commission.	Planning Director	2007	
9.5	Two additional current planners should be added to the Planning Department to perform the development review planning functions.	City Manager	2007/2008	\$55,000 per position (\$110,000 in total)
9.6	The Planning Commission should undertake a detailed review of its meeting schedule and agenda management process during its next annual planning meeting. As part of this review, the Commission should have discussions with the City and County Elected Officials regarding the appropriate role of the Commission.	Planning Commission	2007	

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Section	Recommendation	Management Responsibility	Suggested Timeframe	Estimated Cost
10.2	The existing level of building inspection staffing should not be modified.	Neighborhood Resources Director	Immediate	
10.3	The Neighborhood Resources Department should adopt formal service level targets. Performance against these targets should be monitored on a regular basis.	Neighborhood Resources Director	4 th Quarter, 2006	
10.4	The Neighborhood Resources Department should provide the training necessary to its Combination Inspectors to enable these inspectors to function as Combination Inspectors for residential and commercial inspections.	Neighborhood Resources Director	2007	
10.5 (a)	Checklists should be provided to each Inspector in the Division and their use required on each inspection.	Neighborhood Resources Director	1 st Quarter, 2007	
	These checklists should be published on the Neighborhood Resources Department's website.	Neighborhood Resources Director	1 st Quarter, 2007	
	Completed inspection checklists should be stored with the permit files.	Neighborhood Resources Director	1 st Quarter, 2007	
10.5 (b)	The Code Enforcement Manager should allocate a proportion of his/her time to quality control the consistency of code interpretations by the Building Inspectors.	Neighborhood Resources Director	4 th Quarter, 2006	
10.5 (c)	The Neighborhood Resources Department should document official code interpretations and publish them on the website.	Neighborhood Resources Director	1 st Quarter, 2007	
	Neighborhood Resources should develop policies on how official code interpretations are made and published.	Neighborhood Resources Director	4 th Quarter, 2006	

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Section	Recommendation	Management Responsibility	Suggested Timeframe	Estimated Cost
10.5 (d)	A training needs assessment should be developed for employees in Neighborhood Resources.	Neighborhood Resources Director	4 th Quarter, 2006	
	The training budget for the Neighborhood Resources Department should be increased	Neighborhood Resources Director	2007	\$5,000
	The Code Enforcement Manager should coordinate bi-weekly training and be responsible for the quality of in-house training.	Neighborhood Resources Director	Immediately	
	One hours of training should be provided bi-weekly for the staff of the Department.	Neighborhood Resources Director	Immediately	
11.2	All development review should be co-located at a common facility.	City Manager	4 th Quarter, 2008	
11.3	The Departments of Neighborhood Resources and Planning should be merged into a new Department of Community Development.	City Manager	1 st Quarter, 2007	\$25,000
11.4	The Utilities Department should designate a single individual to be responsible for plan reviews. This individual should be trained in all of the components of plan review for each of the relevant functional areas.	Director of Utilities	1 st Quarter, 2007	
	The City of Lawrence should devote one employee from the Utility Department exclusively to the performance of development review activities. This position should be located in the One Stop Shop Center.	City Manager	2007	
11.5	The current separation of duties relative to plan review for traffic and transportation issues should be combined into a review conducted by the Traffic Engineer.	Public Works Director / Planning Director	1 st Quarter, 2007	

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Section	Recommendation	Management Responsibility	Suggested Timeframe	Estimated Cost
	One individual from Public Works should be assigned to the One Stop Shop to handle all development review functions for the Public Works Department.	City Manager/ Public Works Director	2007	
11.6	The plan of organization of the Planning Department should be modified, and two Planner positions upgraded to Senior Planner.	City Manager/ Planning Director	1 st Quarter, 2007	\$25,000
11.7	The City of Lawrence and Douglas County should consider the joint provision of Building Inspection Services through a cooperative arrangement.	City Manager / County Manager	1 st Quarter, 2007	

2. PROFILE OF THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

2. PROFILE OF THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

This initial chapter in the development review study presents background information regarding the City of Lawrence and the departments involved in the development process. The chapter includes the following:

- Organizational structures for the divisions and departments involved in the development review process, including the divisions within the Utilities and Public Works Departments that are significantly involved in this process, the Planning Department, the Neighborhood Resources Department, and the Fire Medical Department.
- Workload and staffing trends for these departments where available; and
- The role of staff within the permit, plan check, inspection, and code enforcement process.

The first section provides information on the City of Lawrence / Douglas County Planning Department.

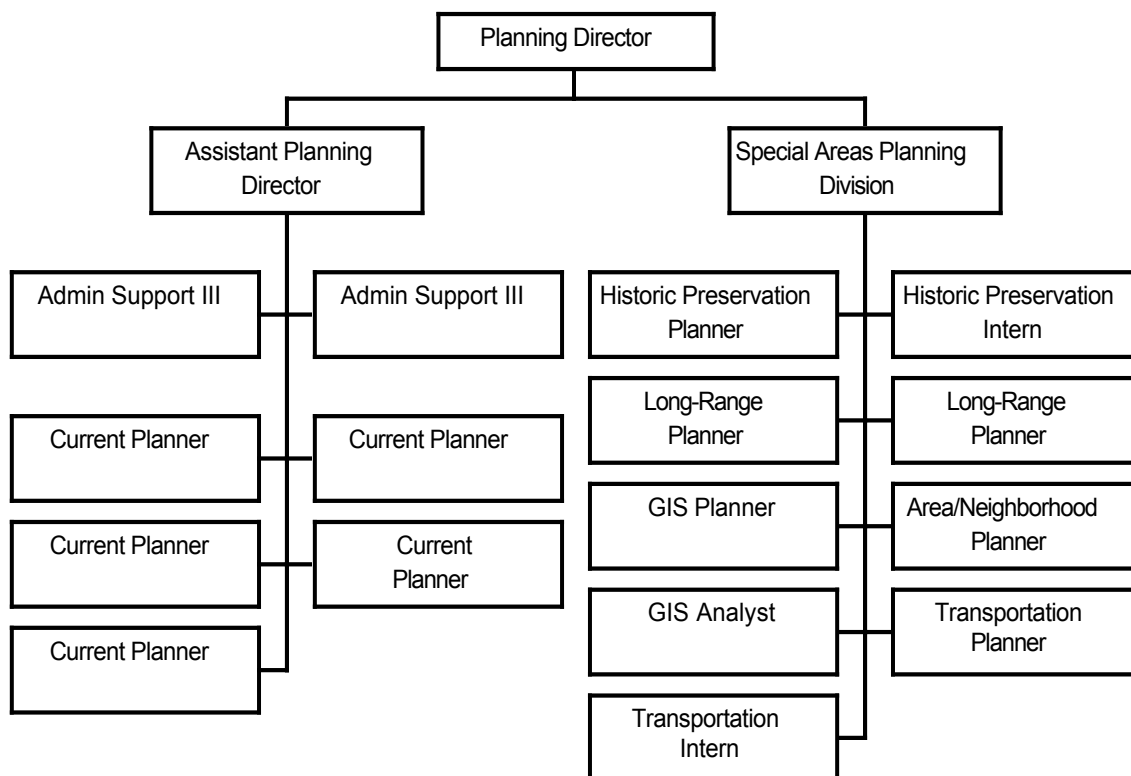
1. PLANNING DEPARTMENT

The Planning Department is responsible for both long-range planning and development permits. A description of the primary responsibility and the mission of the Planning Department is presented below.

- The Planning Department's primary responsibility is implementation of the Comprehensive Plan [Horizon 2020 and Transportation 2025] through development and administration of regulatory tools that include: City and County zoning codes, City and County subdivision regulations, Historic Resources code, Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), Transportation Improvements Plan (TIP), special area plans, and City and County development policies. Although a city department, the County funds 1/6 of the Department's budget.
- The Department's mission is the effective and efficient delivery of services to the community in a timely manner consistent with the adopted land use plans, which includes providing guidance on land use planning principles and practices. In performing this mission, planning staff provides support to: the City and County Commissions; five advisory boards (Lawrence/Douglas County Metropolitan

Planning Commission, Historic Resources Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals / Sign Code Board of Appeals, City / County Bicycle Advisory Committee, and Transportation Advisory Committee); and, numerous ad hoc committees / task forces of these Boards and Commissions.

The Department has two divisions, in addition to support staff. These divisions are: Current Planning and Special Areas Planning (Long-Range, Area/Neighborhood, Historic Resources, Transportation, and GIS/Web). Two administrative personnel support the Department and provide customer service. The organizational chart, below, provides a graphical depiction of the Department's organization.



Important points to note regarding the organization are provided below.

- The Planning Director has a span of control of eight, excluding the Historic Preservation and Transportation Interns.
- The Department has a flat plan of organization. There are only two managerial positions: the Planning Director and the Assistant Planning Director. The remaining positions are classified as Planners (excluding the administrative support staff, GIS Analyst, and interns).

- The Planning Director position is vacant at the present time.
- The Historic Preservation Design Intern is funded 40% by the Departmental budget.
- The Transportation Planner and Transportation Intern positions are funded 20% by the Departmental budget.

The table below provides a summary of the key roles and responsibilities of personnel within the Planning Department:

Function	Staffing By Classification		Roles and Responsibilities
Administration	Planning Director	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Planning Director is responsible for the overall administration and management of the Planning Department. • The Director is responsible for developing the annual budget. • The Director develops policies and procedures and establishes the overall mission and goal of the Department. • Planners assigned to the Special Areas Planning Division report directly to the Director. • This position is currently vacant and is filled by the Assistant Planning Director who acts as the Interim Planning Director.
	Assistant Planning Director	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Assistant Director is responsible for administration and management of the Current Planning Division. • Assists in the development of the annual budget. • Develops policies and procedures for Current Planning Division. • The Assistant Director is currently acting as Interim Director. • Direct reports include the Current Planners and the Administrative Staff.

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Function	Staffing By Classification		Roles and Responsibilities
Current Planning Division	Current Planner	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current planners review all development permits including site plans, development plans, plats, re-zoning, use permitted upon review (UPR), and flood plain development permits. Ensure development is in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision Ordinance. Current planners coordinate the development review process related to land use. Building permit review is a separate process that occurs after the review of zoning, subdivision, and flood plain review. Current planners share responsibility for staffing the Planning Commission meetings, Board of Zoning Appeals, and various subcommittees. Current planners meet with applicants during a pre-submittal conference to outline submission requirements. Current Planners and Specialty Planners share responsibility on a rotating basis for acting as Planner of the Day (POD). The POD is responsible for staffing the front desk to answer zoning and land use questions for incoming applicants. Current planners work five eight hour days each week and may attend evening meetings of the Planning Commission.
	Admin Support III	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for intake and tracking of all development permits. Staff the front desk, and answer applicant questions related to submission requirements and/or directs applicants to schedule pre-application meeting with Current Planners. Prepare agenda packets and minutes of Planning Commission meetings. Prepares Planning Department payroll for submittal to Finance/HR. Prepares legal notices, mailings, ordinance preparation and CC/BCC packets. Handle and route all incoming mail and phone calls.

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Function	Staffing By Classification		Roles and Responsibilities
Special Areas Planning Division	Historic Preservation Planner	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Historic Preservation Planner acts as case manager for all development applications within the environs of a Historic District. The Historic Preservation Planners involvement in the development review process includes coordination of land use review and building review to ensure compliance with the City's Zoning Ordinance and Historic Resources codes. Prepares all staff reports related to development within Historic Districts. Staffs the Historic Resources Commission. The Historic Preservation Intern assists the Historic Planner through research and administrative support. Historic Preservation Planners share Planner of the Day (POD) responsibilities with Current Planners
	Historic Preservation Intern	1	
	Long Range Planner	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long Range Planners prepare the City's Comprehensive Plan (Horizons 2020), conduct research and develop specific area plans, and prepare updates and revisions to the Comprehensive Plan. Facilitate public meetings on area plans and the City's Comprehensive Plan. Provide support to the Planning Commission and subcommittees. Share Planner of the Day (POD) responsibilities with Current Planners.
	Area/Neighborhood Planner	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepares area specific area plans for the City . Facilitates public hearings regarding development of area plans. Shares Planner of the Day responsibilities.
	GIS Planner	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GIS Planner conducts advanced planning research related to the Comprehensive Plan, area plans, and transportation plans. Assists with Comprehensive Plan and area plan updates. Assists with zoning and subdivision ordinance research and development. The GIS Analyst produces all zoning and land use maps, specific area maps, maintains data layers re: land use and zoning, flood plains, historic resource and special areas, transportation elements, etc. Share Planner of the Day (POD) responsibilities with Current Planners..
	GIS Analyst	1	

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Function	Staffing By Classification		Roles and Responsibilities
	Transportation Planner	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researches and prepares City transportation plan. Maintains and updates the City's traffic impact model. Reviews site plans and development plans for traffic impacts. Verifies projected trip generation and evaluates the access management plans. The Transportation Intern provides administrative and research support. Share Planner of the Day (POD) responsibilities with Current Planners.
	Transportation Intern	1	

The table, that follows, summarizes service levels, hours of operation, and other workload elements of the Planning Department.

Characteristic	Description
Hours of Operation and Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. May include early a.m. or evening hours to attend to meetings, including Planning Commission, City Commission, etc. The front office is also staffed at lunch by at least one Administrative Support employee and one planner.
Coverage Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Planning Department's primary responsibility is implementation of the Comprehensive Plans [Horizon 2020 and Transportation 2025] through development and administration of regulatory tools that include: City and County zoning codes, City/County subdivision regulations, Historic Resources code, Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), Transportation Improvements Plan (TIP), special area plans, and City and County development policies. Responsible for all processing of discretionary and administrative permit applications assuring the applications meet the requirements of the Comprehensive Plan and the zoning ordinance. Responsible for implementing Department priorities as directed by the City Commission and County Commission. Planning personnel staff each of the committees, boards, and subcommittees related to zoning and land use including: Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Historic Resources Commission, Zoning & Code Subcommittee, Comprehensive Plans Subcommittee, Parks & Recreation Chapter Revisions, County Zoning Regulations, Community and Neighborhood Development Subcommittee, and Transportation 2030.
Training and Certification	<p>The planning series classification descriptions do not require AICP certification nor is it indicated as preferred.</p> <p>Three professional-level planners have AICP certification.</p>

Characteristic	Description																																																												
Codes Administered and Enforced	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Comprehensive Plan (Horizon 2020)City and County Zoning ordinancesCity and County Subdivision ordinancesHistoric Resources Codes																																																												
Workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The table below shows the number of applications reviewed by the Planning Department during 2004 and 2005: <table><tr><th>Permit Type</th><th>2004</th><th>2005</th></tr><tr><td>Design Reviews</td><td>120</td><td>114</td></tr><tr><td>Annexations</td><td>7</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>BZA Requests</td><td>34</td><td>43</td></tr><tr><td>Comprehensive Plan Amendments</td><td>2</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>Conditional Use Permits</td><td>6</td><td>9</td></tr><tr><td>Preliminary Development Plan</td><td>15</td><td>9</td></tr><tr><td>Final Development Plan</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>Flood Plain Development Permit</td><td>18</td><td>16</td></tr><tr><td>Landmark Designations</td><td>1</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Lot Splits</td><td>9</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>Non-Conforming Uses</td><td>4</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>Preliminary Plats</td><td>28</td><td>28</td></tr><tr><td>Final Plats</td><td>40</td><td>46</td></tr><tr><td>Site Plans</td><td>93</td><td>101</td></tr><tr><td>Temporary Use Permits</td><td>37</td><td>38</td></tr><tr><td>Text Amendments</td><td>5</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Use Permitted Upon Review</td><td>5</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>Rezoning</td><td>66</td><td>83</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>508</td><td>549</td></tr></table> <ul style="list-style-type: none">As shown above, the Planning Department processed 508 permits during 2004 and 549 permits during 2005, an increase of approximately 8%. The largest proportion of permits consisted of design reviews at 120 and 114 during 2004 and 2005.Cycle times for various permits were not available at the time of data collection. The Planning Department does not utilize an automated permit tracking system.	Permit Type	2004	2005	Design Reviews	120	114	Annexations	7	3	BZA Requests	34	43	Comprehensive Plan Amendments	2	5	Conditional Use Permits	6	9	Preliminary Development Plan	15	9	Final Development Plan	18	19	Flood Plain Development Permit	18	16	Landmark Designations	1	3	Lot Splits	9	11	Non-Conforming Uses	4	6	Preliminary Plats	28	28	Final Plats	40	46	Site Plans	93	101	Temporary Use Permits	37	38	Text Amendments	5	4	Use Permitted Upon Review	5	11	Rezoning	66	83	Total	508	549
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Conditional Use Permits	6	9																																																											
Preliminary Development Plan	15	9																																																											
Final Development Plan	18	19																																																											
Flood Plain Development Permit	18	16																																																											
Landmark Designations	1	3																																																											
Lot Splits	9	11																																																											
Non-Conforming Uses	4	6																																																											
Preliminary Plats	28	28																																																											
Final Plats	40	46																																																											
Site Plans	93	101																																																											
Temporary Use Permits	37	38																																																											
Text Amendments	5	4																																																											
Use Permitted Upon Review	5	11																																																											
Rezoning	66	83																																																											
Total	508	549																																																											

2. NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

The Neighborhood Resources Department is organized into three divisions: Building Safety Division, Codes Enforcement Division, and Community Development

Division. The Building Safety Division is responsible for building inspection, plan review, contractor and trades licensing and enforcement.

As stated in the City's FY 06 Budget, the purpose of the Building Safety Division is to "preserve the viability and stability of the business and residential districts and prevent deterioration and blighting influences within the community." In order to accomplish this task the Department has several responsibilities including:

- Responsibility for the enforcement of building and environmental codes. Plan reviews and inspections ensure buildings and structures provide safe and proper occupancies for all individuals.
- The Department reviews and recommends adoption of applicable construction related codes. These codes establish the minimum standards and regulations to which buildings and structures are to be built.
- The Department also runs the contractor licensing program for the City, which ensures that contractors meet minimum standards for building construction.

The City's budget also lists the following objectives over the coming fiscal year:

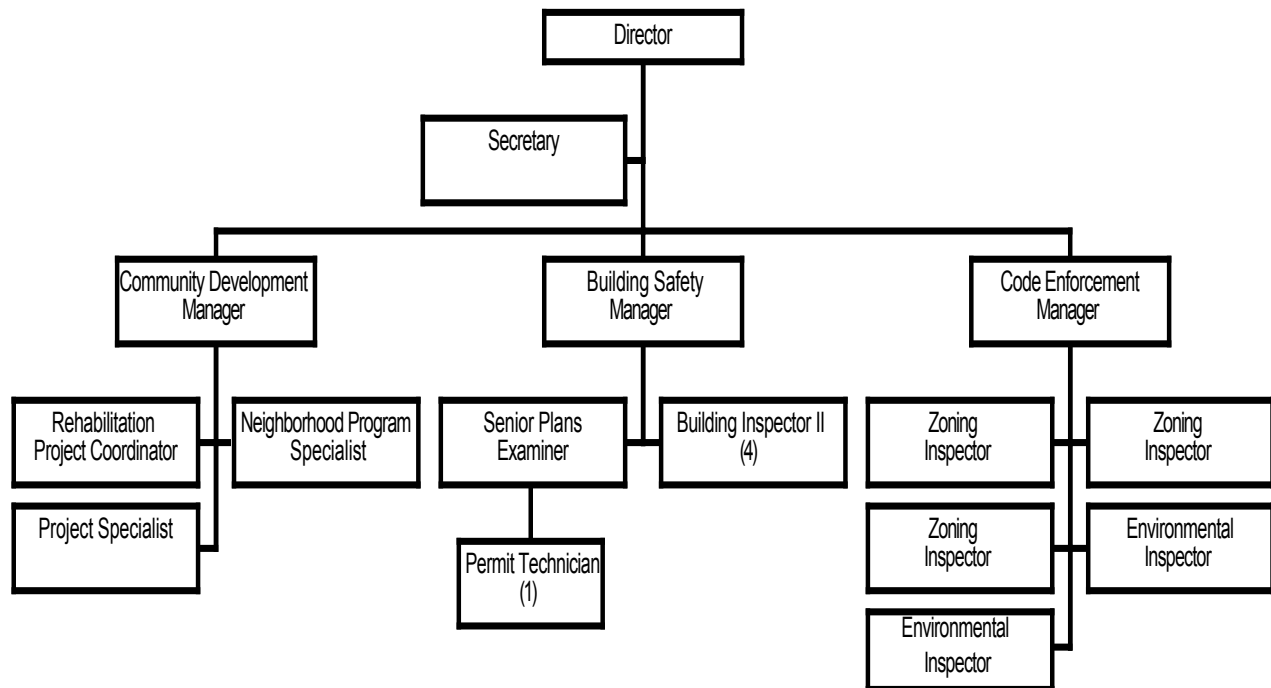
- Implement Click2Gov inspection request component;
- Implement scanning/imaging program for documents associated with environmental, zoning, and rental housing complaint cases;
- Develop customer service standards for Neighborhood Resources Department staff;
- Continue adoption process for updated building, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing codes; and
- Implement licensing and continuing education program for building and building specialty contractors.

Seven personnel are assigned to the Building Safety Division.

Community Development is responsible for administering community development projects such as low income housing initiatives and CDBG programs. Four personnel, including one manager, are assigned to the Community Development

Division. Community Development is not directly involved in development review. A Director manages the Department and is supported by one Secretary.

The organizational chart below shows the structure of the Department:



It should be noted that the organizational chart above includes the addition of a Code Enforcement Manager .

The key roles and responsibilities of those personnel directly involved in development review in the Neighborhood Resources Department are presented in the table below.

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Function	Staffing By Classification		Roles and Responsibilities
Administration	Director	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Director is responsible for the overall administration and management of the Neighborhood Resources Department. The Director is responsible for developing the annual budget. The Director develops policies and procedures and establishes the overall mission and goal of the Department. Directly supervises the Community Development Manager, Code Enforcement Manager, and Zoning Enforcement Manager.
	Secretary	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretary is responsible for handling all walk in applicants for building permits, contractor licenses, and inspection requests. Secretary provides initial intake of applications for permits and enters information into the HTE building permit and inspection system. A PIN number is also generated to allow applicants to track the status of their application online. Handles and routes all incoming mail and phone calls. Building permit applications and plans are routed to the Plans Examiner/Inspection Supervisor for assignment.
Code Enforcement	Building Safety Manager	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for oversight and management of the Code Enforcement Division. Develops Division policies and procedures, goals and objectives, and strategic initiatives. Currently oversees the implementation of the IVR system that allows telephone based inspection scheduling and inspection result access. Oversees processing of contractor license applications. Reports directly to the Director of Neighborhood Resources.
	Senior Plans Examiner	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Inspection Supervisor currently acts as the Plans Examiner for the Division. This includes coordinating the assignment and routing of all plans and files. Monitors the status of building plan reviews. Develops plan review and inspection checklists. Reviews building plans for conformance with City codes. Coordinates plan revisions with applicants.

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Function	Staffing By Classification		Roles and Responsibilities
Code Enforcement (Cont'd)	Building Inspector Ils:	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspectors review building plans for conformance with the locally adopted building codes including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1997 Uniform Building Code - 2005 National Electrical Code - 2003 Uniform Plumbing Code - 2000 Uniform Mechanical Code Two inspectors are combination residential inspectors and one is certified as a combination residential and commercial inspector. Inspectors perform a variety of commercial inspections. Conduct inspections during various stages of construction to ensure compliance with approved building plans. Inspectors do not carry tablets/laptops in the field to report results of inspections but have recently implemented a phone activated IVR system to update this information.
	Code Enforcement Manager	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for supervision and oversight of the Zoning Inspector and Environmental Inspectors. Develops policies and procedures and checklists relating to code enforcement. Monitors inspection productivity and resolution of code violations. Resolves issues that require coordination with building inspections or planning. Attends weekly meetings to review new plans/review status of outstanding permits.
	Zoning Enforcement Officer	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducts inspections to ensure compliance with approved site plans. Coordinates with Planning to ensure design elements, landscaping, screening, and ADA requirements comply with approved site plan. Conducts final inspections prior to issuance of certificate of occupancy to ensure revisions and or approved plans were followed.

The table, that follows, provides information on key services and workload of the Neighborhood Resources Department.

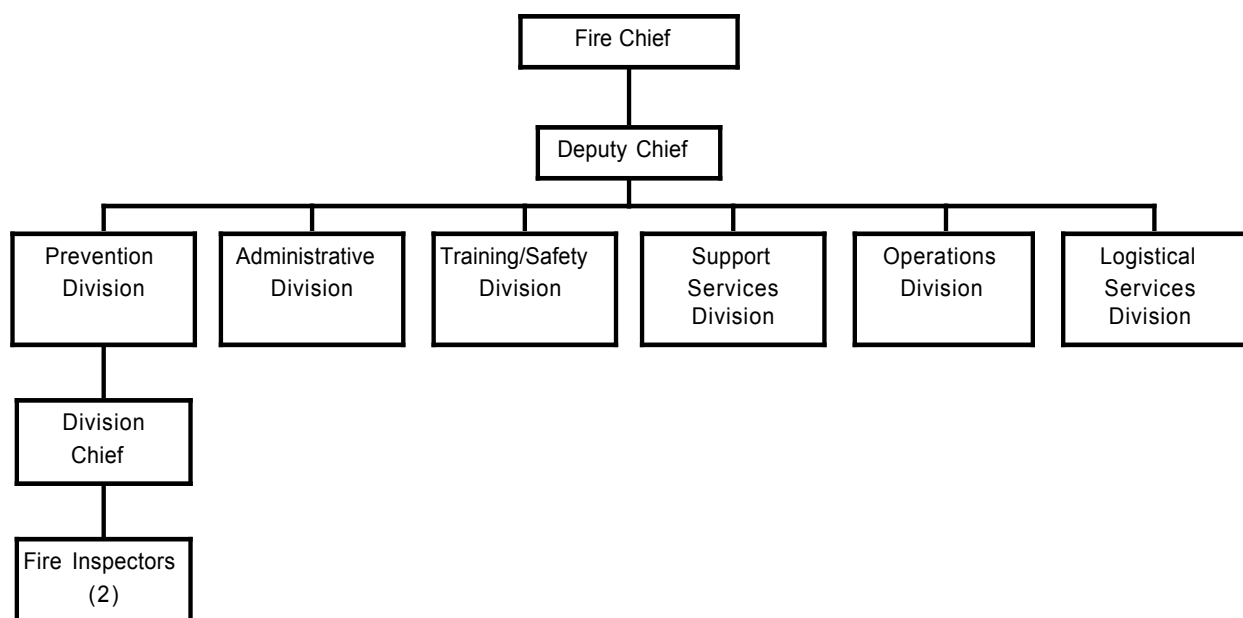
Characteristic	Description
Hours of Operation and Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Advisory Board Meetings may be scheduled after hours. • The public window is also staffed at lunch by at least one Secretary or Permit Technician.
Workload and Coverage Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The primary responsibility of the Building Safety Division of the Neighborhood Resources Department is to process building permits and inspect construction in the City to ensure compliance with the adopted building codes. • The Department also ensures compliance with zoning regulations. • The Department also administers the contractor licensing program. • The Department has a goal of reviewing single family plan reviews within 5 business days and responding to and completing building inspection requests within 24 hours.
Training and Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two inspectors are certified as combination residential inspectors (ICC), a third is certified as a combination commercial and residential inspector, and the Building Safety Manager is combination certified (ICC). Only one of the inspectors is certified as a combination commercial inspector under the ICC. One inspector is certified in both commercial electrical and commercial plumbing (ICC). Staff has varied commercial certifications under the Uniform Building Codes. • Each inspector specializes in a specific area for commercial building permits.
Codes Administered and Enforced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deck Construction Requirements • Residential Deck Guideline • Environmental Code • Weed Ordinance • Snow Removal Ordinance • Mobile Home Ordinance • Rental Registration Ordinance • Sign Ordinance • Swimming Pool Ordinance • Walls, Fence and Other Structures Ordinance • Street Tree Ordinance • 2005 National Electrical Code Amendments • 1997 Uniform Building Code with Amendments • 1997 Uniform Building Code Permit Fees with Amendments • 1997 Uniform Housing Code with Amendments • 2000 Uniform Mechanical Code Amendments • 2003 Uniform Plumbing Code Amendment • Contractor License Ordinance • Contractor License Board Ordinance

Characteristic	Description																																																								
Workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2004 a total of 2,785 building permits were issued including: 313 single family, 110 duplexes, and 3 apartment buildings with a combined 102 apartment complexes. In 2005 at total of 2,711 building permits were issued, including: 432 building permits for new units – 232 single family, 73 duplexes, 3 triplexes, 12 four-plexes, and 12 apartment buildings with a combined 112 dwelling units.. The table below shows the estimated valuation by permit type: <table> <tr> <th>Permit Type</th><th>Valuation</th></tr> <tr> <td>Accessory Structure</td><td>\$251,145</td></tr> <tr> <td>Carport</td><td>\$500</td></tr> <tr> <td>Commercial Accessory Structure</td><td>\$474,600</td></tr> <tr> <td>Commercial Addition</td><td>\$344,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Commercial Pool</td><td>\$109,630</td></tr> <tr> <td>Commercial Re-Model</td><td>\$12,266,088</td></tr> <tr> <td>Demolition - Commercial</td><td>\$464,330</td></tr> <tr> <td>Demolition - Residential</td><td>\$108,230</td></tr> <tr> <td>Detached Garage</td><td>\$29,021</td></tr> <tr> <td>Electrical Permit</td><td>\$361,748</td></tr> <tr> <td>Flood New Single Family</td><td>\$160,632</td></tr> <tr> <td>Flood Res. Accessory Bldg.</td><td>\$1,500</td></tr> <tr> <td>Flood Res. Addition</td><td>\$145,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Mechanical Permit</td><td>\$2,007,499</td></tr> <tr> <td>Multi-Family (4-Plex)</td><td>\$1,870,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Multi-Family (Apts.)</td><td>\$22,197,808</td></tr> <tr> <td>Multi-Family (Duplex)</td><td>\$13,463,828</td></tr> <tr> <td>Multi-Family (Triplex)</td><td>\$419,433</td></tr> <tr> <td>New Commercial</td><td>\$16,236,827</td></tr> <tr> <td>New Single Family</td><td>\$42,036,454</td></tr> <tr> <td>Plumbing Permit</td><td>\$419,089</td></tr> <tr> <td>Residential Addition</td><td>\$1,490,202</td></tr> <tr> <td>Residential Pool</td><td>\$382,400</td></tr> <tr> <td>Residential Re-Model</td><td>\$3,856,378</td></tr> <tr> <td>Sign Permit</td><td>\$564,087</td></tr> <tr> <td>Temporary Sign Permit</td><td>\$18,036</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total</td><td>\$119,678,465</td></tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As shown above, total building permits during 2005 were valued at approximately \$120 million. Of this amount, new single-family building permits comprised the largest proportion at approximately \$42 million. 	Permit Type	Valuation	Accessory Structure	\$251,145	Carport	\$500	Commercial Accessory Structure	\$474,600	Commercial Addition	\$344,000	Commercial Pool	\$109,630	Commercial Re-Model	\$12,266,088	Demolition - Commercial	\$464,330	Demolition - Residential	\$108,230	Detached Garage	\$29,021	Electrical Permit	\$361,748	Flood New Single Family	\$160,632	Flood Res. Accessory Bldg.	\$1,500	Flood Res. Addition	\$145,000	Mechanical Permit	\$2,007,499	Multi-Family (4-Plex)	\$1,870,000	Multi-Family (Apts.)	\$22,197,808	Multi-Family (Duplex)	\$13,463,828	Multi-Family (Triplex)	\$419,433	New Commercial	\$16,236,827	New Single Family	\$42,036,454	Plumbing Permit	\$419,089	Residential Addition	\$1,490,202	Residential Pool	\$382,400	Residential Re-Model	\$3,856,378	Sign Permit	\$564,087	Temporary Sign Permit	\$18,036	Total	\$119,678,465
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3. FIRE AND MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

The City of Lawrence and Douglas County jointly fund the Fire and Medical Department. The City funds the fire services and the County funds a portion of the emergency medical services. Overall, the City funds seventy-five percent of the shared costs. Fire services are only provided within the City of Lawrence, while emergency medical services and hazardous material responses are provided for the entire county.

The Fire and Medical Department is divided into six divisions. The Fire Prevention Division is one of six divisions of the Fire and Medical Department. The staff of Fire Prevention is co-located with the Neighborhood Resources Department. Fire Prevention is responsible for planning and fire protection engineering, enforcement of Uniform Fire Code and Life Safety Code, fire control management areas, investigations, cause and origin investigations, and the juvenile fire setter program. The Fire and Medical Department is authorized 146 full-time equivalent staff. The organizational chart, below, depicts the organization of the Department.



As shown above, three personnel within the Department are involved in development review.

The table below provides a summary of key roles and responsibilities of Fire and Medical Department personnel involved in development review.

Function	Staffing By Classification		Roles and Responsibilities
Administration	Division Chief	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Fire Marshal is responsible for overall management and oversight of the Prevention Division.• Develops policies and procedures for the Prevention Division.• Reviews site plans for conformance with the locally adopted fire code and life safety code.• Directly supervises the Fire Inspectors.
Inspection/Plan Review	Fire Inspector	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire Inspectors are responsible for reviewing site and building plans for conformance with the 1997 Uniform Fire Code and Life Safety Code.• Prevention staff provides inspections on new construction, site plans, day care operations, nursing homes, congregate residences, and business inspections. In addition permits are issued by Prevention for blasting operations, explosive storage, and open burning.• One Fire Officer/Inspector does plan review and inspections for new construction, attends development review meetings at the Planning Department to identify issues with development proposals. The Fire Officer/Inspector also attends meetings with code enforcement staff to review status of building permits.• The other fire inspector conducts inspections of existing dwellings including multi-family establishments, schools, day care, businesses, and other high occupancies/high hazard occupancies.

The table, that follows, describes the workload and services provided by the Fire and Medical Department related to development review. As indicated in the table, the Fire Inspector performed 166 site plan reviews, 164 building plan reviews and 150 final

occupancy inspections. A total of 890 inspections or 703 hours were spent conducting inspections, performing plan reviews, and testing fire suppression systems.

Characteristic	Description																																																																								
Hours of Operation and Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.																																																																								
Coverage Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Division is responsible for site and building plan reviews for occupancies within the City limits.• Inspectors also conduct inspections to ensure conformance with the Fire Code and approve site and building plans.																																																																								
Training and Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NFPA Fire Inspector I and II• NFPA Firefighter I and II• NFPA Fire Officer I and II																																																																								
Codes Administered and Enforced	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Code of the City of Lawrence, Kansas Chapter VIII• Uniform Building Code 1997 edition• Uniform Fire Code 1997 edition• NFPA codes																																																																								
Workload	<p>The table below provides a summary of plan review and inspection activity performed by the Fire Inspector during 2005:</p> <table><tr><th>Activity/Permit Type</th><th>Hours</th><th>Inspections</th></tr><tr><td>Business Inspections</td><td>58</td><td>121</td></tr><tr><td>Apartment Inspections</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>Day Care Inspections</td><td>3</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Group Living Inspections</td><td>37</td><td>38</td></tr><tr><td>Inspection Data Entry</td><td>18</td><td>NA</td></tr><tr><td>Inspection Scheduling Hours</td><td>2</td><td>NA</td></tr><tr><td>Inspection Consultations</td><td>4</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Site Plans</td><td>70</td><td>166</td></tr><tr><td>Building Plans</td><td>125</td><td>164</td></tr><tr><td>Plan Consulting</td><td>59</td><td>62</td></tr><tr><td>Underground Flush</td><td>8</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>200 PSI Underground Witness</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>200 PSI Sprinkler Witness</td><td>18</td><td>18</td></tr><tr><td>Sprinkler Test Inspections</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>Hydrant Flow Test</td><td>4</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Final Occupancy Inspections</td><td>136</td><td>150</td></tr><tr><td>Complaint Inspection</td><td>35</td><td>43</td></tr><tr><td>CMBL Administration</td><td>1</td><td>NA</td></tr><tr><td>Other Inspections</td><td>30</td><td>28</td></tr><tr><td>Occupant Load Determination</td><td>11</td><td>14</td></tr><tr><td>Smoking Complaint Inspections</td><td>42</td><td>37</td></tr><tr><td>Emergency Calls</td><td>18</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>703</td><td>890</td></tr></table>	Activity/Permit Type	Hours	Inspections	Business Inspections	58	121	Apartment Inspections	5	6	Day Care Inspections	3	3	Group Living Inspections	37	38	Inspection Data Entry	18	NA	Inspection Scheduling Hours	2	NA	Inspection Consultations	4	3	Site Plans	70	166	Building Plans	125	164	Plan Consulting	59	62	Underground Flush	8	10	200 PSI Underground Witness	10	10	200 PSI Sprinkler Witness	18	18	Sprinkler Test Inspections	10	10	Hydrant Flow Test	4	2	Final Occupancy Inspections	136	150	Complaint Inspection	35	43	CMBL Administration	1	NA	Other Inspections	30	28	Occupant Load Determination	11	14	Smoking Complaint Inspections	42	37	Emergency Calls	18	5	Total	703	890
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4. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The Public Works Department is a full service department. The Department provides a wide range of services including Solid Waste, infrastructure maintenance (Streets, Traffic, and Stormwater), design and construction management of public improvements through Engineering, and internal services such as Buildings and Structures and a Central Maintenance Garage.

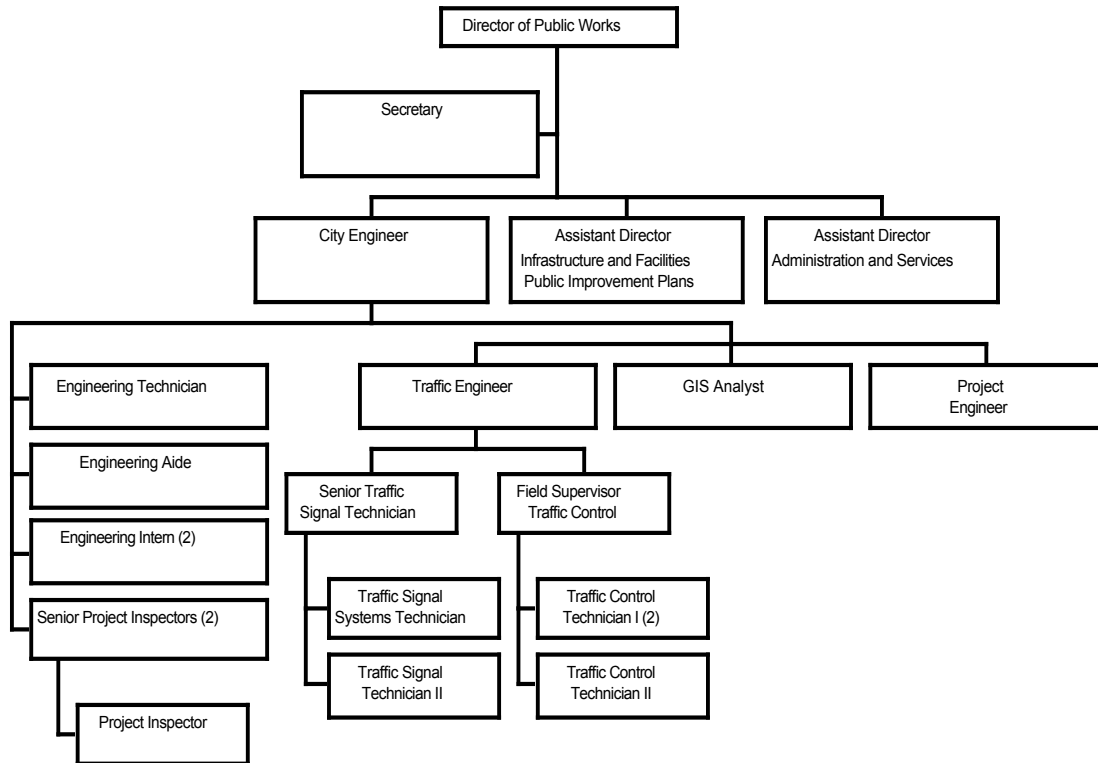
Two divisions of the Public Works Department are involved in the development review process: the Engineering Division and the Traffic Engineering Division. The following points describe the functions of these two divisions.

- **The Engineering Division is authorized 9.66 full-time equivalent staff.** The Engineering Division is responsible for the review and approval of all plans for streets, plats and site plans, sewers, sidewalks, and storm sewers. The Division administers these projects and inspects project construction, evaluates pavement condition and contracts for major pavement restoration and replacement. The City Engineer provides supervision for the traffic, pavement management, and stormwater programs.
- **The Traffic Engineering Division is authorized 8 staff.** There is only one engineer in the Division - the Traffic Engineer. The Traffic Engineering Division reviews plats and site plans, street plans, analyzes traffic data, and provides professional and technical data to the Traffic Safety Commission. Field crews assigned to the Division are responsible for signal maintenance, signal timing, street signs, and pavement markings. Crews also maintain school beacons, conduct electronic and manual traffic counts and school crossing counts.

It should be noted that the Planning Department analyzes and develops traffic mitigation measures.

The organizational chart, that follows, provide a graphical depiction of the organization of these two divisions:

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process



The table, that follows, provides a description of the key roles and responsibilities of the staff in these two divisions involved in the development review process.

Function	Staffing By Classification		Roles and Responsibilities
Engineering	City Engineer Project Engineer	1 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews discretionary permits including preliminary plats, final plats, site plans, use permits, and final development plans for City code compliance, such as right-of-way, sidewalk (ADA requirements), easements, public improvement requirements, etc. Develops correction comments and conditions of approval. Attends the inter-departmental development review meetings. Reviews all public improvement construction drawings for compliance with the City's standard details, and compliance with conditions of approval in previously approved discretionary permits. Responds to phone calls from residents about construction issues.

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Function	Staffing By Classification		Roles and Responsibilities
Stormwater Engineering	Stormwater Engineer	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages the implementation of the 1996 stormwater master plan. Reviews discretionary permits including preliminary plats, final plats, site plans, use permits, and final development plans for stormwater design criteria, use of stormwater best management practices, compliance with the standards proposed in drainage studies as appropriate, etc. Develops correction comments and conditions of approval. Attends the inter-departmental development review meetings. Reviews all public improvement construction drawings submitted by consulting engineers for compliance with the City's standard details, compliance with conditions of approval in previously adopted discretionary permits, and compliance with City ordinances. Responds to phone calls from residents regarding problems with stormwater drainage.
Traffic Engineering	Traffic Engineer	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages the Traffic Division including signs and markings, signals, support of the Traffic Safety Commission, and development review. Responds to and analyzes requests from residents for traffic signs, stop signs, and traffic signals. Conducts special studies. Reviews discretionary permits including preliminary plats, final plats, site plans, use permits, and final development plans for compliance with traffic standards, traffic flow design criteria, previously approved conditions, etc. Develops correction comments and conditions of approval. Attends the inter-departmental development review meetings. Reviews all public improvement construction drawings submitted by consulting engineers for compliance with the City's standard details, compliance with conditions of approval in previously adopted discretionary permits, and compliance with City ordinances.

The table, that follows, describes the workload and services provided by the Public Works Department related to development review.

Characteristic	Description
Hours of Operation and Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
Coverage Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Engineering Division is responsible for discretionary permit review including preliminary and final plats and site plans, and final development plans and reviews for code compliance with right-of-way, sidewalk, easements, etc.• Oversees review and construction of public improvement construction projects.
Training and Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional Engineer
Codes Administered and Enforced	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Code of the City of Lawrence, Kansas• ADA Requirements• City Standards for construction
Workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Detailed records regarding plan review activities are not maintained.• Historical numbers would be the same as those distributed by the Planning Department for the review of site plans plus public improvement plans.

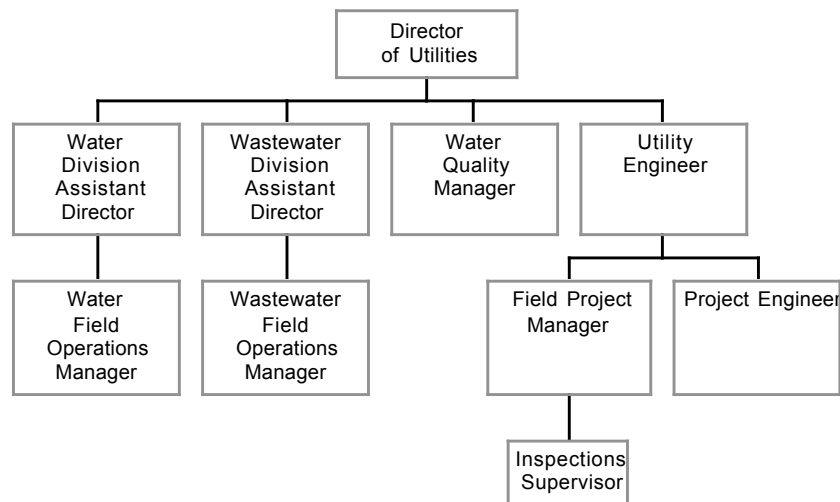
5. UTILITIES DEPARTMENT

The Utilities Department is allocated 115.5 full-time equivalent positions. The Utilities Department's mission is to "provide the City with an adequate supply of clean, safe, drinking water and properly return this precious resource back to the environment so that its life-sustaining properties can be utilized for generations to come." The primary responsibilities of the Divisions involved in the development review process include the following:

- The Engineering Division is responsible for reviewing preliminary and final plats, development plans, site plans, and public improvement plans to ensure that water lines and sanitary sewer connections are consistent with the design and capacity of the City's water distribution and sanitary sewer collection systems and that sufficient capacity is in place. Inspection of water and sanitary sewer extensions during construction are also performed throughout each project. The Engineering Division consults with the Water Distribution and Wastewater Collections staff as required.

- The Water Quality Division also reviews development permits and new construction to ensure design and construction conforms to the Clean Water Act. A Water Quality Manager is dedicated to this latter function.

The organizational chart, below, illustrates the organization of the Divisions and personnel involved in development review process.



As shown above, seven to eight staff within Utilities are involved in reviewing development and public improvement plans. The Director is typically not involved in development review. The table, that follows, provides a description of the key roles and responsibilities of these personnel related to development review:

Function	Staffing By Classification		Roles and Responsibilities
Administration	Water Division Assistant Director	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide oversight and management of their respective divisions. • The Assistant Directors typically do not review development and public improvement plans but are provided plans so that they are aware of new development and potential impacts on water distribution and wastewater systems.
	Wastewater Division Assistant Director	1	

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Function	Staffing By Classification		Roles and Responsibilities
Engineering	Utilities Engineer	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for oversight and management of the Engineering Division. Oversees all utilities infrastructure design and construction. Attends meetings with the development community to evaluate proposed development areas and provide guidance on requirements for connection to and extension of the water and wastewater utilities. Reviews development plans for the following types of issues: design/compatibility with City's water and wastewater systems, capacity issues, etc. Reviews plans to identify design, access, and capacity issues with water and wastewater systems. Reviews public improvement plans for conformance to city codes, accepted design standards, and capacity. Typically does not attend development review meetings at Planning Department.
	Field Project Manager	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly supervises the Inspections Supervisor and Project Inspectors. Reviews development and public improvement plans to identify design, access, and capacity issues with water and wastewater systems. Oversees inspection of water and sewer line construction. Manages the construction of all developer funded water and sewer public improvements including final acceptance letters, sanitary sewer video inspections, assuring warranty inspections are conducted, etc
	Project Engineer	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for document review and the management of inspection staff. Responsible for managing the construction of all developer funded water and sewer public improvements including final acceptance letters, sanitary sewer video inspections, assuring warranty inspections are conducted, etc. May attend development review meetings at the Planning Department.

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Function	Staffing By Classification		Roles and Responsibilities
	Inspections Supervisor	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for supervision of water and sewer line construction inspections. Directly supervises the project inspectors (4). Reviews development and public improvement plans to identify design and access issues, capacity issues, and construction standards. May attend development review meetings at Planning.
Water Distribution	Water Distribution Manager	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Water Distribution Manager is responsible for field operations within water distribution. Reviews site plans for the following types of issues: fire hydrant spacing, connection valves, service connects / how lines cross lots, capacity issues, and access points to water mains. Does not attend development review meetings at Planning Department.
Wastewater	Wastewater Field Collection Manager	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for oversight and management of field operations within wastewater collection and treatment. Does not attend development review meetings at Planning Department.
Water Quality	Water Quality Manager	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for all water quality issues for the Utilities Department. Enforces provisions of the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act. Typically reviews site plans to identify potential water quality issues. Reviews include the following types of elements: potential discharge of contaminants into the water system, manhole requirements, and wastewater treatment. Does not typically attend Planning Department development review meetings.

The table, that follows, describes the workload and services provided by the Utilities Department related to development review.

Characteristic	Description
Hours of Operation and Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
Coverage Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Water Distribution Division is responsible for site plan review focusing on issues related to hydrant location and spacing; connection locations, capacity issues, and access to water mains. • The Wastewater Division is responsible for site plan review focusing on issues related to capacity of wastewater lines, conformance with construction standards, access to main collection lines, piping slope, and related design elements. • The Water Quality Division is responsible for site plan review focusing on issues related to potential discharges into the water system, manhole requirements and wastewater treatment.
Training and Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and Wastewater Certifications, • Some staff are Professional Engineers.
Codes Administered and Enforced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of the City of Lawrence, Kansas. • Water and Wastewater Master Plans. • City Standards for construction. • KDHE Design criteria for public sewer and water utilities.
Workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed records regarding plan review activities are not maintained. • Historical numbers would be the same as those distributed by the Planning Department for the review of site plans.

3. SUMMARY OF THE EMPLOYEE SURVEY

3. SUMMARY OF THE EMPLOYEE SURVEY

The Matrix Consulting Group conducted a survey of employees in the Departments involved in the development review process to obtain feedback on the effectiveness and efficiency of the review process as well as to identify management, organizational, and operational issues within each review department. This survey was conducted as part of the Management Study of the Development Review Process. Surveys were distributed to all Department employees. Of the 50 surveys that were distributed, 27 were received for a response rate of 54%. While the survey was anonymous, employees were asked to indicate to which Department they were assigned and their primary role. The tables, below, present the results.

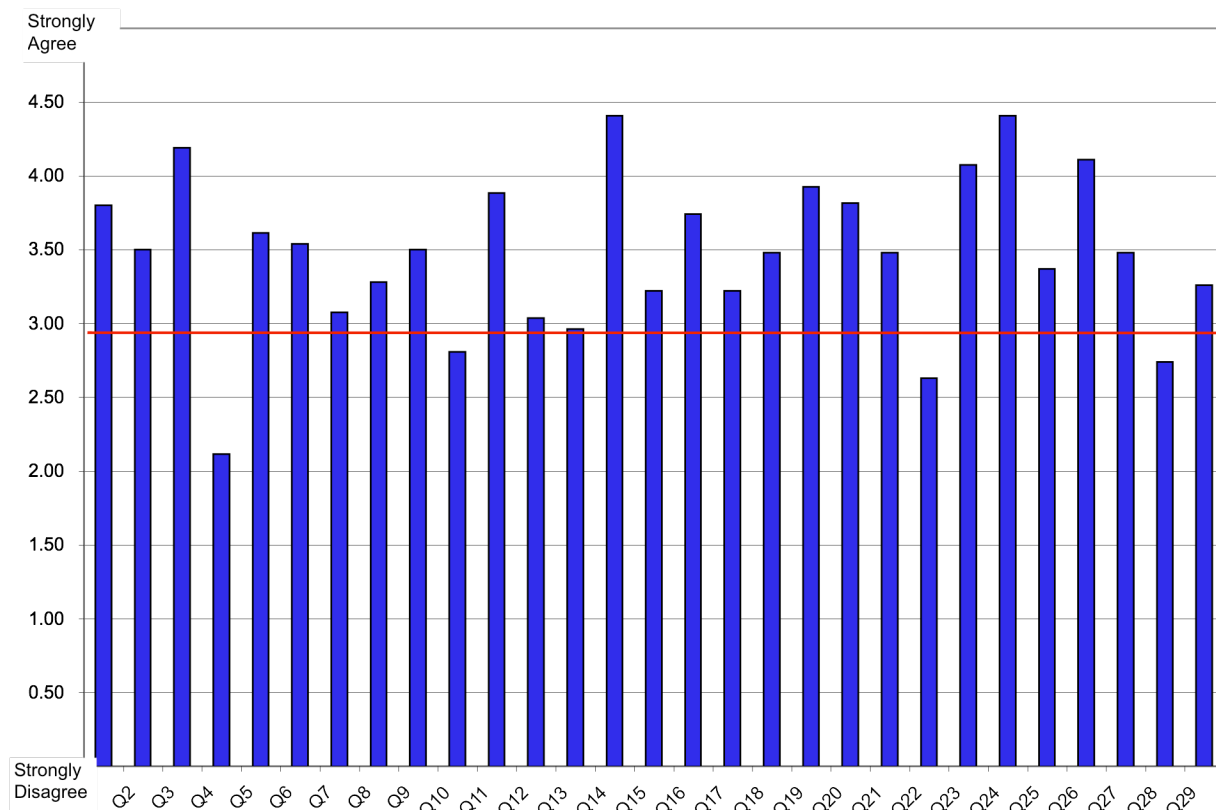
Department	Number	Percent
Planning	9	33%
Neighborhood Resources	8	30%
Utilities	5	19%
Public Works	4	15%
Fire	1	4%
Total	27	100%

Primary Role	Number	Percent
Plan Review	9	33%
Inspection	3	11%
Administration	8	30%
Other	5	19%
No Answer	2	7%
Total	27	100%

Note that the largest proportion of respondents were from the Planning Department and involved in Plan Review or Administration. The section, which follows, presents a brief overview of the results of the employee survey.

1. GENERAL FINDINGS

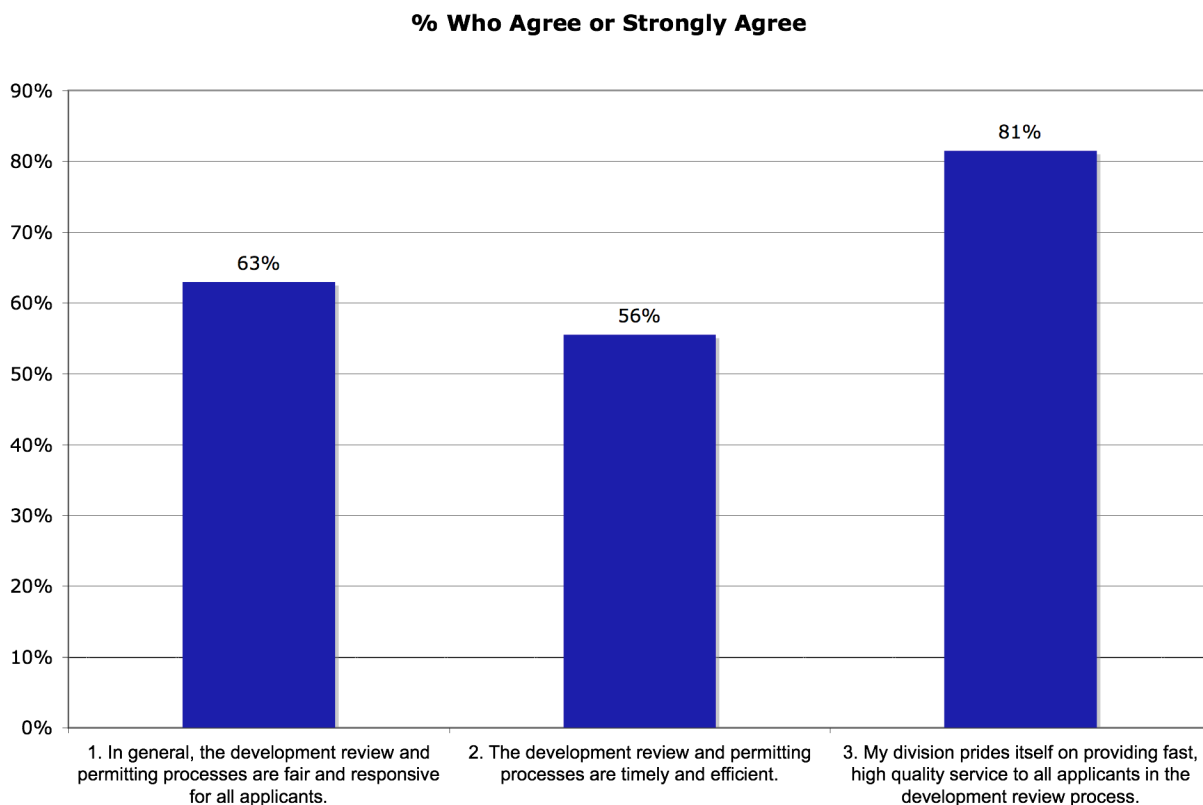
In reviewing the results of the employee survey, it is useful to review the overall pattern of responses. The chart, below, shows the overall average rating of each statement by respondents. Note that strongly disagree is a score of 1, while strongly agree is a score of 5. An average score of 3 represents a response of neutral or 'neither agree or disagree.' Also note that 'neutral' is represented by the red line.



As shown above, the majority of the responses were positive. Only five statements received negative responses – questions 4, 10, 22, and 28. In addition, the overall average response rating was 3.5, which represents a response between neutral and agree. The sections, which follow, provide a detailed discussion of the results of the employee survey for each of the topic areas as identified.

2. RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED TO EVALUATE STATEMENTS REGARDING THE OVERALL PROVISION OF SERVICE BY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW DEPARTMENTS.

The employee survey contained several statements relating to the provision of service to the development community, citizens, and other stakeholders. Statements included overall responsiveness, timeliness, consistency, and clarity of the process. The chart, below, provides a comparison of the results for statements relating to the general provision of service.

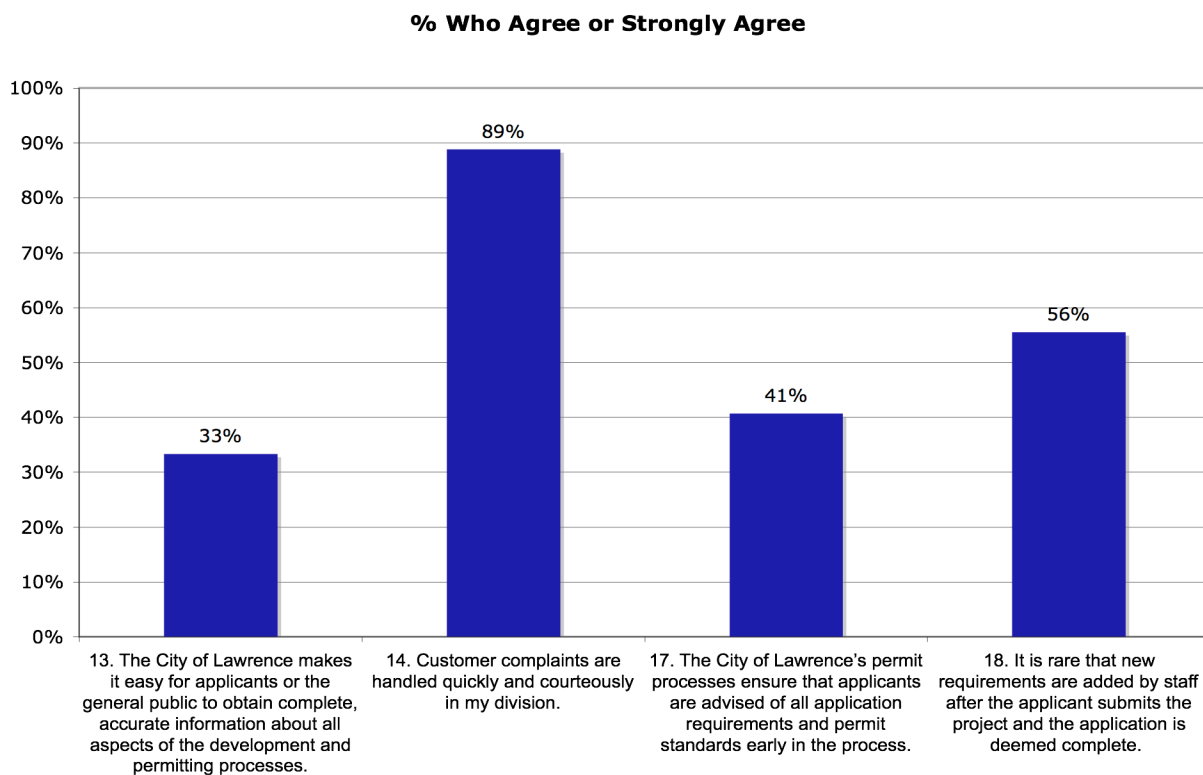


The points, which follow, provide the results for the statements presented in the above chart.

- In response to the statement, 'the development review and permitting processes are fair and responsive for all applicants,' 63% of respondents selected 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' 19% select 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree,' 11% selected 'neutral', and 7% did not answer.

- When provided the statement, 'the development review and permitting processes are timely and efficient,' 56% of respondents selected 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' 22% selected 'neutral,' and 19% selected 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree.'
- In response to the statement 'my division prides itself on providing fast, high quality service to all applicants in the development review process,' an overwhelming majority, 81%, selected 'strongly agree' or 'agree', compared to 11% who chose 'neutral.'

The next chart, below, provides response results to additional statements related to customer service and general service provision.

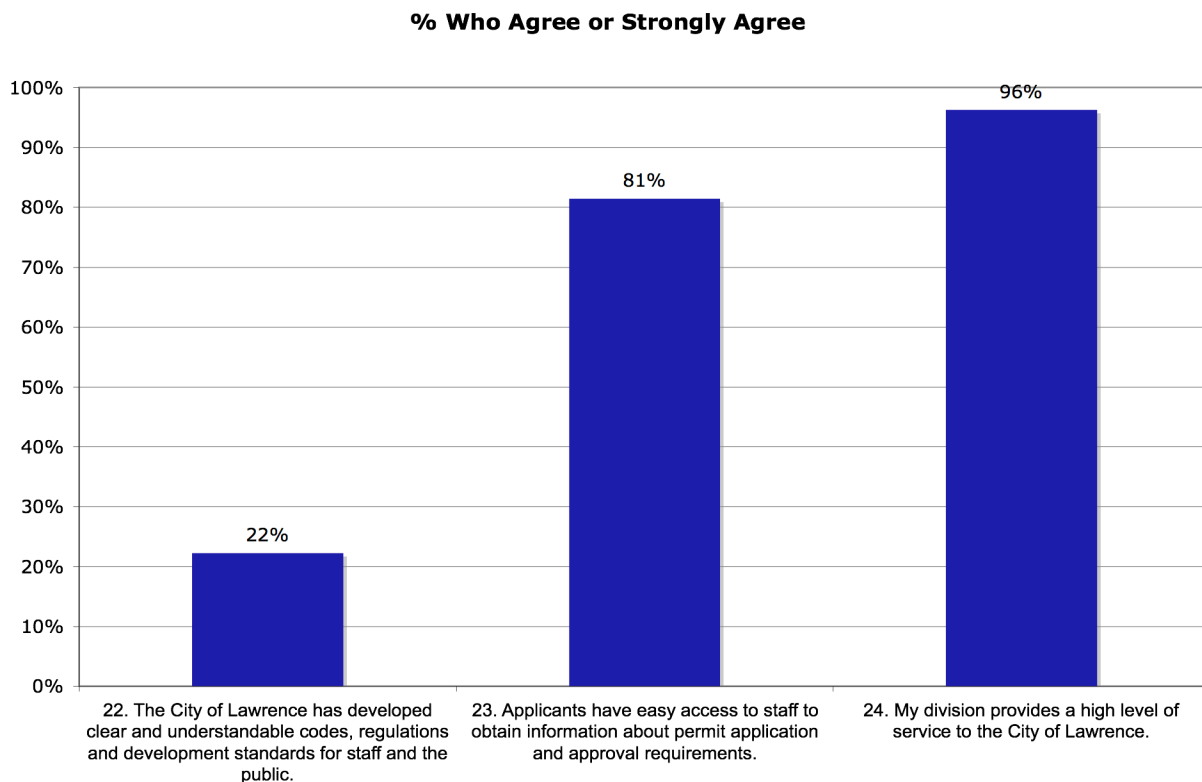


The points, which follow, present a discussion of the information presented in the chart.

- In response to the statement, 'The City of Lawrence makes it easy for applicants or the general public to obtain complete, accurate information about all aspects of the development and permitting processes,' only 33% of respondents agreed, compared to 41% who disagreed, and 26% who were neutral.
- The vast majority of employees, 89%, agreed with the statement "customer complaints are handled quickly and courteously in my division."

- When provided the statement, 'The City of Lawrence's permit processes ensure that applicants are advised of all application requirements and permit standards early in the process,' only 41% of respondents indicated agreement, while 26% disagreed, and 33% were neutral.
- Respondents positively evaluated the statement, 'It is rare that new requirements are added by staff after an application has been accepted and deemed complete,' with 56% of respondents selecting 'strongly agree' or 'agree' and 22% selected 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree.'

The chart, below, provides additional response results to statements regarding customer service.



The points, below, provide a discussion of the results presented in the chart.

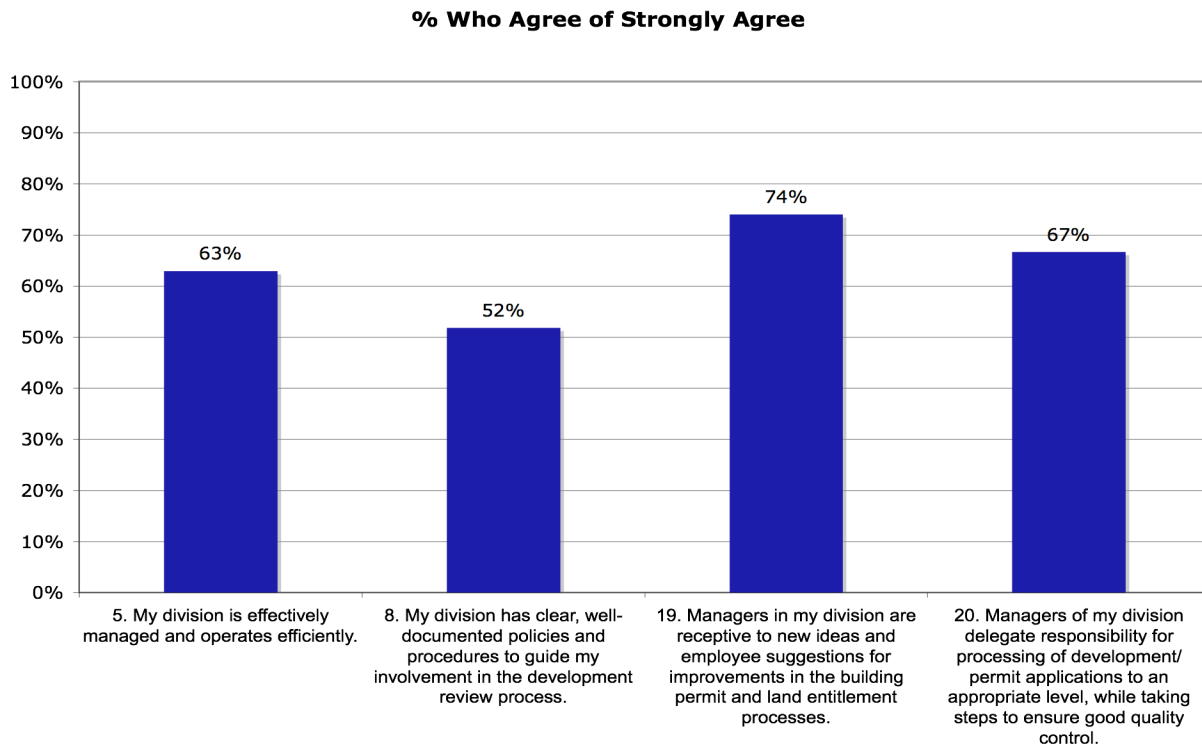
- In response to the statement, 'The City of Lawrence has developed clear and understandable codes, regulations and development standards for staff and the public,' only 22% indicated agreement, compared to 44% who disagreed, and 33% who indicated 'neither agree or disagree.'

- When provided the statement, ‘applicants have easy access to staff to obtain information about permit application and approval requirements,’ 81% of respondents selected ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree,’ while 11% indicated ‘neutral.’
- Respondents agreed almost unanimously with the statement ‘my division provides a high level of service to the City of Lawrence.’

In summary, respondents had mixed perceptions of the provision of development review services. While respondents generally agreed that the reviewing departments provide high levels of service to the City, they also indicated that the City can do a better job of providing information to residents and development customers and clarifying rules and requirements.

3. EMPLOYEES EVALUATED STATEMENTS REGARDING MANAGEMENT OF THEIR RESPECTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND THE REVIEW PROCESS.

The employee survey included several statements regarding management of their respective departments and coordination of the development review process. The chart, below, presents the results with respect to employees’ perceptions of the management of their departments.

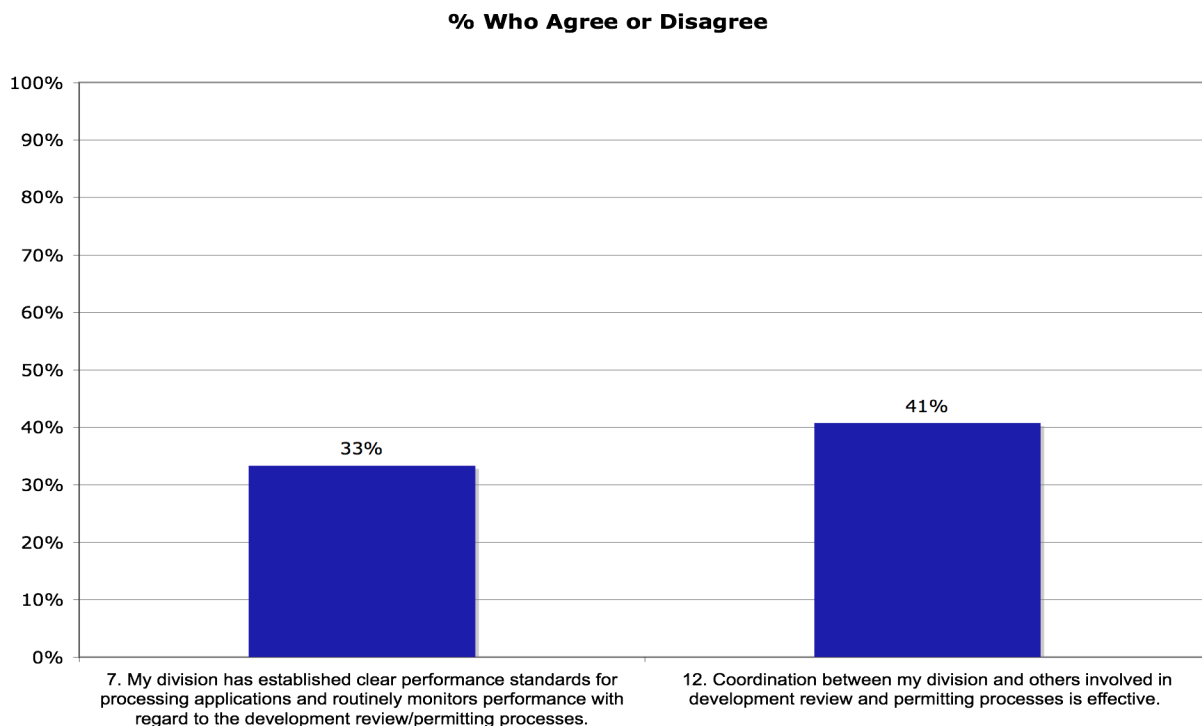


The points, which follow, present a discussion of the employee survey results with respect to department management.

- In response to the statement, 'my division is effectively managed and operates efficiently,' 63% of respondents selected 'strongly agree' or 'agree.'
- When provided the statement, 'my division has clear, well documented policies and procedures to guide my involvement in the development review process,' 52% selected 'strongly agree' or 'agree' and 37% selected 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree.'
- Respondents had positive perceptions with respect to the statement, 'managers in my division are receptive to new ideas and employee suggestions for improvements in the building permit and land entitlement process,' 74% of respondents selected 'strongly agree' or 'agree.'
- In response to the statement, 'managers of my division delegate responsibility for processing of development permit applications to an appropriate level, while taking steps to ensure good quality control,' 67% of respondents selected 'strongly agree' or 'agree' and 22% selected 'neutral.'

Overall, respondents had positive perceptions with respect to managers and management practices. However, respondents also strongly indicated that policies and procedures could be improved.

Additional statements were presented related to performance standards and the coordination of the development review process. These data are shown in the chart below.



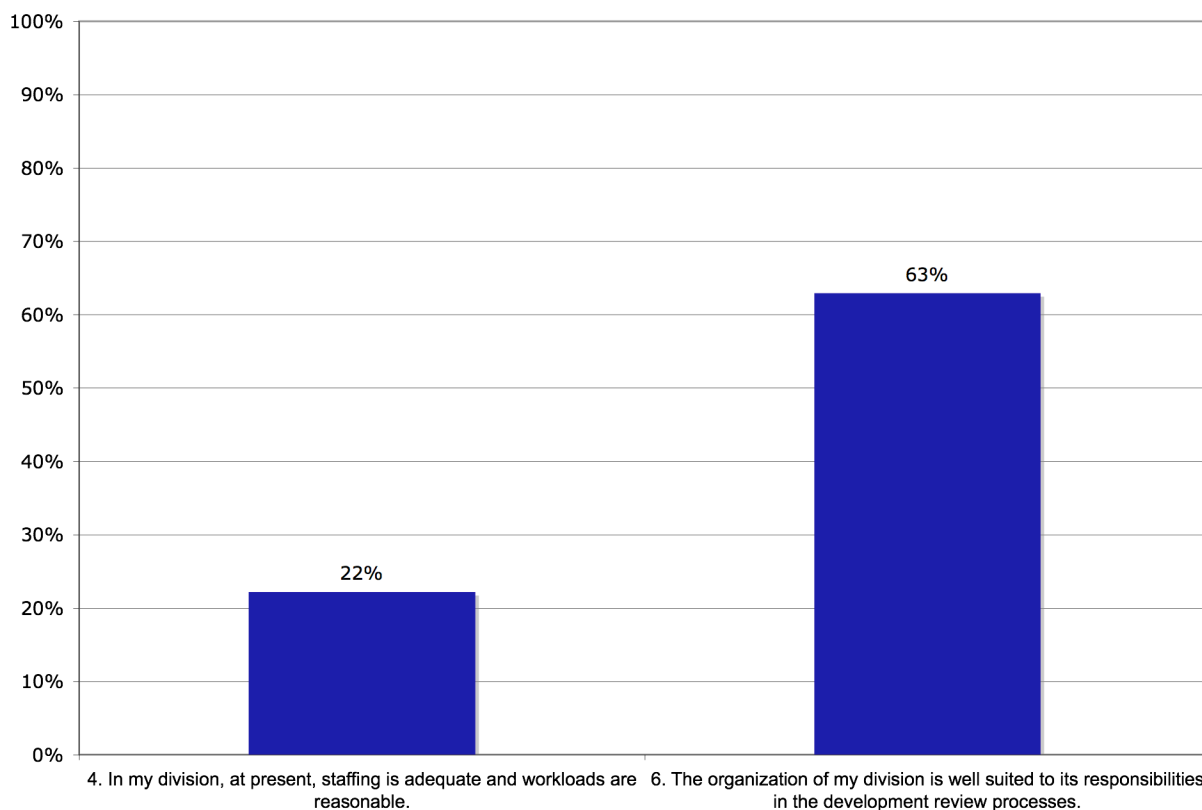
The points, which follow, present a summary of the employee survey results.

- In response to the statement, 'my division has established clear performance standards for processing applications and routinely monitors performance with regard to development review/permitting processes,' only 33% of respondents selected 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' compared to 33% who indicated disagreement, and 30% who were 'neutral.'
- When provided the statement, 'coordination between my division and the others involved in development review and permitting processes is effective,' only 41% of respondents selected 'strongly agree' or 'agree.' 37% of respondents indicated disagreement and 22% selected 'neutral.'

Overall, while respondents generally view division managers positively, many respondents believe the review process can be coordinated more effectively. The next section provides response results to statements related to staffing and organization of development review departments.

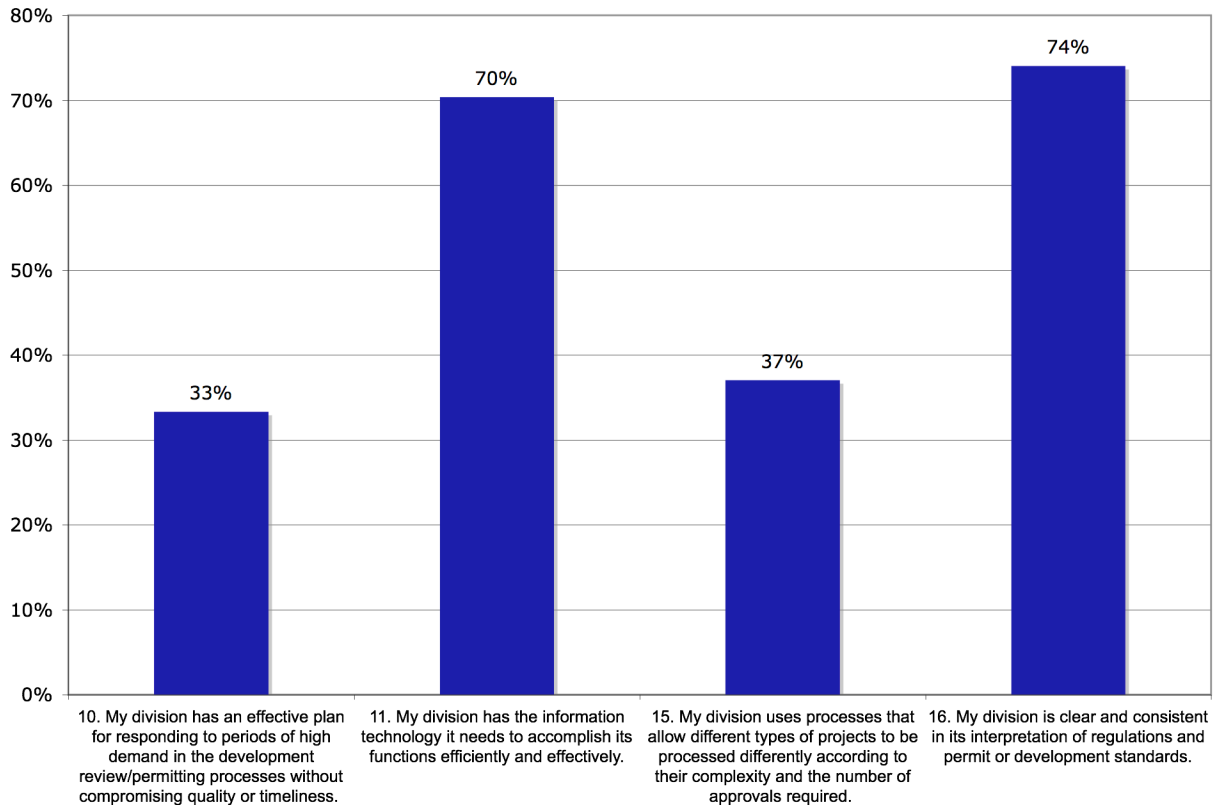
4. EMPLOYEES EVALUATED STATEMENTS RELATED TO ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF THEIR RESPECTIVE DEPARTMENTS.

Employees were provided with a number of statements related to staffing, organization, and operation of the department in which they are employed. The first chart, below, shows response results to statements regarding staffing and organization.



As shown above, only 22% of respondents agree that their division is staffed appropriately based on workload. However, a clear majority, 63%, indicated that the organization of their division 'is well suited to its responsibilities in the development

review process.’ The next chart, below, shows results to statements regarding other operational issues.

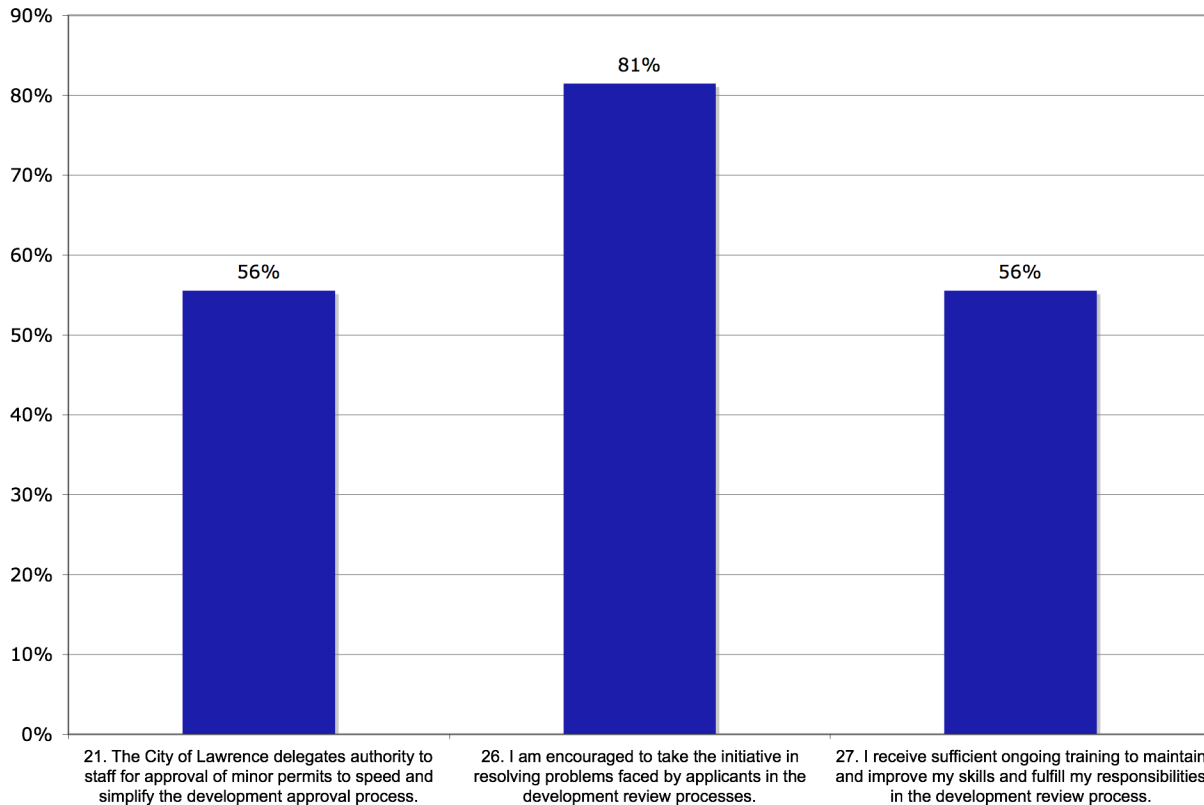


The following points highlight the information presented above:

- In response to the statement, ‘my division has an effective plan for responding to high demand in development review/permit processes without compromising quality or timeliness,’ only 33% of respondents selected ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree,’ compared to 41% who indicated disagreement, and 22% who were ‘neutral.’
- When provided the statement, ‘my division has the information technology it needs to accomplish its functions efficiently and effectively,’ the vast majority, 70%, indicated agreement.
- In response to the statement, ‘my division uses processes that allow different types of projects to be processed differently according to complexity and number of approvals required,’ only 37% of respondents selected ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree,’ compared to 26% who indicated disagreement, and 37% who were ‘neutral.’

- The vast majority, 74% believe that their division is clear and consistent in its interpretations of regulations and permit or development standards.

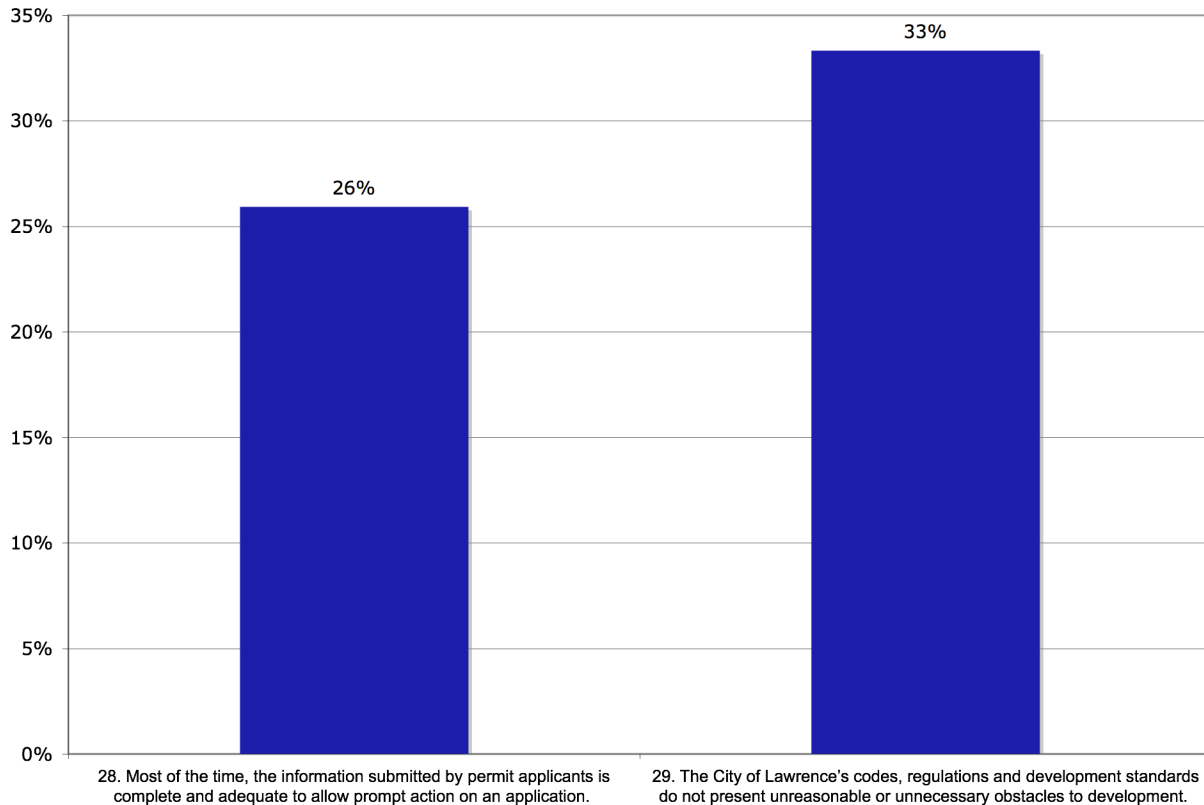
The next three statements relate to problem resolution.



The following points can be made regarding the chart above.

- In response to the statement, 'The City of Lawrence delegates authority to staff for approval of minor permits to speed and simplify the development approval process,' 56% of respondents selected 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' compared to 15% who indicated disagreement, and 30% who were 'neutral.'
- A clear majority of respondents indicated agreement with the statement 'I am encouraged to take the initiative in resolving problems faced by applicants in the development review process.'
- A majority of respondents, 56%, responded positively to the statement 'I receive sufficient ongoing training to maintain and improve my skills and fulfill my responsibilities in the development review process. There was an equal distribution of respondents who indicated disagreement and 'neither agree or disagree (22%).'

The final chart, below, provides response results to statements related to obstacles presented in the review process:



- As shown above, only 26% of respondents agree with the statement 'Most of the time, the information submitted by permit applicants is complete and adequate to allow prompt action on an application.' The largest share, 44%, indicated disagreement with this statement, and 30% were neutral.
- Only 33% of respondents agreed with the statement that 'codes, regulations and development standards do not present unreasonable or unnecessary obstacles to development.' A majority, 52%, indicated 'neither agree or disagree.'

Overall, respondents believe there are a number of improvement opportunities related to organization and operation of the review departments and review process. The next section provides a summary of written comments by respondents.

5. RESPONDENTS IDENTIFIED A NUMBER OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES WITH THE REVIEW PROCESS AND REVIEW DEPARTMENTS.

Employees were provided with an opportunity to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the review process. The list of points, below, provides a summary of comments made by respondents regarding the strengths of the review process.

- Good teamwork
- Good supervision
- Employee dedication
- Resources
- Autonomy
- Qualified and experienced staff
- Good communication
- Pleasant place to work
- Training
- Good technological support

The points, that follow, present a list of improvement opportunities identified by responding employees.

- Better trust from upper management.
- Workload needs to be more evenly distributed.
- More staff.
- Better pay.
- Incomplete applications delay progress and increase workload. Need process to turn back incomplete applications to customers.
- Website needs to be updated & improved.

- Future Land Use Map needs to be updated.
- Business licenses: “going out of business” license required, but no license required to start business. This could generate revenue for the City.
- Need to approve updated codes
- Improve compensation of technical staff.
- Better communication with upper management.
- Additional technical resources.
- More training.
- Better relationship with Neighborhood Resources.
- Adopt I-Codes.
- Need “one-stop-shop” concept for customers that combines planning, zoning, Neighborhood Resources, etc.
- Need full time position to handle POD (Planner of the Day) duties.

The detailed responses to each question from the employee survey are included as Attachment A to this report.

4. SUMMARY OF THE FOCUS GROUPS

4. SUMMARY OF THE FOCUS GROUPS

As part of the Management Study of the development review process, the project team conducted a number of focus groups to assist in the evaluation of customer satisfaction and identify issues with, and opportunities to improve, the development review process. These focus groups were conducted over a two-day period and included the following:

- **Wednesday, June 14**
 - 10:00 AM – this group consisted of 12 individuals who work as developers, architects, consultants, real estate professionals, and contractors.
 - 3:00 PM – this group consisted of 10 individuals, including business owners, advisory councils, University of Kansas associations, and Chamber of Commerce representatives.
 - 7:00 PM – this group consisted of 10 individuals, including neighborhood association representatives and other Lawrence residents.
- **Thursday, June 15**
 - 10:00 AM – this group consisted of 8 individuals, including developers, construction managers, architects, etc.
 - 1:00 PM – this group consisted of 7 individuals, including developers and residents of the unincorporated areas of Douglas County.

In total, the project obtained input from 47 focus group participants. All meetings were conducted on a confidential basis to obtain as much candid feedback as possible, with no City staff in attendance.

The following sections summarize the focus group perceptions regarding a variety of topics and issues. Responses are organized into two groups: the development community / business interests and neighborhood associations, and City and County

residents. Words and phrases in quotes represent actual comments made by the focus group participants.

1. THE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS GROUPS IDENTIFIED A NUMBER OF ISSUES AND METHODS TO STREAMLINE THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS.

Several developers, architects, consultants, business owners, and other groups participated in the focus groups to provide their insight regarding the issues and challenges of the development review process, as well as a number of recommendations. The participants identified a number of issues and recommendations regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of the process and overall staff support.

The project team asked participants about the level of customer service of each of the Departments involved in development review, timeliness and consistency of the process, effectiveness of the process, and overall perceptions of customer service. The following points provide the general comments:

- **Customer Service.** Participants indicated that customer service levels vary by Department.
 - The Planning Department is generally viewed as not customer service oriented. Many participants indicated that the prevailing attitude within Planning is “you can’t do that” not “how can we get this done.”
 - Neighborhood Resources was viewed more favorably. The Department is seen as making an effort to improve customer service. An example given was the recent change of allowing same day footing inspections.
 - Engineering review was generally viewed as not customer oriented and disjointed. A common comment regarding the engineering review process was that “departments change their mind frequently. Something that is approved at one stage is not allowed at another.”
 - Additional comments made regarding customer service include:
 - “The City deals with an iron hand.”

- - “The objective of the review process is to hinder development.”
 - “You never know when you will get approval. It’s a crapshoot.”
 - “The culture of the City is out of control.”
 - “The City has made it so expensive to get development off the ground.”
 - “City planners lack experience.”
 - “Planning staff is rude.”
- **Accountability.** Participants stated that there is an overall lack of accountability within the development review process. A common theme among participants was that no department or individual takes ultimate responsibility for development review decisions. They also indicated that there is a general “lack of leadership to get things done.” Specific comments regarding the issue of accountability include:
 - “Each department is just trying to limit their own liability. No one wants to make a mistake.”
 - “The Engineering review process takes too long. Departments will disapprove something that they approved at an earlier stage. The requirements change all the time.”
 - “Departments do not apply the zoning ordinance and subdivisions regulations consistently. They use the rules to support their personal position.”
 - “Requirements come out of the blue and do not relate to the comprehensive plan, zoning, and subdivision regulations.”
 - “Departments are afraid to make decisions.”
 - “Developers need to know how long something will take to get approved.”
 - “Improvements need to start at the top.”
- **Consistency.** Participants indicated that the review process is very inconsistent. They also stated that there are no agreed upon rules or criteria that can be used to know if a project will be approved. They also stated that Departments apply conflicting requirements for projects and frequently disallow plan items that were previously approved. Additional comments received include the following:

- “Plans are approved at one stage by a Department and disapproved at another.”
- “The City has changed the requirements for submitting comments to staff reports before Planning Commission meetings. They have reduced the time available to review staff reports and submit comments, and changed the day for public hearings. This makes it difficult to be prepared for these meetings.”
- “You never know what will pop up in a staff report.”

The project team asked the participants what are the most significant and important changes that should be made over the next several years, and their responses included the following:

- **Improve the level of accountability within the process.** Participants indicated that someone should be empowered to make final decisions and resolve issues. Other recommendations include:
 - Create a “Planning Ombudsman” to provide an avenue for appeals.
 - Provide customers with realistic time frames for project approval.
 - Outline standard rules and regulations that will be followed in reviewing development applications.
 - Provide an opportunity for applicants to sit down with all of the Departments involved in the review process to resolve issues early on.
- **Improve the coordination of development review between the Departments involved.** A common complaint from participants was that the Departments involved in the process do not communicate well with one another. This issue relates back to the accountability issue identified by participants. A recommendation was made to assign a project manager for development projects who can coordinate comments and make decisions regarding requirements.
- **Make the review process consistent and transparent.** As indicated above, participants stated that many review comments and conditions were not based on the rules and regulations governing development. A consistent suggestion was to require City staff to base their conditions on City ordinances, the Comprehensive Plan, accepted engineering practices, and other regulations adopted by the City. Participants indicated that all review comments should be made with clear references to these rules and regulations. Another suggestion

was to extend the time for responding to staff reports prior to Planning Commission meetings.

The following section provides the issues and recommendations identified by residents and neighborhood associations.

2. RESIDENTS AND NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS IDENTIFIED ISSUES AND CHALLENGES REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS AND PROVIDED A NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

The project team met with neighborhood association representatives and residents to discuss their perceptions of customer service, effectiveness and consistency of the review process, and general issues related to development. The points that follow provide a summary of the most commonly identified issues raised and recommendations made by focus group participants:

- **Communication.** A number of participants indicated that there is a lack of communication between the Planning Department and Lawrence residents and neighborhood associations. The issue of communication was discussed in several areas including access to information on new development, how to develop neighborhood plans, and code interpretations. Some comments, such as the one regarding the appeal process for the County, may indicate a general lack of understanding of the existing process. Specific comments include:
 - “Planning has not told us what needs to be done to develop neighborhood plans.”
 - “Neighborhood associations are not notified of new development proposals.”
 - “The comprehensive plan is not user friendly. It’s hard to figure out what the rules say.”
 - “Neighborhood association comments are not being incorporated into staff reports.”
 - “County residents are not informed about the status of development plans.” Particular reference was made to road extensions into unincorporated areas and the impact on residents.

- County residents do not know what's going on. Participants also felt that they were "losing their rights."
- "County residents do not have an appeal process. There is no Board of Zoning Appeals on the County side."
- "Planners aren't getting out and looking at areas proposed for development."
- **Political influence.** A common concern expressed by participants was that the development community has too much influence over the review process and Planning Commission. Specifically, participants stated that developers have too much influence over the Planning Commission and review Departments and that the comprehensive plan, zoning and subdivision regulations are "cherry picked" to suite developers' purposes. Another concern was that developers get unlimited time before Planning Commission while Public comments have strict time limits.
- **Application of rules and regulations.** Another common theme among participants was that the rules and regulations that govern how development will occur within the City and County are not consistently followed or not appropriately developed. Common statements concerning this issue include:
 - The comprehensive plan is often ignored or certain elements of it are "cherry picked." Common examples of these issues were "big box" retail development projects, which were larger than zoning regulations.
 - "Commercial nodes are overbuilt." The Planning Commission ignores restrictions on the size of retail development.
 - The City does not adequately consider the need for parks and neighborhood connectivity.
 - The City does not require impact fees for new development. This limits the City's ability to provide and maintain infrastructure and City services.
 - Participants expressed concerns about grandfathering of development projects. Submittal of site plans before adoption of new code gives applicants the option of using the old or new code. Participants did not think this was appropriate.
 - County residents unanimously expressed concern about the current building moratorium and lot restrictions within the unincorporated areas. Participants indicated that this issue should be resolved as soon as possible so that residents can develop land.

In addition to the comments identified above, neighborhood associations and residents made several recommendations to improve the development review process:

- **Better leadership.** Participants agreed that resolving these issues will require leadership “from the top.” A common statement made was that “one person needs to have the final decision.” Participants indicated that change should come from the City Manager.
- **Improve Communication.** Participants indicated that Planning information should be made more accessible. Neighborhood association representatives stated that this should improve with the implementation of the new code, which requires notification for new development projects.
- **Accountability.** Participants indicated that planning staff should not be evaluated based on how quickly they get projects approved, but rather based on performance measured against the comprehensive plan and growth management skills.
- **Other Recommendations:** Participants also offered recommendations to improve the review process, including:
 - Develop a zoning appeals process for the County. Participants indicated that the Board of Zoning Appeals is not available for County residents. As previously noted, this comment may indicate a need for greater education regarding existing procedures and boards and how they interact in the process since an appeal mechanism is currently in place.
 - Charge developers impact fees to adequately fund infrastructure maintenance and additional City services (e.g. police, fire, public works, etc.).
 - Move the Planning Department to a separate facility and co-locate them with Neighborhood Resources.
 - Provide additional information to County residents about proposed developments and planning issues via the newspaper or other methods.
 - Update the comprehensive plan to make it more user friendly and to reflect actual development patterns.

Overall, the focus groups were well attended and provided a significant amount of input to the project team.

5. RESULTS OF THE COMPARATIVE SURVEY

5. RESULTS OF THE COMPARATIVE SURVEY

As part of the management study of the development review process, the project team conducted a comparative survey of development service operations in other comparable municipalities in the region. The project team developed a survey instrument that was distributed to thirteen cities. The project team received six partially completed surveys. This document presents a summary of the information collected from other cities, as well as a comparison to the current development services in the City of Lawrence.

1. SURVEYED CITIES PROVIDED GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS.

Comparative agencies were asked to provide general data regarding the workload levels of the department. Attachment B at the end of this report presents a summary of the data gathered. The following points present a discussion of the information presented in Attachment B.

- The median number of building inspection performed by the comparable communities was 25,992, with an average of 25,905. The number of inspections ranged from 13,242 to 46,131. The City of Lawrence conducted 12,671 inspections. The following table presents the results by city.

Comparative City	Number of Building Inspections Performed
Lawrence, KS	12,671
Columbia, MO	46,131
Overland Park, KS	28,236
Ames, IA	N/A
Lincoln, NE	25,992
Lenexa, KS	15,927
College Station, TX	13,242

- The median number of building permits issued was 3,277, with an average of 2,514. The number of building permits issued ranged from 1,159 to 4,496. The City of Lawrence issued 694 permits, or approximately 79% below the mean

value of the comparable communities. The table, below, presents the results by city.

Comparative City	Number of Building Permits Issued
Lawrence, KS	694
Columbia, MO	3,277
Overland Park, KS	4,107
Ames, IA	N/A
Lincoln, NE	4,496
Lenexa, KS	1,159
College Station, TX	2,484

- The median value of building permits issued was \$323,555,257, with an average of \$323,117,562. The City of Lawrence issued \$131,265,191 in building permits. The City of Lawrence's building permit value is approximately 67% below the mean value of the comparable communities. The table, below, presents the results by city.

Comparative City	Valuation of Building Permits Issued
Lawrence, KS	\$131,265,191
Columbia, MO	N/A
Overland Park, KS	\$464,624,807
Ames, IA	N/A
Lincoln, NE	\$481,836,169
Lenexa, KS	\$182,485,707
College Station, TX	\$163,523,566

- Data was collected regarding the number of commercial plans reviewed by the responding departments. The median number reviewed was 570, with an average of 1,500. The number of commercial plan reviews ranged from 66 to 4,650. The City of Lawrence's review numbers are well below the median and average values.

Comparative City	Number of Commercial Plan Reviews
Lawrence, KS	232
Columbia, MO	570
Overland Park, KS	1,968
Ames, IA	N/A
Lincoln, NE	4,650
Lenexa, KS	248
College Station, TX	66

- The table, below, presents the number of residential plans reviewed by each specific comparative agency. The median number reviewed was 627, with an average of 602. The City of Lawrence was below the average by 41%.

Comparative City	Number of Residential Plan Reviews Performed
Lawrence, KS	354
Columbia, MO	0
Overland Park, KS	919
Ames, IA	NA
Lincoln, NE	958
Lenexa, KS	501
College Station, TX	627

- The median number of site plan reviews performed was 44, with an average of 583. The City of Lawrence is approximately 83% below the average and over twice the mean of the comparable communities. The table, below, presents the results by city.

Comparative City	Number of Site Plan Reviews Performed
Lawrence, KS	101
Columbia, MO	2,660
Overland Park, KS	N/A
Ames, IA	44
Lincoln, NE	135
Lenexa, KS	39
College Station, TX	36

- Data was collected regarding the number of preliminary plats reviewed by the responding departments. The median number reviewed was 19, with an average of 17.8. The number of commercial plan reviews ranged from 4 to 36. The City of Lawrence's number of preliminary plats reviewed is greater by approximately 50% than both the median and average values. The table, below, presents the results by city.

Comparative City	Number of Preliminary Plats Reviewed
Lawrence, KS	28
Columbia, MO	N/A
Overland Park, KS	36
Ames, IA	4
Lincoln, NE	19
Lenexa, KS	8
College Station, TX	22

- The median number of final plats reviews performed was 46, with an average of 62. The number of plats ranged from 9 to 153. The City of Lawrence has the same number of final plats as comparable communities compared to the median and is 29% below the average of the comparables. The table, below, presents the results by city.

Comparative City	Number of Final Plats Reviewed
Lawrence, KS	46
Columbia, MO	N/A
Overland Park, KS	77
Ames, IA	9
Lincoln, NE	153
Lenexa, KS	39
College Station, TX	46

- The table, below, presents the number of development plans reviewed by each specific comparative agency. The median number reviewed was 30.5, with an average of 30.8. The City of Lawrence reviewed 28 development plans just below the median and average value.

Comparative City	Number of Development Plans Reviewed
Lawrence, KS	28
Columbia, MO	N/A
Overland Park, KS	N/A
Ames, IA	N/A
Lincoln, NE	15
Lenexa, KS	47
College Station, TX	33

- Data was collected regarding the number of rezoning processed by the responding departments. The median number reviewed was 20, with an average of 25.6. The number of rezoning applications ranged from 6 to a high of 58 for the comparables. The City of Lawrence's number of rezoning applications is four times greater than both the median and averages of the comparables.

Comparative City	Number of Rezoning Applications Processed
Lawrence, KS	83
Columbia, MO	N/A
Overland Park, KS	29
Ames, IA	6
Lincoln, NE	58
Lenexa, KS	15
College Station, TX	20

* * * * *

Overall, the level of development-related workload within the City of Lawrence is less than that of these other comparable cities even for cities of comparable population such as College Station and Lenexa, Kansas.

2. BUILDING INSPECTION AND PLAN CHECKING STAFFING LEVELS IN THE CITY OF LAWRENCE DIFFER IN COMPARISON TO THE OTHER CITIES.

The cities included within the comparative survey provided general data regarding the staffing levels in building inspection and plan checking. The following points present a summary of the data gathered.

- **The number of staff allocated for commercial and residential building plan reviews ranges from one to eight.** Overland Park (authorized 8 staff) had the highest number of staff assigned to commercial and residential building and plan reviews. On the other hand there is only one person assigned to commercial and residential building plan reviews in Lenexa and College Station. The City of Lawrence has one staff assigned to commercial and residential building plan reviews and this position is a Senior Plans Examiner.
- **The number of commercial and residential inspectors ranges from four to nine.** Except for Columbia, MO the number of inspectors assigned to commercial and residential inspections does not vary. Lenexa, KS, Overland Park, KS, and College Station, TX utilize combination inspectors. For Lawrence, two of the four building inspectors are combination inspectors and one is a certified combination residential commercial inspector. Building Inspectors in Lawrence have a variety of commercial certifications and perform a variety of commercial inspections.

Overall, there are a number of important differences between the building inspection and plans examining staff in Lawrence and these other comparable cities. The City of Lawrence does not utilize combination inspectors as extensively as Lenexa, KS, Overland Park, KS, and College Station, TX, and the City's plans examiner, classified as a Senior Plans Examiner.

3. THE CITIES INCLUDED IN THE COMPARATIVE SURVEY SUPPLIED INFORMATION REGARDING THEIR OPERATIONS AND APPROACHES TO PROVIDING DEVELOPMENT REVIEW SERVICES.

The cities included within the comparative survey provided information regarding a variety of the key elements of development review programs and services. Important points to note concerning this information are presented below.

- All of the cities, except Columbia, MO, provide residential plan check services. The City of Lawrence also provides residential plan check services.
- None of the cities use consultants to provide building permit plan services. The City of Lawrence does not use consultants to perform building permit plan checks.
- All cities require construction-level drawings for site plan review. The City of Lawrence also requires construction level drawings for site plan reviews.
- Most of the cities provide over-the-counter building permit plan checking services. Columbia, MO is the only city that indicated that they do not provide over-the-counter permit plan checking services. The most common over-the-counter building plan checking services provided are for decks, residential remodels and simple additions. The estimated proportion of building permit plan checking services that are performed over-the-counter ranged from 10% to 40% of all building permits issued. The highest percentage of building permits issued over-the-counter was by Lenexa, KS.
- Building permits plans in Columbia, MO are routed only to the Fire Department. The other three cities (Overland Park, Lenexa and College Station) route their plans to the Planning Department, the Engineering Department, utility departments, and to the Fire Department. The City of Lawrence routes building permit plans only to the Fire Department.
- Overland Park and Lenexa have both adopted processing targets for building permit plan checking services. There is some similarity in the targets for single family residential - 5 business days. Building permit plan checking targets for projects such as multi-family residential, apartment complexes and large commercials are set to 15 to 20 business days. The City of Lawrence also adopted processing targets. Their targets are set to 5 business days for single family residential and 10 business days for multi-family residential and, apartment complexes, and 15 business days for commercial.
- All of the cities, except Columbia, MO, indicated that 100% of their inspection requests are processed the next working day. The City of Columbia, MO indicated that 90% of their inspection requests are responded to in the next working day. City of Lawrence is providing next day inspection requests.
- Two cities provide the opportunity for applicants to apply for building permits using the internet: Overland Park, KS and Lenexa, KS. In Overland Park, building permits that do not require building permit plans can be applied for online, while in Lenexa all permit types are available electronically. Lawrence does not provide an option to apply for building permits online.

- With the exception of Overland Park, KS, none of the cities use the case manager concept for processing of building permits. The City of Lawrence does not utilize a case manager concept that tracks building permit plans from application through the building permit plan check process.
- All of the cities provide building inspection and plan checking services Monday through Friday. The City of Lawrence provides these services Monday through Friday.
- With the exception of College Station, TX, all cities charge a building permit plan check fee. In Columbia, MO and Lenexa, KS, the building fees are set at 50% and 40% of the permit fee. In Overland Park, KS, the fee is \$100 for new residential one and two family homes. Columbia, MO and Overland, KS do not have inspection fees. In most of the cities building permit plan check and inspection fees are set based on square footage or value of construction. The City of Lawrence charges a permit fee covering administration of the building permitting process (including related inspections) that are based upon the value of the construction.
- Of the three responses regarding ICC certifications, Overland Park and Lenexa both require certification for their building inspectors as well as their plan examiners. The City of Lenexa currently requires an ICC certification within 6-18 months.
- Most of the cities have adopted processing targets (turn around times) for administrative and discretionary planning permits. The City of Columbia is the only city without processing targets. The City of Lawrence has also adopted processing targets.
- All of the cities utilize an automated permit information system to manage the plan check and inspection process. Two cities, Columbia, MO and College Station, TX, are using the same computer system as the City of Lawrence. There are four other automated permit information systems being utilized in the other cities. Overland Park, KS utilizes Accela Tidemark. Ames, IA uses a “homegrown” system developed using Microsoft Access. Lincoln, NE utilizes Accela Permits Plus. Lenexa, KS utilizes Cornerstone CL. All cities, except Columbia, MO and Ames, IA, enter building permit plan review and administrative and discretionary permit comments directly into the automated permit information system. The City of Lawrence also uses HTE computer system only for building permit plan functions including plan reviews, and building permit plan review comments are entered directly into the system.
- There is not a particular pattern to the organizational placement of zoning enforcement. In Columbia, MO and Lincoln, NE, zoning enforcement is part of building and safety. In Overland Park, KS and College Station, TX, zoning enforcement is located in the Planning Department. In two other cities, Ames, IA

and Lenexa, KS, zoning is part of a Community Development Department co-located with Planning and Building and Safety. The City of Lawrence is has placed its zoning enforcement within the Neighborhood Resources Department.

- The type of planning and zoning permits that can be approved administratively were similar in most cities and included site plans, minor amendments to special permits, minor permits (including home occupation permits), and certificates of appropriateness. In the City of Lawrence, staff can administratively approve site plans and minor alterations along with lot splits and simple division of lots.
- With the exception of the City of the Columbia, MO, all of the cities route discretionary planning permit plans such as site plans, plats, development plans and rezoning applications to departments besides the planning department for review and comment. The City of Lawrence routes discretionary planning permit plans to Utilities, Public Works, Fire, Police, and Parks and Recreation.

The response from each participating city is presented in Attachment B at the end of this report.

6. BEST PRACTICES ANALYSIS

6. BEST PRACTICES ANALYSIS

While the study of the development review process is designed to provide a comprehensive analysis of operations, organization, staffing, and management, this chapter of the report represents an important step in the assessment of the City's performance. In order to make the assessments of strengths and improvement opportunities, the project team developed a set of performance measures which we call "best management practices" against which to evaluate these processes.

1. BUILDING PERMIT PLAN CHECKING AND INSPECTION

There are a number of positive aspects to the building permit plan check and inspection processes utilized by the City of Lawrence. These positive aspects are presented in the paragraphs below.

- The Neighborhood Resources Department has established a response time target of responding to inspection request by 4:00 p.m. of the next business day. Same day inspection requests are honored for a charge of \$47.50.
- The Neighborhood Resources Department has established a will-call inspection process for foundation walls, sewers, and footings, which allows for same day inspection of these items.
- The Neighborhood Resources Department has recently implemented an IVR system, which will allow applicants to schedule inspections over the phone 24/7. This system will be linked to the HTE permit tracking system.
- The Neighborhood Resources Department typically utilizes combination inspectors for residential construction only. Two inspectors are certified residential combination inspectors, and a third is certified combination residential and commercial. The Department offers a 2.5% salary increase for each additional certification. Residential combination inspector certification provides a 5% increase. Incentives are capped at 10%.
- It is estimated that the four building inspectors spend approximately 1.5 hours per day in the office (including training and plan review time).

- The Neighborhood Resources Department charges a fee of \$47.50 for the third building inspection of an item that was previously disapproved to manage the extent of re-inspections.
- The Neighborhood Resources Department utilizes an automated permit system – the HTE financial information system. However, the Neighborhood Resources Department and the Fire Department only use this system to track building permits. No other Department involved in the development review process utilizes this system. In addition, the Neighborhood Resources Department utilizes this system for a variety of other tasks including scheduling and tracking inspections, issuing certificates of occupancy, placing holds on applications and permits, calculating fees, tracking approvals, managing contractor licensing. This information is linked to the Neighborhood Resources Department's website and allows applicants to check the status of permits and inspections.
- Building permit plan checking is accomplished concurrently by the Neighborhood Resources Department and the Fire Department.
- The Neighborhood Resources Department coordinates with the Planning Department to ensure that zoning clearances for permits within historic districts/environs and floodplains are obtained prior to the issuance of building permits.
- The Neighborhood Resources Department provides residential building permit plan check services in a shorter amount of calendar days than benchmarks (based upon a sample by the project team). These processing times are calculated based upon available data from the system and may reflect initial date of application rather than date of application completion. More specifically:
 - New single-family residential plan checks were completed in ten (10) calendar days for the first check;
 - 4-plex residential plan checks were completed in eleven (11) calendar days for the first check; and
 - Multi-family residential plan checks larger than 4-plex were completed in twenty (20) calendar days for first check.
- The Neighborhood Resources Department participates in the development review meetings held every Friday by the Planning Department to discuss current development projects, requirements and conditions of approval.
- Costs for the Neighborhood Resources Department are covered by the fees the Department charges for its services. The City has recently adopted a new Council Policy regarding the assessment of building permit fees and a procedure

outlining the costs that will be included as City charges for performing this function.

- The Neighborhood Resources Department utilizes a periodical (2-3 times per year) to keep architects, engineers, and contractors informed of relevant building permit plan, building inspection, and building code information.

There are also a number of opportunities for improvement in the building permit plan check and inspection services. These opportunities are identified in the sections that follow.

- The Neighborhood Resources Department does not monitor inspection performance against a target. Inspection request turnaround time is not monitored to compare actual levels of service to the target levels of service.
- Inspection requests were not accepted until 7:00 a.m. of the day inspection are to be completed. With the recent implementation of the new Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system requests are accepted until 7:00 a.m.
- The Neighborhood Resources Department is authorized four building inspection positions – Building Inspector II's. Only two of these positions are capable of functioning as combination inspectors for residential construction and one is certified as a combination residential and commercial inspector.
- Building inspectors do not utilize automated input devices to record inspection results or to display inspection history while in the field.
- The HTE automated permit information system is not utilized by all Departments in the development review process to (1) assure the status of each plan submittal is visible during the plan check process; (2) manage the processing time for building permit plan checking by measuring actual performance against cycle time objectives; (3) provide a database of inspection service; (4) enable all of the departments/divisions involved in the building permit plan check process to enter and retrieve data; and (5) facilitate customer service through access to the internet to enable customers to submit building permit and inspection requests. These functions are performed by the Neighborhood Resources and Fire Department for the review of building permit plans.
- Over-the-counter building permit plan checking is provided for all mechanical, plumbing, and electrical projects for single-dwelling units. Over-the-counter plan check service is not provided five days a week for plan checking of pools (requires Health Department approval), patio covers, decks, small single-family additions or remodels that do not require structural calculations, and other minor

permits. Some permits for properties located within the historic environs or flood plain require additional approvals before the issuance of building permits.

- Building permit applications cannot be submitted on-line.
- Building permit plans are not checked at the counter at initial submittal for completeness. A cursory review of necessary forms is done. The Neighborhood Resources Department is working on a process to have preliminary checks done at the counter.
- The amount of calendar days required for commercial building permit plan checking is longer than benchmarks. These processing times are calculated based upon available data from the system and may reflect initial date of application rather than date of application completion. More specifically:
 - The plan checking of commercial remodels were completed in twenty-two (22) calendar days for the first check;
 - The plan checking of commercial additions were completed in forty-eight (48) calendar days;
 - The plan checking of new commercial structures were completed in fifty-six (56) calendar days for the first check.
- The Neighborhood Resources Department still utilizes the 1997 Uniform Building Codes. This is a challenge since inspectors are ICC certified.
- The City does not provide a one-stop shop for its development review services. The Planning Department and the Engineering Division are located in a different building than the Neighborhood Resources Department.
- The Neighborhood Resources Department does not provide nor utilize a detailed building permit plan “checklist” for all permit types that will enable customers to verify that all necessary information is included and submitted. A detailed checklist is available for one and two family dwelling projects and is available on the Department’s website.
- Building code, policy and ordinance interpretations are presented in the form of memos and amended to a policy notebook. There are few memos that address policy and ordinance issues, and there is not a consistent format for documentation or distribution.
- The Neighborhood Resources Department does not provide a list of the most common building permit plan check comments or corrections noted during plan reviews on its website.

The strengths in the aspects of building permit plan checking and inspection provide a sound basis for improvements in the services provided by the City.

2. DISCRETIONARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERMITS

There are a number of positive aspects to the discretionary and administrative permit process utilized by the City of Lawrence. These positive aspects are presented in the paragraphs below.

- Periodic joint work sessions are conducted typically once per year between the City Council and the Planning Commission.
- The Planning Department provides alternatives and recommendations to the Planning Commission within the staff reports on each item under consideration.
- The Planning Director provides new Planning Commission members with an orientation. Six of the ten planning commission members attended the American Planning Association National Conference last year.
- The Planning Commission has adopted bylaws to govern their operations and activities.
- The Planning Commission uses a consent agenda.
- The comprehensive plan was adopted in 1998. Since then, minor amendments have been made to the plan in 2000 and 2001. Amendments were made to the economic development chapter in 2003, the transportation chapter in 2003, and the commercial land use chapter in 2003/04.
- Discretionary permit applications are placed on the Planning Commission agenda when the application is filed. Unless the applicant does not meet the most of the conditions and requirements identified during the review process, applications proceed to the Planning Commission on the date originally scheduled. Typically, it takes 48 calendar days for an application to be heard by the Planning Commission.
- The Planning Department is open during lunch and five days per week for the acceptance of applications.
- The Department assigns a ‘planner of the day’ to assist customers at the Planning Department counter. Two administrative personnel are also assigned to the counter to provide information.

- The departments and divisions that participate in the discretionary and administrative permit process have access to GIS including the assessor parcels, general plan categories, zoning districts, aerials, flood and drainage data, utilities, etc.
- Application handouts have been prepared for such permits as variance, conditional use, rezoning, site plans, subdivision of property, etc.
- The zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, and comprehensive plan are available on line.
- The City has recently adopted a new zoning ordinance effective July 1, 2006. All amendments to the ordinance are dated so that the most current version can be identified. On-line access to the ordinance ensures access to the most current version.
- The Planning Department has five staff dedicated to advanced planning, not including two interns, a historic resources planner, and a GIS analyst. While these personnel share “Planner of the Day” duties, these responsibilities do not consume a large amount of their time.
- With the adoption of the new zoning ordinance this past July 1st, staff of the Planning Department are allocated more authority to approve minor permits and site plans.
- The planner assigned a discretionary permit application by the Planning Department assumes responsibility for collection and follow-up on all comments for plan checks completed by other departments to ensure they are received in time for dissemination to the applicant. Typically, one planner is assigned to an application throughout the process unless an issue beyond the planner’s knowledge is involved, such as a flood plain development permit or communications tower application.
- Development review meetings are held with a representative from each of the reviewing departments each Friday at the Planning Department to discuss discretionary permits and conditions of approval.
- Design review guidelines have been developed primarily for the downtown commercial and historic districts. These guidelines provide broad direction as to required design elements.
- Checklists are utilized for reviewing completeness of discretionary permit applications.

- The table below shows the average and median number of calendar days to review development permits during 2005. Note that the project team sampled 45 cases.

Permit Type	Average 1st Review Time	Median 1st Review Time
Preliminary Development Plan	11.0	11.0
Final Development Plan	10.3	10.0
Preliminary Plat	9.4	9.5
Final Plat	9.0	9.0
Site Plan	10.5	10.8
Total	10.2	10.0

As shown above, the initial review of development permits took approximately 10 calendar days to complete. This means that from the date of application to the date the applicant was notified of review comments made, approximately 10 calendar days elapsed. This is based upon a sample of various development permits by the project team to approximate the typical time – calendar days - required to provide these comments, since the data is not available in an ongoing monthly report generated by the Planning Department.

- The actual number of calendar days to provide initial comments by the City to the applicant for discretionary permits is comparable to benchmarks.

Permit Type	Average Approval Time	Median Approval Time
Preliminary Plat	53.0	49.0
Final Plat	80.0	76.0
Site Plan	75.1	61.0
Preliminary Development Plan	62.0	55.5
Final Development Plan	36.0	53.0
Zoning	110.0	50.0
Total	73.7	52.0

The following points highlight the information above:

- The average number of calendar days for approval (from application date to commission or staff approval) for all of the development permits sampled was approximately 74 calendar days.
- The median number of calendar days for approval of planning permits was 52 days.
- Preliminary Plat applications were processed in the fewest number of calendar days, based on a median approval time of 49 days. Final Plats required the largest number of calendar days, based on a median approval time of 76 calendar days.

- Based on the average number of calendar days required for approval, Final Development Plans received the quickest processing time, while Zoning permits received the longest processing time.

There are also a number of opportunities for improvement in the discretionary permit services. These opportunities are identified in the sections that follow.

- The Planning Commission does not conduct an annual retreat.
- On-going training of Planning Commissioners in recent years has been limited.
- Planning Commission meetings are not televised.
- Since Planning Commission meetings occur over two days (Monday and Wednesday) of one week, applicants are aware of the week their item is scheduled, but not the specific date until the agenda is developed. Agendas for the meetings are developed using a variety of factors including staff involved, related projects, etc., in an attempt to accommodate citizen and staff schedules.
- The Planning Department does not have sufficient reception space for receiving and serving customers. Space for the Planning Department staff is extremely limited.
- The Planning Department and the other divisions and departments involved in the development review process do utilize an automated permit information system. As a consequence, it is not possible to (1) determine the status of discretionary and administrative permits, (2) assure the status of each permit is visible during the permit review process, (3) manage the processing time, (4) provide a common database of corrections and conditions of approval, (5) enable all of the divisions and departments to enter and retrieve data, and (6) facilitate customer service through online access to the system to enable customers to check on the status permit requests, be notified of corrections and conditions of approval, etc.
- The fees collected by the Planning Department are low compared to other municipalities and do not appear to cover the costs of the permit process.
- Only 3 of the 14 professional Planning Department staff have AICP certification.
- A formal ongoing training program is not provided for the staff of the Planning Department. A needs assessment has not been conducted.
- Due to the implementation of the new zoning ordinance, Planning Department staff are transitioning from one set of standards to another. While the new

ordinance was developed to increase administrative approval of some items, staff time to train and understand the new ordinance has been limited.

- The Planning Department has not developed and does not utilize a formal advanced planning work program. The Department does not track labor hours by project for those staff assigned to the advanced planning work program.
- The Planning Department does not have a centralized, formal manual of zoning ordinance interpretations, though some policy memorandums are contained on the shared drive for use by staff.
- Reviews of discretionary permits in the Utilities Department are conducted sequentially, which limits the time available for a thorough and timely review.

The strengths in the discretionary permit process provide a sound basis for improvements in the services provided by the City. In the chapters of the report, which follow, are provided analyses of the issues raised in this project together with recommendations for change, where necessary.

7. ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

7. ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

This chapter presents an analysis of technology and its use to support the permit, plan check, and inspection processes conducted by the City of Lawrence. This analysis focuses on the use and application of an automated permit information system, and follows with a discussion and review of HTE, the current software utilized by the Neighborhood Resources Department.

Automated permit information systems have changed the way cities do business and interact with their customers, speeding the permit process for the customers most involved - applicants, contractors, neighborhoods, and staff - and providing better and more timely information to decision-makers, managers, and staff throughout city hall and communities.

Initiated by a few pioneering jurisdictions in the early 1980's, automated permit information systems have become mainstream in municipal government. Software vendors offer a variety of automated permit information systems that can be tailored to a jurisdiction's needs. Many are integrated into larger, city-wide information technology systems such as ArcInfo. Progressive local governments have adopted automated permit information systems that cover the process from inception to conclusion and that contains all relevant information regarding an individual project.

Regardless of the reason for implementation, automated permit information systems can provide a broad range of benefits, including:

- Standardized building site and parcel information;
- Improved record keeping and reliable archiving of permitting activities;

- Enhanced communication between customer and staff that produces higher quality plan submissions and reviews, permit applications, and customer service;
- Defined workflow and project tracking that results in more timely review of plans and permits;
- Higher quality inspections (since the inspectors can readily retrieve conditions of approval associated with discretionary permits) with better scheduling and improved reporting;
- More efficient use of staff time and less duplication of effort;
- Better internal management tools for gauging permitting efficiency and service levels and spotting problems,
- Improved financial tracking of permitting, plan review, and inspection fees; and
- Flexible reporting capabilities that document the volume of work completed and the revenue generated by the departments/divisions involved in the permit, plan check, inspection, and code enforcement process.

However, the investment that a city makes in permitting software can only be worthwhile if the automated permit information system itself is effectively utilized by the departments and divisions participating in the development review process.

At the present time, the only automated permit information system in place within the City of Lawrence is HTE module utilized by the Neighborhood Resources Department for building permits. Launched in February 2004, this application provides a web access point into the Neighborhood Resources Department new building permit system. Permit holders are issued a Personal Identification Number (PIN) on each permit enabling them to access the permit information and complete inspection activity via the City's website. This system is used to track applications and capture basic information regarding staff actions.

In addition, the Neighborhood Resources Department has recently implemented an interactive voice response (IVR) system that enables the contractor to schedule

inspections and allows inspectors to enter inspection results remotely via phone entry.

None of the other departments involved in the development review process utilize an automated permit information system or any integrated and comprehensive work management software. All current data that is collected, monitored and reported is done through the use of Excel or Word documents that are limited to an individual department's use.

1. THERE ARE SEVERAL SOFTWARE OPTIONS THAT EXIST FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE CITY OF LAWRENCE THAT WOULD IMPROVE THE CURRENT SITUATION.

It is the project team's experience that the greatest benefit from the implementation of a permitting software system can be achieved from acquiring one that is specifically designed for the process. The HTE system has been developed as part of a suite of applications in an attempt to be a full service system serving the municipalities' range of needs. However, these specialized products are often not as user-friendly or feature rich as more specialized software products that are only focused on providing software for the permitting, planning and inspection functions. There are a number of these programs available on the market, including Accela products (which include Accela Land Management, PermitsPlus, PermitsPlan), MuniCity, Hansen, AMANDA (by CSDC Systems, Inc.), PermitsSoft and others that more fully integrate the development review functions in a more user friendly software application. The HTE modules are not industry leaders in the development review software field. However, given the City's current investment in HTE, the review and decision to make a change should be based upon the additional features and functions that can be achieved with a new system versus what can be achieved through enhancement of the existing system.

Depending upon several factors, including the software vendor chosen, the functions desired, and the amount of staff involvement in the implementation process, the prices received from the software RFP will typically range from around \$250,000 up to \$700,000. The prices at the higher end will be for the more robust or enterprise-wide systems, such as Accela and Hansen.

The project team recommends that the City of Lawrence acquire a comprehensive software application that will cover the development process from start to finish and all involved departments be required to utilize the system for processing applications. The decision of which particular system to utilize should be made after a comprehensive RFP and review process that focuses critically on selecting a system that provides the most features and capabilities relative to the development review process (and incorporates all departments) balanced against the benefit to be achieved by utilizing one standard software suite for all municipal functions (financial, budgeting, building, planning, engineering, utility, Fire, etc.).

In addition, careful consideration should be made regarding the ability to incorporate the County Development Review functions and, potentially, County Departments, in the use of the software. At the present time, the County is utilizing a Windows based program entitled PTWin32, and there has been some discussion to upgrade this software in the near future. By the end of the year, the County and City Hall will be connected with fiber optic cable that will increase the ability of the parties to share access to whatever software is put in place for the development review process.

In evaluating the various software options, the City of Lawrence should seek a solution that offers the following functionality (at a minimum) even if the features will be

phased into operation:

- Ability to handle plan submittals and permit applications from multiple departments with the ability to customize the processing of each application/permit based upon type;
- Ability to consolidate data storage within the system and share data between each component of the software to minimize duplication of entry;
- Enables plan review comments to be entered, compiled, and edited electronically.
- Maintains historic conditions of approval attached to each project and/or property address.
- Links the Planning process with the Building Inspections process to ensure that conditions of approval are met prior to issuance of a building permit.
- Allows the scanning and storage of applications and plans within the system.
- Has workflow capabilities to enable schedule generation for staff utilization, routing of applications for electronic comments, and the ability to develop management reports related to actual performance.
- Ability to create, access, process, and store forms and documents electronically to reduce paperwork and enable future options to implement paperless processes over time.
- Supports e-permitting and on line access to application status, comments/conditions of approval, and inspection results.
- Integrates with the ESRI ArcGIS (the system utilized by both the City and County) data.
- Integrates with Selectron, the City's current IVR system.

These general requirements should be supplemented by the specific needs of each department with a focus on standardizing the approaches between departments and utilizing more standard approaches in each department.

To achieve the implementation of a comprehensive system requires the City to take several actions, including the following:

- Develop a City-wide approach and strategy for computerization of the Development Review Process and ensure that all divisions and departments adhere to it.
- Develop a vision of the entire software solution, then buy products and implement technologies with that vision in mind. A key component of this vision is the identification of the desired balance between integration with existing systems and the capability of the system to grow with the City – both in terms of size and features.
- Form a steering committee made up of City employees, industry representatives, customers, and other stakeholders to further define the needs of the system, review and evaluate responses received in response to a comprehensive RFP process, issue a recommendation regarding the best product for the City of Lawrence, and guide the implementation of the selected product.

Recommendation: The City of Lawrence should implement a comprehensive software package for the Development Review Process. All departments involved in the Development Review process should be required to utilize the selected system for scheduling, processing, and reporting on work activities.

Recommendation: Form a steering committee made up of City employees, industry representatives, customers, and other stakeholders to guide the definition of system needs, review various software packages, and guide the implementation of the selected product.

2. IF AN ALTERNATIVE SOFTWARE IS NOT CHOSEN, THE CITY SHOULD EXPAND THE USE OF HTE FOR THE ENTIRE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS.

If a decision is made not to replace the current software utilized in the development review process, the City should proceed to fully implement the various modules that are not in place, so that all departments involved in the review process are utilizing the same system. The HTE computer software suite also has available other modules, including one titled “Planning & Engineering” that can be implemented and integrated with the Building Permits system. The Planning and Engineering module allows a municipality to track and monitor planning and engineering review for applications, provide bond tracking, agreement processing, and track multiple

resubmissions of documents through subsequent reviews. If integrated with the Building Permits module, the system enables staff to prevent a building permit from being issued when there are outstanding conditionals of approval from Planning or Engineering that have not been satisfied. In addition, the integration of these modules ensures that the most accurate and up to date information regarding legal descriptions and zoning data are attached to each address. The module also provides a variety of reporting and document generation capabilities, including plan review processing times, agenda preparation, staff reports, comment documents and various permits.

HTE also has available a system entitled, Click2Gov that enables the information contained within the system to be shared on line with citizens and contractors relative to planning projects underway and the current status of projects. The City of Lawrence has already purchased the Click2Gov module and is utilizing it in limited fashion with the Neighborhood Resources Department.

The major benefit to the City of Lawrence in utilizing additional modules from the HTE suite of software products is the integration that can be achieved from maintaining all City records on one platform. However, it is the project team's experience that the greatest benefit from the implementation of a permitting software system can be achieved from acquiring one that is specifically designed for the process. The HTE system has been developed as part of a suite of applications in an attempt to be a full-service system to meet a city's needs.

The project team recommends that the City of Lawrence (1) more fully utilize the building permit module acquired from HTE and modify some of the data elements captured: (2) acquire the Planning and Engineering module from HTE to address the

planning and engineering aspects of the development review process; (3) more fully utilize the Click2Gov module from HTE to provide public access for building permits and install the Click2Gov module from HTE to provide public access for planning and engineering permits; (4) acquire the mapping module from HTE, and (5) consider migration to the newest version of the browser interface (moving from the “green screen” to the more user-friendly Windows look. It is estimated that the additional modules for the HTE system can be acquired for approximately \$125,000. The upgrade to the NaviLine function is more dependent upon user volumes and existing contract agreements.

(1) The City Should Fully Utilize the Building Permit Module.

The building permit module enables a city to manage permit applications and the permit plan check and inspection process. The Neighborhood Resources Department and the Fire Department need to fully utilize the features offered in this module. The features of this system include the following:

- **Expired permit notification** - Create and print notice letters for expiring permits. The module works with Microsoft Word so that the Department can pull building permits information into its notice letters.
- **Plan review** - Track applications through the plan review process. Set up a different plan review sequence for each application type. Track the amount of time each department spent on plan review. Ensure proper plan review by automatically creating and monitoring plan review steps.
- **Automatic fee calculations** - Define permit fee calculations using unit charges (fixtures, outlets, etc.), valuation, square footage, or a combination. Calculate related fees based on permit valuation.
- **Revisions** - Create a revision to an application when a plan is corrected and resubmitted if a department during the review cycle rejects a plan.
- **Inspection scheduling** - Improve the schedule processing by setting up required inspections and printing a list of daily inspections. Facilitate inspection

scheduling, results, and reassignment. Handle all aspects of inspection processing and track daily inspection points, including:

- Inspection scheduling;
 - Required inspection sequences;
 - Inspection results entry;
 - Inspection reassignment from one inspector to another;
 - Inspector daily assignments view when reassigning inspections;
 - Inspection penalty assessment;
 - Inspection inquiry;
 - Standard inspection request comments;
 - Inspection results - Print certificates of occupancy then you approve a final inspection if all fees have been paid.
- **Departmental responsibility** - Make specified departments accountable for processing certain kinds of applications and permits. An employee must be assigned to a department in order to process that department's applications and permits.
 - **Holds on applications and permits** - Prevent processing activity at the application or permit level for records on hold. Place an application on hold so no activity is permitted, or restrict activity of a single permit under the application.

The Department is currently utilizing most of these features in their daily work activities, including fee calculations, inspector scheduling, project tracking, permitting, etc. However, several components of the system could be utilized differently in order to better manage the process. Specifically, this would include entering of data for each review time, the date of application completeness, etc. Additionally, other departments should have access to this module to monitor project status and to place holds, when needed, directly on a project. The City has invested significant funds in the acquisition of this module. The City should more fully utilize the module to enable better tracking of

processing times, reporting capabilities, and managing workloads.

Recommendation: The City should more fully utilize the HTE building permits module.

(2) The City Should Acquire and Install the HTE Planning and Engineering Module.

This newly redesigned module supports planning and engineering departments. This module incorporates features such as planning reviews and construction reviews for public improvements, summary and/or detailed bond tracking, agreement processing, and other features. The City should acquire this module for use by the Planning Department and the Public Works Department. This module has a number of important features including those noted below.

- **Project review** - Project reviews are the types of reviews necessary for the Planning and Engineering processes. They consist of a series of review steps needed to accomplish an action. These steps can send e-mail notifications, create documents, schedule events, and automatically update the project status when you complete the step.
- **E-mail notifications** - When Planning and Engineering close or open a review step, Planning and Engineering automatically generates and sends an e-mail to internal or external agencies.
- **Project conditions maintenance** - During the review process, Planning and Engineering set up the conditions of approval for projects. Planning and Engineering maintain conditions applied to projects and automatically applies approved conditions to all properties involved in the project. These conditions can then be viewed during the building permitting process in the building permit module, if needed.
- **Key project dates** - Planning and Engineering can set up a list of important dates for a project that can be used for future notification of such dates as project milestones, condition deadlines, or approval expiration dates.
- **Automatic fee calculations** - Define the fee schedule for planning and engineering activities. Assess fees based on simple flat rates or complex calculated amounts.
- **Hold permit or certificate of occupancy (CO) issuance** - Prevent accidental

issuance of structural permits or CO's without prior Planning or Engineering approval by placing holds on building permits or the CO issuance process for locations associated with the projects.

- **Receipt collections and corrections** -Planning and Engineering can process payments for Planning and Engineering services using features in the module. Processed payments are updated to Planning and Engineering and then to the City's general ledger accounts. Planning and Engineering can also make corrections to payments before and after they post.
- **Bond processing** - Bonds are required by Engineering to ensure that projects are developed in agreement with approval conditions. The module provides summary and/or detailed bond tracking by creating simple flat rate bonds or algebraically calculated bonds and by tracking work progress.
- **Plan review processing time report** - Develop ongoing monthly reports that indicate the amount of time each division or department spends on plan review.
- **Document generation** - Project information serves as a valuable resource for creating documents, such as agendas, staff reports, engineering permits, and comment documents. Planning and Engineering can pull information from the Planning and Engineering module and the Land/Parcel Management module to produce documents and edit them using Microsoft Word.

The Planning and Engineering module would cost approximately \$75,000 to \$150,000 to acquire and install.

Recommendation: The City should acquire and install the HTE Planning and Engineering module.

(3) Utilize the Click2Gov Module from HTE to Provide Public Access for Building Permits.

The City has already acquired the Click2Gov module from HTE to provide public access for building permits. The City should effectively utilize this module for the full range of features provided by this module. This includes the features described below.

- **Online inspection scheduling** - Allows contractors to schedule or cancel inspections. Enables these contractors to schedule and cancel inspections for permits, 24 hours a day, 7 days week.
- **Property and permit information** – Provides address, parcel number, zoning information, ownership information, including all details of permits, inspections,

plan review fees and payments.

- **Online permit submittal** – Submit online over-the-counter permit applications for single trade permits and obtain online approval.
- **Public inquiry** – Allows contractors and homeowners to access an application without entry of a personal identification number.
- **Online fees** – Allows contractors and homeowners to view and pay project fees online.
- **Project view** – Offers the contractor or homeowner the ability to view all of the inspections necessary to complete the construction project from start to finish in an easy to read format.

This is a powerful tool. The City should fully utilize all of the features provided by the module.

Recommendation: Utilize the Click2Gov module from HTE to provide public access for building permits.

(4) Acquire and Install the Click2Gov Module from HTE to Provide Public Access for Planning and Engineering Permits.

This module, like the module for building permits, is designed to enable homeowners and contractors with the ability to view planning and engineering project information online, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This module provides a number of features including the following:

- **Project inquiry** – This feature enables homeowners and contractors to view general project information such as parcel ID, all applicable owner's names and addresses, address types, and the name of the planner assigned to the project.
- **Review the project step** – This feature enables homeowners and contractors to review the steps associated with a project and all of the applicable reviews.
- **Project text inquiry** - This feature enables homeowners and contractors to view narrative information related to a specific project.
- **Associated document inquiry** - This feature enables homeowners and contractors to view any associated documents and conditions linked to a project in read-only format. The documents that are displayed are limited only to those

documents marked as “public.”

This is a powerful tool, just like the same application for building permits. The City should acquire and fully utilize all of the features provided by the module. The estimated cost of this module is \$20,000.

Recommendation: Acquire and utilize the Click2Gov module from HTE to provide public access for Planning and Engineering permits.

(5) The City Should Acquire Wireless Technology for Building Inspectors.

Building inspectors currently utilize a paper-based system to record inspection results and issue correction notices. This system can cause problems within the Department. Correction notices can be lost, writing can be illegible, and inspectors each use different terminology.

A more efficient and consistent method is needed for handling inspections. The inspection process should be paperless, and permit history should be available to inspectors, if needed. The Neighborhood Resources Department should acquire wireless technology for the use of building inspectors to capture all necessary information regarding permits on a mobile computer. In the morning, building inspectors would download inspection information for scheduled inspections, and during the day building inspectors would enter results and corrections using simple standardized drop-down menus. Correction history would be stored in the HTE database and would be available for future reference. Building inspectors would print professional and legible Correction Notices on-site, using a portable printer.

This system would enable building inspectors to enter real-time results of inspections into the City's database of information, and within seconds of the inspector completing computer entries, permit holders could review inspection status on the City's

website or be able to access HTE for immediate results.

The estimated cost of acquiring the Click2Gov wireless module from HTE for building inspectors to record inspection results and print correction notices would approximate \$20,000.

Recommendation: The City should acquire and utilize the Click2Gov wireless module from HTE for building inspectors to record inspection results and print correction notices.

3. ALL OF THE CITY'S DIVISIONS AND DEPARTMENTS THAT ARE INVOLVED IN THE ISSUANCE OF PERMITS SHOULD UTILIZE THE AUTOMATED PERMIT INFORMATION SYSTEM TO MEET ALL OF THEIR PERMIT REQUIREMENTS.

The City will be making a significant investment in the development review software and therefore its use should be maximized. The system will be capable of a broad range of tasks including the following:

- Plan review tracking;
- Permitting, including the issuance and tracking of permits;
- Inspections scheduling and tracking;
- Workflow management;
- Fee calculation and collection;
- Customer communications through web-based customer services;
- Telephone-based voice response services; and
- Inter- and intra-departmental communication and management.

All of the departments and divisions involved in the issuance of permits need to fully utilize the automated permit information system for all aspects of the development review process.

Recommendation: All of the departments and divisions should utilize the

automated permit information system for all aspects of the development review process.

Recommendation: Modules, applications and reports should be developed within the automated permit information system to support the work of these departments and divisions.

Recommendation: Training should be provided to staff, as appropriate, in the use of the automated permit information system.

8. ANALYSIS OF THE BUILDING PERMIT PLAN CHECK PROCESS

8. ANALYSIS OF THE BUILDING PERMIT PLAN CHECK PROCESS

This chapter presents an analysis of the building permit plan check processes utilized by the City.

1. THE HTE BUILDING MODULE SHOULD BE MODIFIED TO ENABLE THE CITY TO EFFECTIVELY MONITOR ACTUAL PERFORMANCE AGAINST CYCLE TIME OBJECTIVES.

The City has established cycle time objectives for completing building plan checks. These objectives are:

- 3 weeks (15 working days) for commercial and multi-family residential plans for first submittal; and
- 1 week (5 working days) for residential plans for first submittal

The HTE system utilized by the Neighborhood Resources Department is not set up to effectively monitor performance against the above cycle time objectives. One of the major issues with the permit tracking system is that the system does not track the date in which a building permit application is deemed complete. This is critical for fairly assessing the responsiveness of plan review staff within Neighborhood Resources. Currently, an “On Hold” notation is made in the database to indicate that additional information is being requested from the applicant. However, the only entry after this point is an approved date. As a result, it is not clear when the additional information was received from the applicant.

Despite the shortcoming of the available data, the project team collected samples of plan review times to determine the average time required to perform building plan reviews for various types of building permits. The table, below, shows the average and

median plan check times achieved by the Neighborhood Resources Department for sample building permits received during 2005.

Permit Type	Average Calendar Days	Median Calendar Days	Sample Size
Accessory Structure	3	3	1
Commercial Accessory	6	6	1
Residential Addition	8	5	10
New Single Family	10	5	34
Residential Remodel	10	4	42
Multi-Family (4-Plex)	11	11	2
Multi-Family	20	1.5	8
Commercial Remodel	22	6	43
Multi-Family (Duplex)	22	3	10
Commercial Pool	23	22	1
Commercial Addition	48	27	4
New Commercial	56	17.5	8
Total	17	5	164
Standard Deviation		29.5	

The following points highlight the information above:

- The overall average number of calendar days from the date of application to permit approval was approximately 17 days for the sample (164 permits). This number varies significantly from the median of 5 calendar days. The large variance in approval times is also indicated by the large standard deviation of approximately 30 calendar days. The standard deviation indicates that approximately 66% of permits were within 30 calendar days of the average.
- As expected, the average and median number of calendar days for approval of building permits was much lower for residential permits than commercial and multi-family permits. Again, note the large variance between the average and median approval times.
- The Neighborhood Resources Department provides residential building permit plan check services in fewer calendar days than benchmarks (based on a sample by the project team). These processing times are calculated based upon available data from the system and may reflect initial date of application rather than date of application completion. More specifically:
 - New single-family residential plan checks were completed in ten (10) calendar days for the first check;
 - 4-plex residential plan checks were completed in eleven (11) calendar days for the first check; and

- Multi-family residential plan checks larger than 4-plex were completed in twenty (20) calendar days for first check.
- The amount of calendar days required for commercial building permit plan checking is longer than benchmarks. These processing times are calculated based upon available data from the system and may reflect initial date of application rather than date of application completion. More specifically:
 - The plan checking of commercial remodels were completed in twenty-two (22) calendar days for the first check;
 - The plan checking of commercial additions were completed in forty-eight (48) calendar days; and
 - The plan checking of new commercial structures were completed in fifty-six (56) calendar days for the first check.

The project team also evaluated the percentage of building permits that were reviewed within the target timelines utilized by Neighborhood Resources. These data are shown below.

Permit Type	Approval Within 1 Week	Approval Within 3 Weeks
Accessory Structure	100%	100%
Commercial Accessory	100%	100%
Residential Addition	80%	90%
Residential Remodel	68%	83%
Multi-Family	63%	63%
New Single Family	61%	91%
Multi-Family (Duplex)	60%	90%
Commercial Remodel	55%	79%
Multi-Family (4 Plex)	50%	100%
Commercial Addition	33%	33%
New Commercial	14%	57%
Commercial Pool	0%	0%
Total	60%	81%

As shown above, the Department is reviewing approximately 60% of all building plans within one week of the application date, and 81% of all plans within three weeks. Note that 80% of residential additions, 68% of residential remodels, and 61% of new single-family plans were reviewed within 1 week. Also note that approximately 80% of

commercial re-models, 33% of commercial additions, and 57% of new commercial plans were reviewed within 3 weeks.

While the statistics above indicate that the Neighborhood Resources Department is providing a high level of service, the project team cannot make clear conclusions due to the way the data are captured by the Department. However, the project team has identified several improvement opportunities related to the plan review process. In addition, areas where the Department is providing high levels of service are identified. These are presented in the sections that follow.

Recommendation: The Neighborhood Resources Department should modify the dates maintained in the HTE building permit module to include the dates that each division and department completes their plan check – 1st check, 2nd check, 3rd check, etc. – the date the applicant is notified that their plans are ready to be picked up after each plan check – 1st check, 2nd check, 3rd check, etc., and the date(s) the applicant submits and re-submits the building permit plans.

2. THE BUILDING PLAN REVIEW CYCLE TIME OBJECTIVES SHOULD BE REVISED.

While the cycle time objectives targeted by the Neighborhood Resources Department are within best management practices for residential plan checking, the actual practices do not meet best practices for commercial plan checking. In addition the guidelines utilized by the Department lack differentiation to reflect the complexity of construction. These timelines should be revised. The target for processing a plan for a residential re-roof should be different than a plan for a commercial structure larger than 10,000 square feet. Possible timelines are presented in the table below. Each of these timelines are less than the existing timelines currently utilized.

Category Order of Complexity	Building Permit Type	(In Weeks)*
1 (Miscellaneous Small Permits)	Patios and Covers Re-roof Retaining Walls Minor R1 Additions (no structural) Pools (requires Health Department review)	Over the Counter
2	R1, 1 Dwelling Unit R1 Addition (With structural calculations) Tenant Improvements Minor Electrical, Mechanical, Structural and Plumbing	1-2
3	Small Residential Projects (<20 DU) Office/Commercial <10,000 sq. ft.	3 Weeks
4 (Large Project)	Residential >20 DU Office/Commercial >10,000 sq. ft.	4 Weeks

*Time required for first plan check. Second plan check target would be one-half of these targets.

The major differences in the timelines identified above are described below:

- Creating a target for minor permits such as re-roofs and minor R1 additions. The project team believes that the Department should strive to review these types of permits over the counter.
- Differentiating between residential projects with less than or more than 20 dwelling units, and Office/Commercial space less than or greater than 10,000 square feet.

These timelines reflect best practices in other cities, such as the City of Livermore, California. These timelines should be provided to applicants and made available to customers via the internet. Monitoring performance against these targets will require redesign of the HTE permit tracking system (or replacement of the system with a new system) and changes to the current process of reviewing building plans. However, a new permit tracking system is recommended by the project team.

Recommendation: The City should revise the building permit plan check cycle time objectives.

3. THE NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCES DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE AUTHORIZED TWO ADDITIONAL PLANS EXAMINER POSITIONS – AN EARLIER RECOMMENDATION TO RECLASSIFY THE INSPECTION SUPERVISOR TO SUPERVISING PLANS EXAMINER HAS BEEN COMPLETED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

In assessing the plan check staffing requirements for the Neighborhood Resources Department, the project team utilized review time guidelines developed from its experience with a number of departments across the United States. Data were collected from the Department to document the number of building permits by type to estimate the plan review workload. The table below presents the total number of work hours required for each type of plan review and the estimated number of personnel needed to handle this workload based on net availability (gross hours of work scheduled less vacations, holidays, sick time, training, etc.):

Activity	Hours Each	Volume	Required Hours
New residential single family tract dwellings - production units	2.00	232	464.00
New custom single family dwellings and tract models	10.00	0	0
New commercial/industrial buildings	20.00	33	660.00
New multi-family residential	20.00	89	1,780.00
Residential remodeling and additions	4.00	340	1,360.00
Tenant improvements	3.50	0	0
Patios	1.00	0	0
Pools and Spas	1.50	0	0
Miscellaneous construction	2.00	163	326.00
Signs	0.75	367	275.25
Total			4,865.25

Reviewers needed at 1,650 hours of availability	2.95
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As shown above, approximately 3 full-time plans examiners are needed to perform plan review. Currently the Department utilizes its Senior Plans Examiner for plan checking.

The City and the Neighborhood Resources Department should take a number of steps to address this issue.

(1) Reassign the Responsibility from Building Inspectors to Plans Examiners for the Review of Residential Plans and Commercial Remodels.

In order to manage the plan review and inspection workload, the Neighborhood Resources Department has utilized inspection personnel to perform plan review of residential plans and simple re-models. This is an effective use of inspection personnel during times of low inspection activity. The previous section also indicates that two of the inspectors are performing outside of the inspection workload benchmarks. The additional plan review workload has been managed by utilizing available inspector time. This process should be continued.

Recommendation: Responsibility for plan checking residential plans and commercial remodels should be reassigned from building inspectors to the plans examiners.

(2) Two Additional Plans Examiner Positions Should Be Authorized.

Given the plan review workload and personnel availability, the City should authorize two additional Plans Examiner positions to handle the plan check workload. This position would assist the current Senior Plans Examiner with plan check responsibilities. The project team estimates the cost of these two positions at approximately \$108,000 in annual salary and benefits.

Recommendation: The City should authorize an additional two Plans Examiner. The estimated cost of the additional staff position is approximately \$108,000 in salary and benefits.

(3) The Neighborhood Resources Department Should Utilize the Newly Reclassified Plan Check Technician Position to Ensure Applications Are Complete When Submitted to Resolve Potential Delays in Plan Review.

The Neighborhood Resources Department has recently been authorized, through the reclassification of a Secretarial position, a Plan Check Technician to handle permit application intake. Verifying that permit applications are complete when submitted saves plan check personnel a significant amount of time contacting applicants and monitoring the status of permit submittals. The addition of a Plan Check Technician should eliminate the backlog created by waiting for additional documents and re-submitted applications.

Early in the review process there was a recommendation to reclassify the Inspection Supervisor to Supervising Plans Examiner. This recommendation has been completed by the Department. At the onset of this review process, the Neighborhood Resources Department was utilizing its Inspection Supervisor to provide building permit plan check services. The classification title for this position did not reflect its primary responsibility. With the proposed addition of two Plans Examiner positions, this position was recommended to be reclassified to Plans Examiner Supervisor. It was also recommended that this position should be expected to supervise the two Plans Examiners and the Plan Check Technician and carry a plan check workload. This reclassification recommendation was completed during the review process and thus is no longer a recommendation for the future.

Recommendation: Utilize the newly authorized Plan Check Technician to ensure that applications and plan submittals are complete prior to review by Plans Examiners.

4. EXPAND THE EXTENT OF BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED OVER-THE-COUNTER BY UTILIZING THE PLAN CHECK TECHNICIAN.

The Department issues a minor proportion of its building permits over-the-counter. Over-the-counter building permit plan checking is only provided for furnace and water heater replacements. The extent of permits issued over-the-counter should be increased.

The project team does not expect that over-the-counter building permits would be issued for such permits as new multi-family, new commercial, or new single family. However, the project team does expect that over-the-counter permits can be issued for such building permits as the following:

- Single family addition. Single story room addition not to exceed 600 square feet;
- Single family interior work. interior modifications without structural changes;
- Single family garage conversion. change the garage to living space;
- Single family outdoor pools (if suitable arrangement can be made with the health department for expedited approval) and spas;
- Single family patio enclosures;
- Single family patio covers and trellis;
- Single family new roof framing over existing roof (without major structural work);
- Office space: tenant improvements for office space less than 4,000 square feet.
- Retail: interior modifications for retail space less than 1,500 square feet.

For commercial projects to be issued over-the-counter, the following restrictions should apply:

- There will be no storage of hazardous materials of any amount in the space;
- The proposed tenant improvement should not contain any alterations to the structural system of the building (e.g. openings into bearing or shear walls,

changes to floor system, etc.). Structural modifications required to install roof mounted mechanical equipment should be exempted pending plans examiner verification;

- The proposed tenant improvements should not contain any alterations or modification to fire-rated walls; and
- The application should not require any special Fire Department processing.

The project team would expect that the Department should be able to increase the number of building permits issued over-the-counter to 55% to 60% using these criteria.

The Plan Check Technician should be utilized for the plan checking and issuance of these types of minor and miscellaneous building permits with backup provided by the Plans Examiners.

This assignment should recognize the impact of these additional skills and knowledge requirements. The Plan Check Technicians should be required to obtain certification by the International Code Council as a Permit Technician. It also recognizes that this position performs other duties, related to contractor licensing, in addition to the ones outlined in this section.

This assignment to the Plan Check Technician should only occur after initial training and certification. This reassignment could be achieved by the following method:

- The Plans Examiner Supervisor should function as a team leader for the Plan Check Technician to train the Plan Check Technician in the performance of plan checking of minor and miscellaneous building permit plans.
- The Plans Examiner Supervisor should provide code and practical plan check training to the Plan Check Technician for an appropriate period of time.
- Establish a time period for training and implement the program on a target date. Confer with the Plan Check Technician regarding the establishment of the implementation date. Establish the target date realizing that some of the quality

expertise will occur with practice. A comfort level can be achieved by realizing that support by the Plans Examiner Supervisor is available.

This method will produce a quality performing Plan Check Technician that is fully capable of plan checking miscellaneous and minor building permit plans.

Recommendation: The Neighborhood Resources Department should increase the number of building permits issued over-the-counter to 55% to 60% of all building permits issued.

Recommendation: A Plan Check Technician should be utilized to provide over-the-counter plan checking of minor and miscellaneous building permits.

5. THE CITY SHOULD ADOPT THE MOST CURRENT VERSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CODE COUNCIL BUILDING CODES

The Neighborhood Resources Department still utilizes the 1997 Uniform Building Codes. The City should adopt the most current version of the International Code Council building codes. Modernizing the City's building codes involves much more than keeping pace with new materials and technologies. The vision extends to the tangible benefits that will be realized by adoption of an up-to-date code that will add clarity and uniformity to our City's design and construction processes.

The adoption of the most recent International Code Council building codes make it safer, easier, and cheaper to build in Lawrence. Given its comprehensiveness, its ease of use, its flexibility in adapting to local conditions, and its extensive support infrastructure, these ICC Codes promise to make this vision a reality.

Included in this vision is a promise to encourage the growth of affordable housing, stimulate economic development and, most importantly, enhance public safety. These benefits will emerge as a result of various factors, such as: the ability to use modern materials and techniques, the ability to use a modern code that is understood by a broad spectrum of design and construction professionals who use it elsewhere

and, ultimately, the savings that will result from a code that is clear and more easily understood.

In order to improve the level of service and consistency provided to the development community and achieve the goals outlined above, the City should continue to vigorously attempt to implement the full family of ICC Codes and move away from the utilization of a blended code family. In addition to the benefits listed above, the City's codes will be more consistent with those typically seen in most other communities, the inconsistencies that can occur from the utilization of multiple codes will be eliminated, and the standards expected in Lawrence will be similar to most other municipalities in the region. It will also provide a benefit to staff by having only to deal with one set of codes that staff need to be trained and certified in.

Recommendation: The City should adopt the most current version of the International Code Council building codes.

Recommendation: The City should continue its efforts to fully implement the entire ICC building codes rather than continuing the use of a blended code.

6. APPLICANTS SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH THE ABILITY TO OBTAIN SIMPLE BUILDING PERMITS ON LINE USING THE BUILDING PERMIT SOFTWARE.

Permits that do not require a plan check, such as single trade permits, often known as over-the-counter permits, are well suited to online permit processing. Similar to e-commerce transactions, such as buying products from a website, this activity involves credit card processing and the printing of a permit. On line processing of permit applications can be as basic as automating only the front-end information collection process or as complete as full automation of the entire over-the-counter permit transaction.

At their own personal computer, applicants can apply for a building permit, schedule an inspection, and print the permit and receipt. Credit card payments are secured through the use of encryption technology. Applicants can setup their access so that basic information does not need to be re-entered for multiple transactions.

HTE provides the capacity for applicants to complete a permit application via the internet. Applicants complete online forms and hit a “send” button to transmit the application to the City’s permit database. HTE processes, reviews, approves, and stores completed permits. The permit system then generates a permit for the applicant. Applicants can pay for permits using a credit card.

There are a number of public agencies throughout the United States that are using this capacity. These cities range from Albany, Oregon to Miami-Dade County, Florida.

The Department should implement this feature within HTE for simple building permits including the full automation of the entire over-the-counter permit transaction. Initially, this would include only single trades permits such as plumbing, mechanical, electrical permits, and re-roof permits. Longer-term, this should be expanded to other types of permits such as kitchen remodels.

Recommendation: The City should expand the use of HTE to enable applicants for single trade permits to complete a permit application online.

Recommendation: The City should adopt an objective of issuing 10% of its building permits online.

7. THE NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCES DEPARTMENT SHOULD PUBLISH A PLAN CHECK CORRECTION COMMENT LIBRARY ON ITS WEBSITE.

The Neighborhood Resources Department currently compiles comments and corrections made during the plan check process in the HTE system. The Division also

lists some common questions received by applicants on its website. However, the Division should formalize this approach. These corrections should be analyzed, with the most common comments for each construction type posted on the City's website. These corrections should include the following.

Fire protection
Room sizes, lighting, ventilation
Exists, stairways, railings
Roofing
Masonry
Garages
Elevations

Mechanical, electrical, plumbing
Noise insulation
Energy conservation
Foundation requirements
Framing
Plot plans
Floor plans

The posting of the correction library will provide guidance to architects in understanding the requirements for construction in Lawrence, and should include the requirements of all divisions and agencies involved in the review process in the City.

Recommendation: Post common plan check corrections on the City's website to provide guidance to architects on the construction requirements in Lawrence.

8. THE PLAN CHECK CHECKLISTS UTILIZED BY THE NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCES DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE PUBLISHED ON THE WEBSITE.

The Neighborhood Resources Division has developed checklists that are utilized by its Plan Check Engineers to assure compliance with the various building code requirements. These checklists should be readily available to architects and the public to act as a guide in the nuances of interpretation of these codes by the City of Lawrence.

Recommendation: The plan check checklists developed by Neighborhood Resources Department should be posted to the Department's website.

9. DEVELOP STANDARD PLANS FOR USE BY THE PUBLIC IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF MINOR RESIDENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS.

A number of residents in Lawrence and other communities are "do it yourselves" in terms of constructing minor retaining walls, residential patio covers, detached storage

sheds, and outdoor fire places. In other instances, residents will pull building permits rather than their contractors for such construction as spas.

The City should assist these “do it yourselfers” meet building permit plan check requirements by developing standard plans. These standard plans, if utilized by the “do it yourselfers” in applying for their building permit, would allow avoiding the retention of an architect or designer for the preparation of these plans, as long as the homeowner utilized these standard plans.

In addition, the Neighborhood Resources Department should develop a “Home Improvement Center” web page on the City’s website to assist the homeowner navigate through the building permit plan check and inspection process. The City of Scottsdale, Arizona has developed such a web page; the City could utilize this as a model.

Recommendation: Develop standard plans for use by the public in minor residential improvements.

Recommendation: Develop a “Home Improvement Center” webpage on the City’s website to assist the homeowner navigate through the building permit plan check and inspection process.

10 THE NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCES DEPARTMENT SHOULD DEVELOP A CODE INTERPRETATION MANUAL TO IMPROVE CONSISTENCY AMONG INDIVIDUAL PLANS EXAMINERS AND TO EDUCATE CUSTOMERS REGARDING EXPECTATIONS.

While the City is utilizing a set of national building codes and local ordinances to govern the construction activities with the community, there are, at times, areas within these codes and guidelines that require further explanation and/or clarification. These are commonly referred to as “code interpretations.” At the present time, the Neighborhood Resources Department has no comprehensive listing of code interpretations or clarifications that they have made.

The Department should memorialize all local code interpretations and clarifications of local policies and ordinances into a comprehensive manual that contains the text of the code, the staff's interpretation of this code, and the manner in which it will be enforced. Once developed, this should be posted on the City's website. This provides clear detail to customers of the action that needs to be taken in order to comply with the existing building codes.

The manual should be maintained as an up-to-date document, utilized as part of the periodic training sessions for plans examiners and building inspectors and posted on the City's website for the development community. Providing this information, in advance, to the construction community, provides an additional opportunity for them to self-educate regarding the City's expectations and to voluntarily comply with the regulations. It also demonstrates the City's service commitment to its customers.

Recommendation: The Neighborhood Resources Department should develop a comprehensive manual of code interpretations. The manual should be utilized for internal staff training and be posted to the website for use by the development/construction communities.

11. SELECTED TYPES OF BUILDING PERMIT PLANS SHOULD BE ROUTED TO THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT, ENGINEERING DIVISION, AND THE UTILITIES DEPARTMENT.

At present, building permit plans are plan checked only by the Neighborhood Resources Department and the Fire Department.

Of four other cities that provided data in the comparative survey, only Columbia, MO used the same approach. The other three cities – Overland Park, KS, Lenexa, KS, and College Station, TX – all route their building permit plans to a wider array of departments. This routing of building permit plans is designed to provide these units with the opportunity to assure that these building permit plans comply with the

conditions of approval for discretionary permits, with the public improvement plan and standard engineering criteria utilized by the Engineering Division, and the utility master plans, industrial waste, and engineering criteria of the Utilities Department.

Not all of the building permit plans should be routed to all departments. Only select types of building permit plans should receive this wider distribution. A possible distribution is presented in the table below.

Types of Building Permit Plans	Building	Fire	Planning	Utilities	Engineering
Tracts	X	x	x	x	
Single family dwelling	X	x	x		
Duplex	X	x	x	x	
Apartments/condos	X	x	x	x	x
New Commercial/industrial Building	X	x	x	x	x
Restaurants	X	x	x	x	x
Pools (private use)/Spas	X				
Patio covers/decks	X				
Residential garages	X				
Fences/block walls	X				
Secondary dwellings	X	x	x		
Res. additions (<650 sf)	X				
Residential additions (>650)	X	x	x		
Tenant improvements	X	x	x		
Commercial/ind. Additions	X	x	x	x	x
Grading	X				
Fire sprinklers	x	x			
Fire alarm systems	x	x			
Fire Sprinkler Plans		x			
Demolition	x	x			

Recommendation: Selected types of building permits should be routed to the Planning Department, Engineering Division, and the Utilities Department for plan checking.

Recommendation: The City should develop and adopt a policy regarding the distribution of the different types of building permit plans to the various divisions and departments involved in the development review process.

9. ANALYSIS OF THE DISCRETIONARY PERMIT PROCESS

9. ANALYSIS OF THE DISCRETIONARY PERMIT PROCESS

This chapter presents an analysis of the discretionary permit processes utilized by the City of Lawrence.

1. THE ROLE OF THE PROJECT MANAGER IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE CLARIFIED.

The City utilizes a quasi-project manager system. The purpose of this project manager system is to provide applicants with a single point of contact as their permit goes through the multi-department / division plan check process and to coordinate the development of an unified set of comments and corrections for applicants.

During the focus groups conducted by the project team, a number of comments were made regarding the level of coordination of the review process and the ability to resolve issues. These included comments related to the ability of staff to make decisions and resolve issues between multiple departments. In general, the focus groups cited a lack of accountability and leadership for managing the planning stage of the development review process. In addition, the employee survey indicated that few employees (33%) believed the City had clear performance standards for processing development permits, and few (41%) believed the coordination between departments during the review process was effective.

There are three key aspects of project management that leading organizations use to support an organized approach to permit administration. These are: 1) providing a single point of contact for applicants, 2) having dedicated project managers, and 3) monitoring internal timelines. These are described below:

- **Single Point of Contact** – A single point of contact is having one person assigned to a particular permit or permit type, and having that individual accessible to the applicant for any questions regarding permit application, review, and issuance.
- **Dedicated Project Managers** – Similar to a single point of contact, dedicated project managers (also known as application facilitators, case managers) are typically assigned only for large or complex projects. A project manager is different from the single point of contact, in that the project managers take an active role in managing the permit application through the permit process.
- **Monitoring Internal Timelines** – These are the approaches used to monitor the time it takes to process a permit from the time of permit application.

The project manager in the Planning Division should be responsible for managing all aspects of a permit application submitted to the Planning Division, including being the single point of contact for applications submitted to the Planning Division, monitoring internal timelines, and taking an active role in managing the permit application through the permit process.

The project manager should be empowered to manage the review of these permit applications by all staff in the various divisions/departments. The project manager should be empowered as the team leader of a multi-discipline team comprised of staff from Planning, Public Works, Utilities, Neighborhood Resources, and Fire Prevention.

While the Planning Division already utilizes a quasi project or case manager system, the parameters and authority of the project or case manager need to be clarified and defined in writing. The parameters or authority of the project or case manager should include those aspects defined in the following paragraphs.

(1) The Project Manager Should Be Responsible for Making Sure the Applicant Gets to a Clear Decision Point in Accordance with Adopted Timelines.

The project manager is there to make sure that the review of the permit application submitted to the Planning Department proceeds in a timely and predictable fashion. Another common comment made during the focus groups was that applicants did not have a clear idea of how long a permit application would take to be reviewed. The current process utilized by the Planning Department for processing development permits includes the following:

- Applicants are now required under the current code to attend a pre-submittal meeting with a Planner. Submission requirements and the general conception of the proposed development are discussed.
- Once an application is submitted it is assigned to a current planner who becomes the project manager for that project.
- Development plans are routed to several departments, including Police, Fire, Neighborhood Resources, Utilities, Public Works, etc. A cover sheet establishes a deadline for submission of comments and sets a meeting time for those who wish to discuss issues.
- After the review meeting, comments are summarized by the planner assigned to the project and sent to the applicant.
- If revisions are required, based on Department comments other than Planning, it is the applicant's responsibility to work out issues.

While the initial stages of this process are consistent with a good project manager system, the latter stages lack clear guidelines on how quickly departments will respond to revisions made by the applicant and when an ultimate decision will be made. The planner assigned to the project should facilitate the resolution of issues between the applicant and reviewing departments. However clear rules are not established. As a result, the project team recommends that the project manager's role throughout the process be clarified.

Recommendation: The Planning Department should establish guidelines for reviewing departments to respond to all submissions by applicants and establish clear timelines at each step.

(2) The Applicant Should Be Informed Regarding the Name of the Project Manager Assigned to Their Permit Application Within Five Working Days of Submittal of the Application.

The applicant should be informed of the name of the case manager assigned to their application no later than five working days after the submittal of their application.

This should include the phone number and e-mail address of the project manager.

Recommendation: The applicant should be informed regarding the name of the project manager assigned to their permit application within five working days of submittal of the application and provided their telephone number and e-mail address.

(3) The Project Manager Should Be Responsible for Complete and Timely Communication Among the Multi-Disciplinary Team.

The project manager should make sure communication occurs amongst the multi-disciplinary team, and that complex issues are resolved, such as when code issues raised by the multi-disciplinary team conflict.

The project manager should lead any discussions that focus on resolving conflicting conditions of approval or competing code requirements. His or her job is to keep the review process of the permit application submitted to the Planning Department coordinated and predictable.

Recommendation: The project manager should be responsible for the communication amongst the multi-disciplinary team, and the resolution of conflicting conditions of approval or competing code requirements.

(4) The Role of the Project Manager Should Be Clarified in a Written Policy.

The responsibility and the authority of the project manager should be clearly spelled out in a written policy issued by the Planning Director, and approved by the City

Manager. The responsibility and authority, in addition to that previously identified, should include:

- Conducting pre-application meetings and reviews as appropriate;
- Collecting and integrating comments from other divisions and departments;
- Resolving inter-division or inter-departmental problems, such as conflicting conditions;
- Assuring that the conditions of approval suggested by other divisions or departments are reasonable;
- Analyzing the application in regards to compliance with zoning regulations and the general plan;
- Coordinating citizen input and comments;
- Working with the applicant to resolve problems and revise the project as appropriate;
- Managing the processing of the permit application in accordance with adopted timelines and seeing that they are met;
- Promptly reviewing and issuing notifications of omissions or problems with the project;
- Coordinating with key decision makers;
- Signing the staff reports; and
- Following up on enforcement of conditions.

The role of the project manager should be that of a team leader; if there are problems with one of the members of the team, it would not be the role of the project manager to resolve this problem directly with that member, but rather with the supervisor of that member of the team. It also does not suggest that the project manager has the authority to override code requirements or adopted standards. However, if the project manager has a problem with the conditions of approval

suggested by the team member, it should be the role of the project manager to resolve that problem working with the member of the team or the supervisor of that member of the team.

In summary, the project manager is a team leader for a multi-disciplinary team who is responsible for keeping the review of a permit application on track, who makes sure issues involving conflicting code or regulatory issues are resolved, who charts a clear course for the applicant through the review process, and who makes sure issues regarding the application are identified early in the review process.

Recommendation: The authority of the project manager should be clearly spelled out in a written policy issued by the Planning Director, and approved by the City Manager.

2. IMPLEMENT A CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.

The purpose a case management system should be to make the amount of staff hours and calendar time required to analyze and reach a decision on permit applications submitted to the Planning Department visible. The specific objectives related to the system are as follows:

- To establish a process whereby specific staff hours and calendar day targets are set for each application.
- To generate data sufficient to assess the performance of both individuals as well as the Planning Division in comparison to those targets.
- To provide a database from which staffing requirements can be analyzed and budget requests can be justified during the annual budget process.

Overall data provided by the system should be sufficient to:

- Indicate when caseload exceeds the time requirements and commitments of the staff assigned to the Current Planning Section.
- Show the impact of overload on the amount of calendar days required to process cases or applications.

Major elements of the proposed case management system are presented in the sections that follow.

(1) The Assistant Director Should Plan and Schedule the Analysis of Permit Applications Submitted to the Planning Division.

The Assistant Director currently supervises the Current Planning Division of the Department. The Assistant Director should review incoming permit applications submitted to the Planning Division and analyze application characteristics, focusing in particular on potential processing difficulties. Once difficulties are identified, the Assistant Director would set targets for staff as follows: (1) overall staff hours allocated to process the application; and (2) calendar targets for completing the analyses of the application. Based on the target data, the Assistant would review the most recent open case inventory report and note the workload of staff. Cases would then be assigned as appropriate. The Assistant Director would then enter the target data and the name of the case planner on the case inventory report. (Ultimately, this responsibility should be delegated to the Senior Planners in the Current Planning Section on a rotating basis). At the current time, the Assistant Director takes into consideration not only work loads, but prior involvement in the project at earlier phases, individual expertise, etc., in the assignment of work. These are good items to continue as part of the case assignment process.

When projects are first assigned, the project manager to whom the permit application is assigned would review the targets (calendar targets and staff hour allocations) established for the case. If the project manager feels that the targets are unreasonable after a review of the application, the project manager should discuss them with the Assistant Director and negotiate appropriate changes.

This system will allow the Department to document workload and utilization and project future staffing needs. The project team has recommended in Chapter 8 that an automated permit tracking system be implemented. This approach would compliment the use of the permit tracking system.

Recommendation: The Assistant Director for the Current Planning Section should plan and schedule the analysis of permit applications submitted to the Planning Division.

(2) The Department Should Establish Clear Timelines for Reviewing Various Permits.

The Planning Department utilizes review timelines for conducting the initial review of development permits. Typically these reviews occur within 2 weeks of receipt of the application. However, as is the case in Neighborhood Resources, the Planning Department is not tracking the date that an application is deemed complete. As a result, processing times are not accurately reflected.

However, the project team compiled review times based on a sample of various development permits to approximate the typical time – calendar days - required to review permits. The table, below, shows the average and median number of calendar days to review development permits during 2005. Note that the project team sampled 45 cases:

Permit Type	Average 1st Review Time	Median 1st Review Time
Preliminary Development Plan	11.0	11.0
Final Development Plan	10.3	10.0
Preliminary Plat	9.4	9.5
Final Plat	9.0	9.0
Site Plan	10.5	10.8
Total	10.2	10.0

As shown above, the initial review of development permits took approximately 10 calendar days to complete. This means that from the date of application to the date the

applicant was notified of review comments made, approximately 10 calendar days elapsed. Note that review times were generally consistent across permit types (e.g. preliminary development plan, preliminary plat, site plan, etc.). The short review times are largely due to the way in which the initial review process is managed and scheduled.

The next table, below, shows the total approval time for processing development permits:

Permit Type	Average Approval Time	Median Approval Time
Preliminary Plat	53.0	49.0
Final Plat	80.0	76.0
Site Plan	75.1	61.0
Preliminary Development Plan	62.0	55.5
Final Development Plan	36.0	53.0
Zoning	110.0	50.0
Total	73.7	52.0

The following points highlight the information above:

- The average number of calendar days for approval (from application date to commission or staff approval) for all of the development permits sampled was approximately 74 calendar days.
- The median number of calendar days for approval of planning permits was 52 days.
- Preliminary Plat applications were processed in the fewest number of calendar days, based on a median approval time of 49 days. Final Plats required the largest number of calendar days, based on a median approval time of 76 calendar days.
- Based on the average number of calendar days required for approval, Final Development Plans received the quickest processing time, while Zoning permits received the longest processing time.

Possible calendar date targets for processing different types of applications, based upon the experience of progressive cities, are presented in the table below.

Type of Application	Target Processing Time (Calendar Days)
Design Review	30
Variance	45
Use Permit	45
Conditional Use Permit	120
Development Review Permit	120
Preliminary & Final Plat	120

These possible targets for processing applications should be reviewed by the Planning Director and the City Manager and modified as necessary. These targets should be published on the Department's website and actual performance against these targets measured.

The Assistant Director should be held accountable for management of the open permit case inventory. The Assistant Director should utilize the planning and scheduling system to:

- Evaluate employee productivity;
- Balance workload among different project managers;
- Determine the amount of staff time that could be reasonably expected to be consumed on various types of cases or activities; and
- Quantify the amount of backlog and the anticipated completion date of various applications, given all work in progress.

This system should be utilized to manage the workload, including reviewing actual progress versus scheduled deadlines and facilitating the shifting of work assignments and schedules in the face of changing priorities or workload. One of the products of this system should be a monthly report to identify workload for each staff, both in number of cases and estimated hours to handle these cases; identification of actual processing time versus scheduled, both on a case-by-case basis and year-to-date; and workload, by type of case, year-to-date.

Recommendation: The timelines for processing of permits by the Planning Department should be revised.

Recommendation: The timelines for processing of permits by the Planning Department should be published on the Department's website.

3. THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT SHOULD FORMALIZE ITS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.

The formalization of these policies and procedures includes a number of distinct elements, including the following:

- The documentation of the conditions of approval utilized by all of the divisions and departments in the review of discretionary and administrative permits;
- The development of a policies and procedures manual by the Planning Division; and
- The use and application of checklists for the review of applications submitted to the Planning Division.

These elements are discussed in greater detail in the sections below.

(1) The Conditions of Approval Utilized by All of the Divisions and Departments in the Review of Discretionary and Administrative Permits Should Be Documented.

In the consulting team's experience, one of the primary methods for assuring consistency in the completion of plan check activities, whether it is a building permit plan check, final development permit plan check, or conditional use plan check, or any other type of permit, is to document in writing the conditions of approval.

Other divisions and departments should follow suit and develop, in writing, their conditions of approval. This would include the Planning Division, Utilities, Public Works, Engineering, Parks, Fire Prevention, and Stormwater Engineering. These conditions should be posted on the Planning Division's website for use by the general public and the development community in knowing what will be expected from them when applying for permits.

The Planning Division should take lead responsibility in facilitating the development of these conditions of approval by all of the divisions and departments.

Recommendation: The conditions of approval utilized by all of the divisions and departments in the review of discretionary and administrative permits should be documented.

Recommendation: These conditions should be posted to the Planning Division's website.

Recommendation: The Planning Department should take lead responsibility in facilitating the development of these written conditions of approval by all of the divisions and departments.

(2) Code Interpretations Should Be Published on the Planning Department's Website.

Another tool to help the Department achieve consistency is an interpretation log that records how various provisions of the zoning ordinance are interpreted in cases where the application of certain regulations is not entirely clear. Interviews with personnel within the Department indicate that a number of code interpretations have been already been documented. However, it is likely that these interpretations will not apply to the new zoning ordinance. In addition, while these interpretations are in writing they have not been made available to the public.

The Department should begin documenting code interpretations of the new zoning ordinance and publish these interpretations on the Department's website.

Recommendation: The Planning Department should document interpretations of the new zoning ordinance and make these available to the public on the Department's website.

(3) The Planning Department Should Develop a Procedures Manual.

The Planning Department has a number of new employees assigned to the Current Planning Section of the Department. This can create significant problems and demands in the training of new staff and in the consistency of service delivery.

The Planning Department can better integrate new employees and enhance consistency by developing a procedures manual. The procedures manual should address such topics as the following:

- Office hours;
- Customer service;
- The ethics policies of the Division;
- A summary of the comprehensive plan, including relevant policies;
- Permit processing procedures (application submittal, initial review, completeness review, etc.);
- Special review, including Historical Resource and Flood Plain Development procedures;
- The use of the case management system; and
- Hearing body review.

Recommendation: The Planning Department should develop a procedures manual.

(4) The Planning Department Should Develop and Utilize Checklists for the Review and Processing of Discretionary and Administrative Applications by Its Own Staff.

The Planning Department has a number of new personnel assigned to the Current Planning Division. In addition, the City has just adopted new zoning and subdivision ordinances. As a result, there is a significant amount of uncertainty regarding interpretation of the new code, and methods to resolve these issues. A

measure that should be taken to integrate new staff and ensure consistency is the development of checklists for the review and processing of each discretionary and administrative application. The development of these checklists should also be designed to assure better consistency among the staff of the Planning Division in the review and processing of discretionary and administrative applications.

For example, for a preliminary development plan application, the checklist could include such aspects as the following:

- Setting up the file;
- Reviewing for consistency with zoning guidelines, parking standards, setback and height requirements, compliance with requirements for drainage, downstream sanitary sewer analysis, traffic impact analysis, etc.;
- Working with the applicant to obtain an adequate design for either staff approval or the Planning Commission;
- Coordinating the resolution of revisions required by other Departments; and
- Condition clearance prior to the building permit plan check.

The checklists should be utilized in all project reviews to ensure consistency and completeness of the reviews conducted. In addition, these checklists should be posted on the City's website for use by those submitting plans.

Recommendation: The Planning Department should develop and utilize checklists for the review and processing of discretionary and administrative applications by its own staff.

Recommendation: The checklists should be posted on the City's website for use by those individuals submitting plans to review requirements that will be required and reviewed by staff.

4. THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT SHOULD EXPAND THE EXTENT OF TRAINING PROVIDED TO ITS STAFF.

The adoption of the new zoning ordinance and the impending implementation of the new subdivision regulations has left a number of personnel uncertain as to how these codes should be interpreted. As a result, the project team recommends that the Planning Division, lead by the Assistant Director, hold several training sessions for all professional planning staff to discuss the impact of the new codes on development permit processing. These retreats should be, to the extent possible, full day sessions where the entire focus is spent on understanding and applying the new zoning ordinance. The project team observed that to a limited extent, this training has already begun. The Department should continue these efforts until all staff are comfortable with the new ordinance and should endeavor to complete this within the next two months.

The project team also compared the Department's training budget to benchmarks utilized by American Society for Training and Development. Recall in the previous chapter that high service level organizations spend approximately 2% to 3% of salary on staff training and development. Based on the Department's FY 2006 budget request, approximately \$17,800 is allocated for staff training (including new commissioner training). This represents approximately 2% of total salary costs or approximately \$1,115 per full time staff person. While this is a sufficient amount of funding for staff training, the additional cost of training new commissioners may limit funds for professional staff. Six of the ten Planning Commissioners attended APA training last year. While this is important and should be encouraged, the same focus on training should be applied to the professional staff, with more encouraged and invited to attend relevant training. The Department should set aside specific money for the training of

Planning Commissioners and monitor training expenditures to ensure sufficient funds are available for staff training.

The annual training program should be designed based upon the following general factors:

- The individual employee's current work assignment;
- The need to maintain certifications, if any, that the employee possesses;
- Internal training provided to all employees; and
- Training needed to address special projects that the Department will be undertaking in the upcoming year.

Recommendation: The Planning Department should conduct training sessions over the next few months to familiarize staff with the new zoning ordinance.

Recommendation: A separate training budget should be established for the Planning Commission.

5. A Review of the Staffing Levels Against the Current Workloads in the Planning Department Indicates that a Total of Seven Planners Should Be Assigned to the Current Planning Function.

Another approach utilized for the analysis of planning staffing is to utilize the total staff review time required based on the number of applications reviewed and processed by the Department as compared to the total available planner hours. The first table, below, shows the estimated hours available for current planning activities:

Element	Hours
Total Annual Hours	2,080
Holidays	88
Vacation	80
Sick Leave	80
Training	80
Staff Meetings (8 hours per month)	96
Administrative Duties/Projects (12 hours per month)	144
Total Annual Available Hours per FTE in Office	1,512

Based upon the 1,512 hours available annually per planner, a total of 6.9 current planners are required to effectively respond to typical or average workloads (see the table below). It is important to note that since Planner of the Day (POD) duties are also provided by the specialty planners, the work activity, shown below, assigns only half of the POD workload to the current planners and assumes that on an average day that the planner assigned is spending the majority of their time on functions associated with POD duties or other administrative functions. Additionally, the table below includes additional work activities related to the review of Building Permit Plan Reviews that have not historically been performed by the Planning Department. It is important that Planning staff review the building permit plan submissions to ensure that plans submitted are in compliance with the discretionary permit approvals previously granted.

Activity	Hours Each	Volume	Required Hours
Preliminary Development Plans	24	9	216
Final Development Plans	16	19	304
Preliminary Plats	20	28	560
Final Plats	20	46	920
Site Plans	24	101	2424
Design Review	12	120	1440
Conditional Use	16	9	144
BZA/Rezoning	16	126	2016
Lot Splits	8	11	88
Planner of the Day Duties	8	130	1040
Annexations	60	3	180
Comprehensive Plan Amendments	40	5	200
Flood Plain Development Permits	8	16	128
Non-conforming uses	8	6	48
Temporary Use Permits	4	38	152
Use Permitted Upon Review	16	11	176
Building Permit Plan Review	683	0.5	341.5
Total			10,378
Planners Needed at 1,560 Hours Available			6.9

At the present time, the planning staff has a total of five current planners. An additional two current planners would be needed to effectively handle the existing workloads in an appropriate fashion. The project team would recommend that the City authorize an additional two full-time planners, with one implemented in 2007 and one in 2008. The workloads and performance times should be monitored following implementation of the new software to determine if processing times are improving. In addition, given the changes in the new code versus the old code, some changes in workload will occur regarding items that previously required Commission approval that will now be handled administratively. These changes may also impact the work volume of staff. The estimated total annual cost for this position would be around \$55,000 annually or \$110,000 annually for both positions.

Recommendation: Two additional current planners should be added to the Planning Department to perform the development review planning functions.

6. MODIFICATIONS IN THE HANDLING OF THE MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETINGS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED TO IMPROVE THE SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC.

A review of the planning commission agendas, schedules, and the staff reports provided to the commission indicates that, in general, the overview function of the Planning Commission is operating well. The Commission has recently undertaken a stronger focus on their internal training. The largest concern that was raised, both by the public and by staff, was the length and unpredictability of the Planning Commission meetings in terms of when specific items would be handled.

While the Commission utilizes a consent agenda as part of its normal agenda, meetings (which are held twice per month – typically on the Monday and Wednesday of the third week) are typically running late into the night – it is not uncommon for them to

last until midnight or later. The length of the meetings result in individuals often waiting in the audience for four hours or so to address a particular topic. The potential also exists for the issue to be pushed to the next meeting date if time gets tight. This type of scheduling and unpredictability does not provide a high level of service to the public.

The staff reports reviewed, and discussions with some members of the Planning Commission, indicate that the issue of the lengthy discussions on some items are not the result of a lack of information from staff but rather either unclear policy direction from the Commission itself or a practice of extensive discussion to occur on items of relatively little controversy.

The Planning Commission should make it a high priority during its annual planning meeting to discuss operational practices, including agenda management and meeting conduct that could improve the meeting process. This planning meeting should also focus on identifying those policy issues that should be addressed during the year and the direction that needs to be provided to staff to maintain effective information exchange.

The Board, as part of this meeting, should also meet with the City Commission and the County Board to discuss the appropriate role of the Commission. Certain difficulties in the current processing of applications and agenda items appear to be related in part to confusion over the role of the Planning Commission (whether it is a policy setting board or a review board – or potentially both) and the fact that the City and County Boards may have differing views on the role of the Commission. It is critical that the Planning Commission members have a clear understanding from the City and County elected officials what the desired role and authority of the Board should be in

order to effectively carry out its mission. If the desire is for the Planning Commission to play a policy setting role through recommendation to the Boards, this should be done separately from the consideration of actual agenda items (for permit approvals) that are before the Commission.

Recommendation: The Planning Commission should undertake a detailed review of its meeting conduct and agenda management process during an annual planning meeting held early in 2007. As part of this review, the Board should have discussions with the City and County Elected Officials regarding the appropriate role of the Board.

10. ANALYSIS OF THE BUILDING INSPECTION PROCESS

10. ANALYSIS OF THE BUILDING INSPECTION PROCESS

This chapter presents an analysis of the inspection process focusing on such issues as the following:

- The level of service provided in response to inspection requests;
- The level of staffing allocated for building inspections;
- The use of combination inspectors; and
- Steps that should be taken to enhance the consistency of code interpretations.

The sections that follow evaluate the inspection process within Lawrence on each of the elements above.

1. THE NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCES DEPARTMENT PROVIDES A HIGH LEVEL OF SERVICE BASED ON INSPECTION AND PLAN REVIEW WORKLOAD.

This section evaluates the Neighborhood Resources Department's utilization of personnel to handle inspection workloads. At the onset of this review process, the Neighborhood Resources Department was in the process of implementing an IVR system for automated inspection scheduling and inspection tracking. Interactive Voice Recognition Systems (IVR) are utilized by a number of progressive municipalities across the country. These systems allow applicants to make inspection requests over the phone and check the status of inspections. These systems are usually connected to an automated permit tracking system, which provides the status of inspections via the web. These systems ensure that little time is lost in scheduling and reviewing the status of inspections. An early recommendation identified was the continuation of this implementation step. As noted, the Neighborhood Resources Department was in the

process of implementing an IVR system, which will be linked to the HTE permit tracking system. Applicants will be able to check the status of permits over the phone and. Inspectors will be able to update the system remotely (over the phone) to provide the results of inspections. The project team mentions the use of an IVR system and an automated permit tracking system in the Technology chapter of this report. A previous recommendation for the Department to continue this effort to limit administrative time spent in the office by inspectors and improve access to inspection results has been completed with the implementation of the IVR system and will reduce the time spent in the office by Inspection Staff. Efforts should continue to focus on productivity levels of Inspection staff by maximizing field time and minimizing office functions..

(1) The Neighborhood Resources Department Effectively Utilizes Personnel to Provide Inspection Services.

The Matrix Consulting Group analyzed workload data to determine the number of inspections being accomplished by Building Inspectors for 2004 and 2005. The table below presents the total and average numbers of inspections completed by Building Inspectors over this period. Building Inspectors are not noted by name; they have been randomly assigned Inspector numbers which are consistent from year to year, but do not necessarily correspond to the numbering system applied elsewhere in this report.

Inspector	2004	2005	Total	Avg./Day
A	3,205.0	3,307.0	6,512.0	14.2
B	103.0	74.0	177.0	0.4
C	2,344.0	2,413.0	4,757.0	10.3
D	117.0	9.0	126.0	0.3
E	236.0	323.0	559.0	1.2
F	3,153.0	3,463.0	6,616.0	14.4
G	2,662.0	2,799.0	5,461.0	11.9
H	7.0	8.0	15.0	0.0
I	11.0	2.0	13.0	0.0

J	2.0	3.0	5.0	0.0
K		105.0	105.0	0.2
Total	11,840.0	12,506.0	24,346.0	53.2

The following points summarize the information above:

- The data show that inspectors are accomplishing approximately 53 inspections per day. This figure was arrived at by using a total of 230 inspection days each year (260 working days less 31 days for vacation, sick days, and holidays each year). Also note that site plan approval inspections are excluded from the totals above.
- The average number of inspections being accomplished by inspector varied significantly. It should be noted that some of the inspections contained above include inspections made by personnel assigned to zoning enforcement and supervisors. Note that the four main building code inspectors conducted an average of 10.3 to 14.4 inspections per day.
- The productivity levels are in the typical range of benchmark inspection targets utilized by the project team. Typically, approximately 13 to 16 inspection stops should be accomplished during an 9 hour day. Note that an inspection stop is different than an inspection since more than one inspection can be made during one inspection stop.

The Department does not track the number of inspection stops made by inspectors. However, using a conservative estimate that approximately 20% of inspections stops may involve two inspections indicates that approximately 15 to 19 inspections can be conducted in a 9-hour day or, 13 to 17 inspections in an 8- hour day. Based on this range, two of the full-time building inspectors are outside the benchmark range.

(2) Approaching the Inspection Staffing Analysis from Another Perspective Confirms That the Current Level of Staffing Is Appropriate Given Current Workloads.

Another approach utilized for the analysis of inspection staffing is to utilize the total inspection time required based on the number of building permits issued by the

Department and compare this figure to total available inspector hours. The first table, below, shows the estimated hours available for inspection activities:

Element	Hours
Total Annual Hours	2,080
Holidays	88
Vacation	80
Sick Leave	80
Training	80
Staff Meetings (8 hours per month)	96
Research and Other Special Projects	60
Administrative Time in Office (phone calls, routing, etc.) – assumes 1 hour per day for days reporting to office (i.e., 240 work days less 46 for vacation, sick, training, holidays)	194
Total Annual Available Hours per FTE in Field	1,402

Based upon the 1,402 available inspection hours available annually per inspector, 4 inspectors are required to effectively respond to the typical or average workload (see the table below).

Activity	Hours Each	Volume	Required Hours
New residential single family tract dwellings - production units	6.50	232	1,508.00
New custom single family dwellings and tract models	10.00		-
New commercial/industrial buildings	15.00	33	495.00
New multi-family residential	20.00	89	1,780.00
Residential remodeling and additions	2.50	340	850.00
Tenant improvements	9.00		-
Patios	1.00		-
Pools and Spas	1.50		-
Miscellaneous construction	1.50	163	244.50
Signs	1.50	367	550.50
Total			5,428.00
Inspectors Needed at 1,402 Hours Available			3.87

The table indicates that four (4) Inspectors would be needed on average to meet average workload levels.

Recommendation: The existing level of building inspection staffing should not be modified.

3. THE NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCES DEPARTMENT SHOULD ADOPT FORMAL INSPECTION SERVICE LEVEL TARGETS AND MONITOR PROGRESS AGAINST THESE TARGETS.

The Neighborhood Resources Department currently utilizes an informal target of meeting customer requests for inspections on the day requested. In addition, the Department has developed a will-call program for footings and sewer line inspections which provides inspection requests on the same day requested. While these practices are commendable, the project team recommends that service level targets be formally adopted and performance should be monitored. Suggested inspection performance standards include:

- Conduct 90% of inspection requests on the day requested or within 24 hours of the request.
- Conduct 95% of will-call inspections on the same day requested.
- Inspectors should perform 13 to 17 inspections per workday.

Performance against these standards should be monitored by the Department to ensure high levels of customer service. These standards should also be adjusted based on workload and customer demands.

Recommendation: The Neighborhood Resources Department should adopt formal service level targets. Performance against these targets should be monitored on a regular basis.

4. COMBINATION BUILDING INSPECTORS SHOULD BE UTILIZED TO CONDUCT BUILDING INSPECTIONS OF RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION AND COMMERCIAL TENANT IMPROVEMENTS.

The use of combination inspectors is standard practice amongst most small to mid-size cities. There are a number of advantages to the use of combination inspectors.

- **Utilization of combination dwelling inspectors enhances the efficiency of inspection services.** A combination inspector increases the efficiency of inspection operations as the inspector can make all of the plumbing, mechanical, electrical, and building inspections in a single stop. With specialized inspectors, three different inspectors – a Building Inspector, a Plumbing/Mechanical Inspector, and an Electrical Inspector – would all have to inspect the structure during three different stops. This results in increased non-productive travel time and reduces the number of potential inspections per day.
- **The combination dwelling inspector provides continuity of contact with the contractor and better public relations.** The use of a combination inspector removes stumbling blocks to the timeliness of inspection services for contractors. A combination inspector can approve the electrical, building, and plumbing/mechanical work; three different inspectors do not have to make three different inspection stops to approve the construction work performed by the contractor.
- **The use of combination dwelling inspectors will enable the Building and Safety Neighborhood Resources Department to better accommodate inspection vacancies.** The use of a combination inspector approach rather than inspection specialists significantly reduces the workload impact of vacant inspection positions since there is a broader pool of inspectors to allocate the workload amongst.

The use of combination inspectors is not unusual. A number of progressive cities, including the cities of Columbia, MO and Overland Park, KS, utilize combination inspectors to increase their building department's flexibility in responding to inspection requests and handling inspection workload.

While the Inspectors currently assigned to the Department possess a number of certifications, in fact two inspectors are certified residential combination inspectors, the project team recommends that the Neighborhood Resources Department fully utilize the

combination building inspector approach for at least two areas of inspections. These include residential construction (including multi-family) and commercial tenant improvements. The application of combination inspectors has the potential for broader application beyond these two areas, depending on the complexity of the construction.

The International Codes Council (ICC) provides certification examination for combined inspection. This course concentrates on the examination questions and answers rather than field application. The Neighborhood Resources Department should facilitate the completion of this certification by all of its inspectors.

In addition, a system of ongoing training is needed for these inspection staff to enable these staff to function as combination inspectors. The Code Enforcement Manager should develop a training program for each of these staff based upon a training needs assessment.

The two existing inspectors that are certified as combination inspectors and the one individual certified as a combination residential and commercial inspector could provide the initial ongoing training. These three staff should be utilized to provide the day-to-day inspection training to the other inspection staff in an approach as follows.

- Select one Inspector to be trained to perform combined residential inspections or tenant improvement inspections, and team this inspector with one of the ICC-certified Combination Inspectors.
- Have each ICC-certified Combination Inspector provide code and practical field training to the group for an appropriate period of time with code training in the morning and group field inspections in the afternoon.
- Establish a time period for training and implement the program on a target date (40 – 60 days). Confer with the Inspectors to establish the implementation date. Establish the target date realizing that some of the quality expertise will occur with practice. A comfort level can be achieved by realizing that team support is available within the group where each Inspector has specific expertise.

It should be noted that the Department will implement new requirements for new hires. Currently, personnel hired at entry level are only required to obtain a specialty certification (e.g. electrical, plumbing, mechanical, building) within eighteen months of hire. Those hired at the Building Inspector II level are required to obtain a specialty certification within six months. New rules will require Building Inspector I personnel to obtain a residential combination building inspector certification, while Building Inspector II personnel will be required to also obtain a commercial combination building inspector certification. Current inspection personnel should be trained to the same level of certification to ensure consistency.

Recommendation: The Neighborhood Resources Department should provide the training necessary to its Combination Inspectors to enable these inspectors to function as Combination Inspectors for residential and commercial inspections.

5. THE NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCES DEPARTMENT SHOULD TAKE A NUMBER OF STEPS TO ENHANCE CONSISTENCY OF CODE INTERPRETATIONS BY BUILDING INSPECTORS.

An objective of the Neighborhood Resources Department is to provide not only timely inspection service, but also to ensure that the inspections provided are consistent interpretations of the building codes. There are a number of steps that should be taken to enhance the level of consistency in building code interpretations. These steps are described in the sections below.

(1) Provide Inspection Checklists to Each Inspector and Require Their Use on Each Inspection.

Although provision of training and periodic staff meetings can be utilized to ensure consistency of interpretations, another approach to enhance consistency of inspection code interpretations is through the development and use of inspection checklists.

While the Neighborhood Resources Department has developed checklists for plan review, official checklists for conducting building inspections are not utilized. While not an exhaustive list, examples of checklists should include the following types of projects:

- Residential Foundation
- Wood Frame Shear Walls
- Underground Plumbing
- Rough Plumbing
- Rough Electrical
- Mechanical
- Insulation Drywall
- Interior and Exterior Lath
- Swimming Pool Spa and Hot Tub
- Building Inspection
- Water Heater and Hot Water Storage Tank Replacement
- Temporary Service Pole
- Re-Roofing
- Copper Water Line Re-Pipe
- HVAC Unit Change-Out

Interviews with inspection staff indicate that inspections checklists are not utilized during inspections. The lack of use of these checklists can result in a deterioration of a standard level of service provided by the Department, both in terms of content and quality. Use of checklists will improve consistency and increase transparency in the

inspection process. The Department should also make these checklists, and inspection results, a part of the permit file.

Recommendation: Provide inspections checklists to each Inspector and require their use on each inspection.

Recommendation: Publish these checklists on the Neighborhood Resources Department's website.

Recommendation: File inspection checklists and results with the permit files.

(2) The Code Enforcement Manager Should Allocate a Proportion of His/Her Time to Quality Control and Consistency of Code Interpretation.

Another best practice utilized to ensure consistency in building inspections is the use of an effective quality control program. A quality control program would assist in the development of feedback and identification of any problems with consistency, and feedback regarding expected employee performance. This program should consist of the following:

- The Code Enforcement Manager should ride for at least one half day each month with each Inspector to observe their inspection procedures.
- The Code Enforcement Manager should visit major jobs periodically to review the results of inspections by the Building Inspectors and visit with contractors and architects regarding the demeanor of the Building Inspectors.
- Document the activity and findings and submit written reviews and findings monthly to the Director.

Recommendation: The Code Enforcement Manager should allocate a proportion of his/her time to assuring quality control and consistency of code interpretations by the Building Inspectors by conducting "ride alongs" with Building Inspectors.

(3) The Neighborhood Resources Department Should Develop Policies Regarding Code Interpretations for Inspections and Publish These Policies on its Website.

Another measure that is utilized by progressive cities to ensure consistency in the code interpretation and inspection process is to formally document code

interpretations regarding building inspections. This approach ensures transparency on how inspections will be conducted and how the code will be interpreted. As an example, the City of Lee's Summit, Missouri publishes documents on its website related to one and two family dwellings, uncovered decks, and the electrical and plumbing codes. These documents provide a condensed summary of code requirements for various types of construction and provide applicants with common interpretations and frequent problems encountered.

The Neighborhood Resources Department should develop policies for documenting code interpretations. These policies should document the process for establishing official interpretations. These policies should also require that interpretations are not published until they are reviewed by supervisors and managers.

Recommendation: The Neighborhood Resources Department should document official building inspection code interpretations and publish them on the Department's website.

Recommendation: The Neighborhood Resources Department should develop policies on how official code interpretations are made and published.

(4) The Neighborhood Resources Department Should Expand the Extent of Training Provided to Its Inspection Staff.

Setting a budget for training is never easy with all the competition for expenses needed to run local government. The American Society for Training & Development (ASTD) 2003 State of the Industry Report identified a number of ways to measure commitment to training and a few benchmarks on what others spend.

- Training as a % of payroll increased to 2.2% in 2002, up from 1.9% in 2001.
- Training expenditures per employee increased to \$826 per employee in 2002, up from \$734 in 2001.
- Training hours per employee increased to 28 in 2002, up from 24 in 2001.

- Training delivery via classroom decreased to 72% in 2002, down from 77% in 2001.
- Training delivery via technology increased to 15% in 2002, up from 10.5% in 2001.

In the fiscal year 2005 annual budget for Neighborhood Resources, the training budget amounts to \$6,500. This is 1.0% of the salary expenditures for permanent employees, or \$509 per employee. The 2006 annual budget requests increases this amount to \$9,000, which is equal to 1.2% of salary expenditures and represents \$705 per FTE. This is less than that found by ASTD.

However, before considering of an increase in the level and extent of training expenditures, the Code Enforcement Manager should assure the development and execution of a well-conceived training program. In developing a training plan, the Manager should assure that skill development is linked to an assessment of the strengths and opportunities for improvement for each employee. The individual training program should be developed to ensure that staff are able to maintain current certifications, achieve necessary (or highly desirable) additional certifications, and maintain current knowledge of existing City of Lawrence code interpretations and policies.

In addition, dedicated time on-site for codes training is essential. This on-site training should be regularly scheduled and coordinated. Assigning training subjects to inspectors and plans examiners works well. There is significant training and accomplishment achieved when people have to prepare and present training. The Code Enforcement Manager should present training on problematic subject areas.

Recommendation: A training needs assessment should be developed for employees in Neighborhood Resources.

Recommendation: The training budget for the Neighborhood Resources Department should be increased to \$14,000 annually. This is an increase of \$5,000 from the current FY 2006 budget request.

Recommendation: The Building Safety Manager should coordinate bi-weekly training and be responsible for the ongoing quality of in house training.

Recommendation: Assure that one hour of training is provided bi-weekly for staff.

11. ANALYSIS OF THE PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

11. ANALYSIS OF THE PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

This final chapter presents an analysis of the plan of organization used for the development review process in the City of Lawrence. The vast majority of the staff involved in the development review process are concentrated in two Departments: Planning and Neighborhood Resources. The remaining staff are located in Fire and Medical, Utilities, and Public Works Departments. While the general quality of the reviews conducted under the existing structure appear to be adequate, there are certain operational issues that the current structure generates, including:

- The lack of a single individual with the authority to oversee the development review process on a day-to-day basis with a focus on resolving issues arising in different functional areas;
- The lack of unified and consistent processes and systems that cross functional areas, including computer systems, approaches to data collection and reporting requirements, and public education efforts;
- Some confusion or unclear understandings from the customers of the City's development review process regarding who to turn to in resolving problems and the perception that there is a lack of accountability among departments; and
- Varying service levels to the public.

There appear to be some opportunities for improvement in the plan of organization utilized for the development review process that can easily address these concerns.

1. A NUMBER OF PRINCIPLES WERE CONSIDERED IN EVALUATING THE PLAN OF ORGANIZATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS.

In evaluating the plan of organization and the management systems utilized by the City of Lawrence for the development review process, the Matrix Consulting Group

utilized a number of principles for organizational structure. These principles are presented in the paragraphs below.

- **The development review processes are organized on a ‘form follows function’ basis** with a clear, distinct and comprehensive sense of purpose or mission for each functional area. Functions should be grouped consistent with their periodic interaction, common information systems, delivery of services which are linked in some way, etc., resulting in functional cohesion.
- **The organizational structure fosters accountability.** The organizational structure should foster accountability among management and supervisory staff. While this criteria needs to consider the performance management systems utilized, the organizational structure itself can facilitate or impede the performance of an organization through various means including excessive fragmentation, inconsistency among functional units, etc.
- **The plan of organization enhances communication and coordination.** The number of handoffs/exchanges required among different divisions/departments providing service to the public should be minimized. The structure should enhance shared knowledge and understanding among divisions and departments. The channels of communication should be clear and consistent.
- **Staff resources are utilized efficiently.** The plan of organization should minimize administrative overhead. Workload should be distributed/shared to maximize the productivity of staff through peaks and valleys and offer cross-functional capabilities (e.g., to balance workload of staff across current planning and long-range planning). Processes should be standardized to enhance the efficiency and customer responsiveness of services (e.g., the permit, plan check, inspection, and code enforcement processes).
- **The potential of human capital is enabled.** The plan of organization should enhance career development opportunities, training and recruitment and retention.
- **The quality and responsiveness of services provided to customers is improved.** The plan of organization should enable staff to provide better service to the public in terms of cycle times, user friendliness, performance management, quality control, and consistency in the application of policies and procedures. Customers are the hub – with the organization designed around them.
- **Each department and division in the development review process have been placed at a level in accordance with its importance in achieving city-wide goals.** Departments or divisions have not been placed too high in the organizational structure or too low, relative to their importance.

- **The span of control for any manager or supervisor does not exceed the number which can be feasibly and effectively supervised.** The trend is to widen span of control. In the last decade, the introduction of information technology has not only spurred the trend toward wider spans of control, but enabled these to put in place without impacting the services provided.
- **The number of layers of management does not result in a tall, narrow configuration.** Organizations with many layers are associated with centralized decision-making. Flatter organizations tend to have decentralized decision-making, as authority for making decisions is given to the front line employees.

Each of these broader principles was considered in the development of the recommendations that follow.

2. THE STAFF ASSOCIATED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS SHOULD BE CO-LOCATED AT A SINGLE LOCATION.

As was noted, both by comments from the employee survey and from discussions during the focus group meetings, the close and seamless interaction of City Departments have a substantial impact on the perceptions of customers regarding the service level provided. This interaction also improves the ability of staff to work together and provide a comprehensive and accurate review of applications and plans throughout the process. While the City currently has in place an interdepartmental review meeting, it was noted during our interviews and discussions with staff that the level of preparation for these meetings varies by department, with some departments submitting plan review comments in advance of the meeting, some providing comments at the meeting, and others providing comments following the meeting after hearing the discussion that occurred. This approach prevents all in attendance from taking into consideration the views expressed by other departments.

The staff associated with conducting plan reviews are located in multiple offices spread over more than four locations. Other than the weekly meetings, there is little

opportunity for staff to collaborate on plan review activities and the public is required to contact multiple locations with questions regarding specific plan review comments if they involve more than one department. At the present time, the Fire and Medical Department staff associated with plan reviews are already co-located with the staff of the Neighborhood Resources Department. The Planning staff should be added to this, or another, suitable location. This, or another suitable location, would achieve the majority of this goal.

The project team has concluded that a Community Development Department approach – especially in light of other recommendations in this report - that combines into one Department, both the Planning function and the Building Safety function (performed by Neighborhood Resources), would be a more beneficial approach for the City of Lawrence. Similar to the arrangement with the Fire Medical plan review staff, the staff assigned to conducting plan reviews in Public Works and Utilities should also be located at this same location. This would enable the City to implement a truly one stop shop for plan reviews. With all relevant staff available at the same location, the City would be able to provide staff support for the review of walk-in plans with the public.

Recommendation: All development review staff should be co-located at a common facility. This will require the relocation of the Planning Department and some selected individuals from Public Works and Utilities.

3. A NEW DEPARTMENT TITLED “COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT” SHOULD BE FORMED THROUGH THE MERGER OF THE EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCES AND PLANNING DEPARTMENTS.

At the present time, these two Departments are not working together in a closely coordinated fashion and do not utilize similar software or tracking efforts on work activities. Unfortunately, the development review process requires seamless interaction

between these two Departments for a successful outcome. Conditions of approval that are adopted through the upfront review of projects should be monitored throughout the process and the public should have a strong expectation that they will be implemented as part of the final development. The establishment of a Planning and Community Development Department would place these two critical functions under the leadership of one individual who could focus on overcoming the boundaries that currently exist and on improving the services provided. This individual would in essence be charged with merging and balancing the sometimes conflicting goals of these two entities – the Planning focus of creating positive and pleasing living environments with the Neighborhood Resources focus of ensuring building safety.

A single Director with oversight over both of these critical functions can ensure that both functions are operating with a concentrated focus on the provision of services to the public in a coordinated and consistent fashion. The major structure and organization of the two departments would remain essentially similar to the current structure with the exception that the current Assistant Planning Director would assume more day to day oversight over Planning and the Neighborhood Services Director position would be classified as an Assistant Director of Community Development position with oversight over the current functional areas. With the current vacancy in the position of Planning Director, the City is in a position of being able to hire an individual with experience in both of these areas and implement this recommendation without the addition of a new position.

Recommendation: The Departments of Neighborhood Resources and Planning should be merged into a new Department of Planning and Community Development.

4. CERTAIN DUTIES RELATED TO THE PLAN REVIEW FUNCTIONS IN THE UTILITIES DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE MODIFIED TO IMPROVE THE PROCESS.

At the present time, the plan review function in the Utilities Department is accomplished by a significant number of employees that are each reviewing a specific area of expertise. For example, within the Utilities Department a submitted plan may be reviewed by four or five different individuals during the plan review period, each looking at a particular component of the plan. The plan review process is made more difficult in that plans are not tracked internally for completion time or routed concurrently to all individuals. The plans are currently being reviewed on a sequential basis that often results in individuals attempting to complete plan reviews on short notice to meet the deadline for submission of review comments for the interdepartmental meeting. This process has several shortcomings, including the potential for reviews to be less complete than desired and it prevents the public from having a single point of contact regarding water and wastewater comments.

The project team recommends that one position be designated as the discretionary permit plan reviewer for the Utilities Department. Other staff should be cross-trained in the various standard comments, conditions, and requirements to be reviewed. The discretionary permit plan reviewer would be able, as needed, to consult with other staff in the Utilities Department as needed when reviewing plans, but would serve as the primary individual responsible for conducting all plan reviews and serve as the point of contact with the public.

(1) A Review of the Staffing Levels Against the Current Workloads in the Utility Department Indicates that One Employee Assigned to the Development Review Function Exclusively Would Be Able to Handle Existing Workloads.

The project team reviewed the 2005 workload for plans reviewed by the Utility Department against available staff time to determine the staffing that would be required in order to devote individuals exclusively to the review of development applications. As noted elsewhere in this report, if the City is to implement a full one-stop center, appropriate staff must be assigned to that location to assist customers as needed. The first table, below, shows the estimated hours available for review activities:

Element	Hours
Total Annual Hours	2,080
Holidays	88
Vacation	80
Sick Leave	80
Training	80
Staff Meetings (8 hours per month)	96
Administrative Duties/Projects (8 hours per month)	96
Total Annual Available Hours per FTE in Office	1,560

Based upon the 1,560 hours available annually per employee, one employee would be required to effectively respond to typical or average workloads (see the table below). This assumes that this person be able to devote his/her entire focus to the development review function.

Activity	Hours Each	Volume	Required Hours
Preliminary Development Plans	2	9	18
Final Development Plans	2	19	38
Preliminary Plats	2	28	56
Final Plats	2	46	92
Site Plans	2	101	202
Public Improvement Plans	6	189	1134
Total			1,540
Employees Needed at 1,560 Hours Available			1.0

This position can either be filled by a reorganization of the duties currently assigned to Utility staff or filled as a new position. Since the Department has been focusing on reducing the number of reviews and moving towards a single point of contact, this would expand that approach and devote the individual entirely to plan review function and include them as part of the One Stop Shop. It would appear that existing staff could be reassigned to handle this function, although it would take a reassignment of duties to other staff members so that existing field functions performed by this individuals were performed by other staff within the Utility Department. Following implementation of this recommendation, staff should monitor workloads within the Utility Department to ensure that staff are able to fully handle the non-development review functions with existing staff.

In addition, it will be necessary to have a backup person designated to fill in for the dedicated staff member when this individual is on vacation, sick, attending training, or otherwise unable to be present at the Development Center. To accomplish this, one of the other Project Engineers in the Utility Department should be cross-trained to provide support and backfill for the individual assigned to the One-Stop Shop.

Recommendation: The Utilities Department should designate a single individual to be responsible for discretionary permit plan reviews. This individual should be trained in all of the components of plan review for each of the relevant functional areas in the Utilities Department, including water distribution, wastewater collection and water quality.

Recommendation: The City of Lawrence should devote one employee from the Utility Department exclusively to the performance of development review activities. This position should be located in the One Stop Shop Center.

5. CERTAIN DUTIES RELATED TO THE PLAN REVIEW FUNCTIONS IN THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE MODIFIED TO IMPROVE THE PROCESS.

At the present time, the plan review function in the Public Works Department is accomplished by a significant number of employees that each are reviewing a specific area of expertise. The Public Works Department has a situation, similar to the Utilities Department, where several individuals are reviewing plans. However, in the Public Works Department the reviews are conducted concurrently so there is not the same issue regarding employees having sufficient time to complete the reviews. The reviews are currently being performed by staff engineers and reviewed by the City Engineer, Stormwater Management, and Traffic Engineering. This approach is working well, for the most part.

As the new staff assigned as staff engineers become more familiar with the City's procedures and requirements, the level of review by the City Engineer should be reduced, the discretionary permit plan review by Stormwater Management consolidated with the staff engineer, and the role of Stormwater Management in discretionary permit review eliminated.

There appears to be a unique arrangement in Lawrence where plans are reviewed by both the Transportation Planner in the Planning Department (who performs more of the technical review) and the Traffic Engineer in the Public Works Department (where it is more common for the detailed review to occur). The opportunity exists for the reallocation of duties between these two individuals to provide only one reviewing individual. Obviously, these two individuals need to be in contact and have some discussions regarding overall transportation plans and approaches, but the need for two

individual reviewers is not apparent and could be reduced to a single individual. This should be the Transportation Planner in the Planning Department who should be provided training and checklists from the Traffic Engineer regarding elements of the plans to be considered from their perspective.

6. A REVIEW OF THE STAFFING LEVELS AGAINST THE CURRENT WORKLOADS IN THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT INDICATES THAT ONE EMPLOYEE ASSIGNED TO THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW FUNCTION EXCLUSIVELY WOULD BE ABLE TO HANDLE EXISTING WORKLOADS.

The project team reviewed the 2005 workload for plans reviewed by the Public Works Department against available staff time to determine the staffing that would be required in order to devote individuals exclusively to the review of development applications. As noted elsewhere in the report, if the City is to implement a full one-stop center, appropriate staff must be assigned to that location to assist customers as needed. The first table, below, shows the estimated hours available for review activities:

Element	Hours
Total Annual Hours	2,080
Holidays	88
Vacation	80
Sick Leave	80
Training	80
Staff Meetings (8 hours per month)	96
Administrative Duties/Projects (8 hours per month)	96
Total Annual Available Hours per FTE in Office	1,560

Based upon the 1,560 hours available annually per employee, 1.3 employees would be required to effectively respond to typical or average workloads (see the table below). This assumes that this person would be able to devote his/her entire focus to the development review function.

Activity	Hours Each	Volume	Required Hours
Preliminary Development Plans	5	9	45
Final Development Plans	3	19	57
Preliminary Plats	5	28	140
Final Plats	3	46	138
Site Plans	3	101	303
Public Improvement Plans	7	189	1323
Total			2,006
Employees Needed at 1,560 Hours Available			1.3

This position should be filled by transferring the currently vacant Project Engineer position to the One Stop Shop to perform development review functions. It would be beneficial and make the most effective use of the One Stop Center to have this individual assigned to that location as is the recommendation in the section related to Utilities. Since the workload review appears to indicate that one individual would not normally be able to handle the existing workload, some staff support from the Public Works Department to this individual would be required at peak times to ensure timely review of submissions. In addition, it will be necessary to have a backup person designated to fill in for the dedicated staff member when this individual is on vacation, sick, attending training, or otherwise unable to be present at the Development Center.

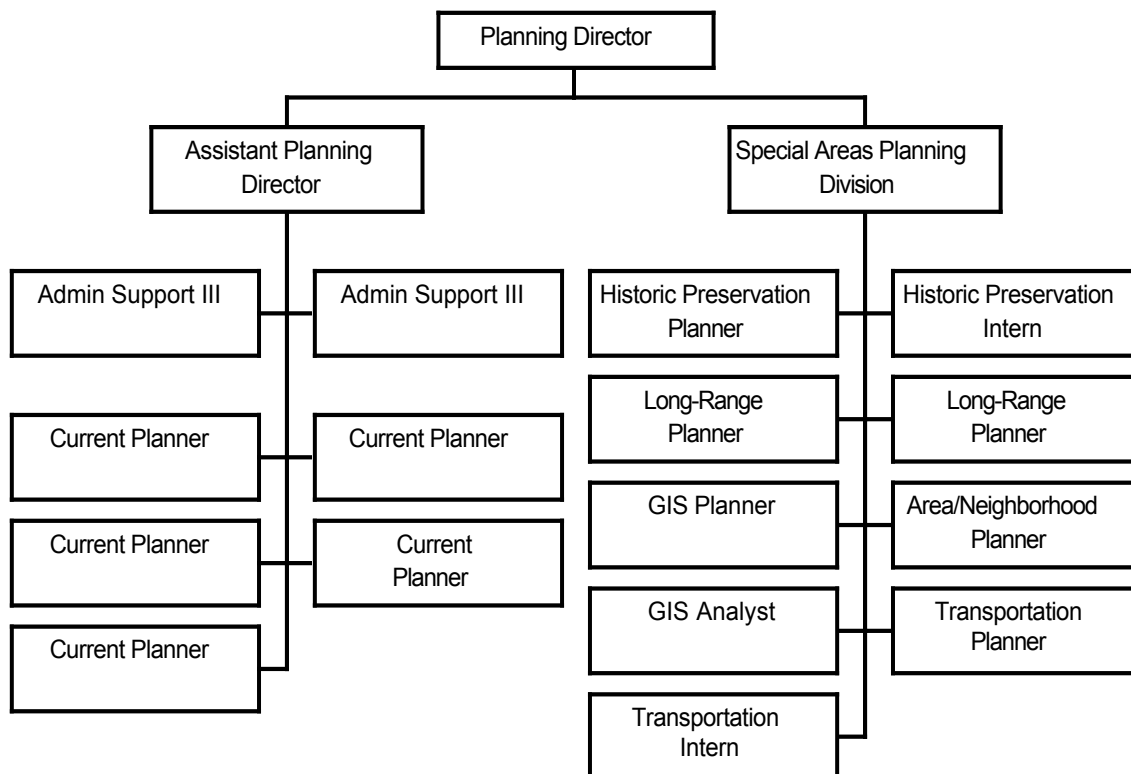
Recommendation: As the new staff in the Engineering Division assigned as staff engineers become more familiar with the City's procedures and requirements, the level of review by the City Engineer should be reduced, the discretionary permit plan review by Stormwater Management consolidated with the staff engineer and the role of Stormwater Management in discretionary permit review eliminated.

Recommendation: The current separation of duties relative to plan review for traffic and transportation issues should be combined into a review conducted by the Transportation Planner. The Traffic Engineer should provide guidance, training, and checklists to the Traffic Planner for use in conducting the plan reviews.

Recommendation: One individual from Public Works should be assigned to the One Stop Shop to handle all development review functions for the Public Works Department.

7. THE PLAN OF ORGANIZATION OF THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE MODIFIED.

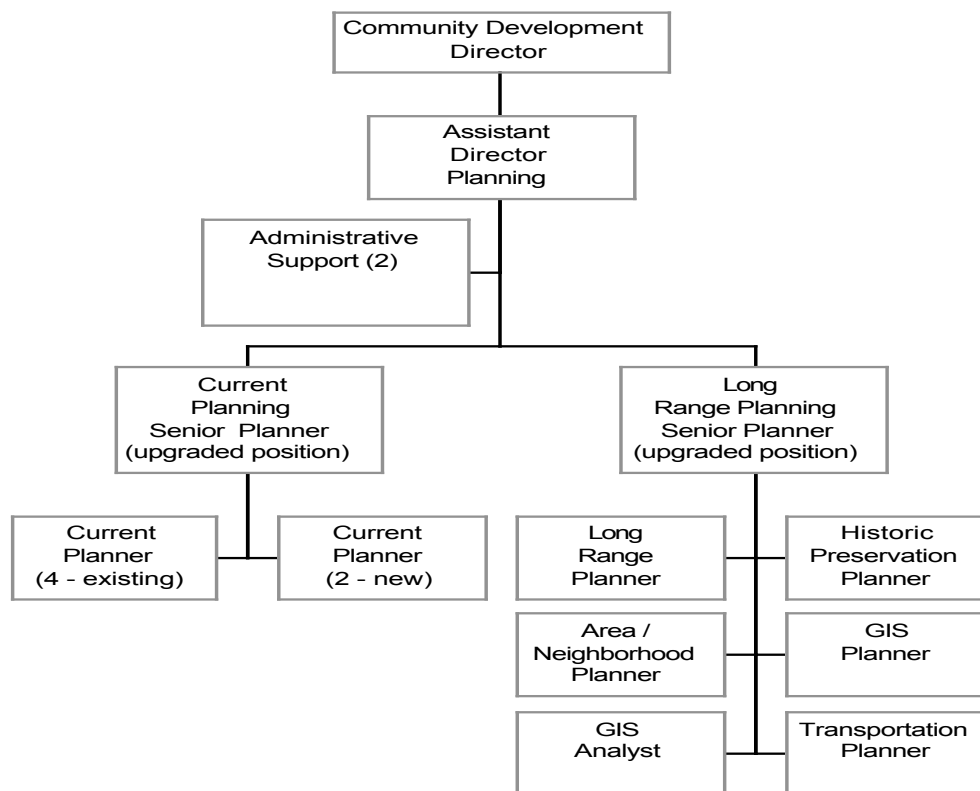
The Planning Department is responsible for both long-range planning and development permits. The Department has two Divisions, in addition to support staff. These Divisions are the Current Planning and Specialized Areas Planning (Long-Range, Area/Neighborhood, Historic Resources, Transportation, and GIS/Web). Two administrative personnel support the Department and provide customer service. The organizational chart, below, provides a graphical depiction of the Department's organization.



Important points to note regarding the organization are provided below.

- The Planning Director has a span of control of nine, excluding the Historic Preservation Intern.
- The Assistant Planning Director has a span of control of seven.
- The Department has a flat plan of organization. There are only two managerial positions: the Planning Director and the Assistant Planning Director. The remaining positions are classified as Planners and GIS Analyst (excluding the administrative support staff).
- The Department has endured a significant amount of turnover at the “line” planner level.

The project team recommends that the plan of organization for the Planning Department be modified. The proposed plan of organization, for fulltime positions, is presented below.



Important points to note concerning the proposed plan of organization are presented below.

- The Planning Director and the Assistant Planning Director would form the top management team of the Planning Department.
- A supervisory level would be established with the proposed upgrading of two Planner positions to Senior Planners. These positions would be working supervisor positions allocating approximately one-half of their time to supervision and the remaining one-half to processing discretionary permits or to long-range planning activities depending on the Division that the Senior Planner is assigned to perform.
- The creation of a Senior Planner will effectively result in 6.5 individuals being assigned to perform current planning functions. Given that the staffing analysis indicated a need for seven individuals devoted to this function, careful monitoring of staff's ability to complete work timely and within adopted cycle times should occur. Since other recommendations in this report may produce efficiencies in the processing of applications, no recommendation is made at this point regarding the ½ position between recommended staffing and estimated staffing.
- The spans of control for the Senior Planners would be six full-time positions with the addition of the two new current planner positions previously recommended in the report.

The intent of this proposed plan of organization is to establish a pyramidal form of organization for the Department and to reduce the day-to-day supervisory workload of the Director and the Assistant Director – enabling them to spend more time on policy development and departmental planning functions. At present, the plan of organization is flat and opportunities for career growth are practically non-existent.

The estimated annual cost for implementation of this revised plan of organization would approximate \$25,000 annually in salaries and fringe benefits for the upgraded position.

Recommendation: The plan of organization for the Planning Department should be modified, and two Planner positions upgraded to Senior Planner level positions.

8. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS REGARDING THE CONSOLIDATION OF SERVICES.

With the establishment of a Community Development Department, there is an opportunity for the City of Lawrence and Douglas County to consider additional shared services – namely the provision of Building Inspections. With the joint planning services currently provided, the level of service in this area is consistent and uniform throughout the two political entities. A logical next step is to evaluate the potential for Building Inspections to also be conducted in a similar fashion. The benefits of this approach are numerous and include:

- Consistent building codes and enforcement approaches for developers and contractors;
- Reduced layers of government that an individual must interact with;
- Opportunities for increased utilization of staff; and
- Improved services to the public.

As a first step in the process, the parties should consider whether the County Building Inspections functions can be co-located with the City's functions in a single location. From the public perspective, this will bring together all building and planning functions for the City and County at a single location and eliminate the need for citizens, developers and contractors to go to multiple locations when dealing with a single project.

Since the City and County are currently undertaking a review of the City-County agreement relative to the arrangement and cost sharing for the provision of Planning Services in the next year, it would be appropriate to expand this discussion into the feasibility and desirability of providing the entire gamut of development review services

in a cooperative manner and the Matrix Consulting Group would recommend that this discussion and exploration occur.

At a minimum, the co-location of the County's staff with the City's will improve the service levels provided to the public, who could access both staff without the need to travel between different locations – something that currently occurs. It will also improve the level of communications between these two staffs on specific development activities and projects.

Recommendation: The City of Lawrence and Douglas County should consider co-location of the County's Planning, Zoning, and Building Inspection staff with the City's at a single facility.

Recommendation: Longer term, the City of Lawrence and Douglas County should consider whether or not there exists a desire and opportunity to provide Building Inspection services through a cooperative arrangement, similar to the one currently in place for Planning Services.

ATTACHMENT A
RESULTS OF THE EMPLOYEE SURVEY

ATTACHMENT A

Results of the Employee Survey Development Review Departments – Lawrence, Kansas

Department	Number	%
Planning	9	33%
Neighborhood Resources	8	30%
Utilities	5	19%
Public Works	4	15%
Fire	1	4%
Total	27	100%

Primary Role	Number	%
Plan Review	9	33%
Inspection	3	11%
Administration	8	30%
Other	5	19%
No Answer	2	7%
Total	27	100%

Question	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	No Answer
1. In general, the development review and permitting processes are fair and responsive for all applicants.	0	5	3	9	8	2
	19%		11%	63%		7%
2. The development review and permitting processes are timely and efficient.	1	4	6	11	4	1
	19%		22%	56%		4%
3. My division prides itself on providing fast, high quality service to all applicants in the development review process.	0	1	3	12	10	1
	4%		11%	81%		4%

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Question	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	No Answer
4. In my division, at present, staffing is adequate and workloads are reasonable.	10	9	1	6	0	1
	70%		4%	22%		4%
5. My division is effectively managed and operates efficiently.	2	4	3	10	7	1
	22%		11%	63%		4%
6. The organization of my division is well suited to its responsibilities in the development review processes.	1	4	4	14	3	1
	19%		15%	63%		4%
7. My division has established clear performance standards for processing applications and routinely monitors performance with regard to the development review/permitting processes.	2	7	8	5	4	1
	33%		30%	33%		4%
8. My division has clear, well-documented policies and procedures to guide my involvement in the development review process.	1	9	1	10	4	2
	37%		4%	52%		7%
9. My division has established a definite timelines for completing work in processing applications.	1	4	7	9	5	1
	19%		26%	52%		4%
10. My division has an effective plan for responding to periods of high demand in the development review/permitting processes without compromising quality or timeliness.	3	8	6	9	0	1
	41%		22%	33%		4%

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Question	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	No Answer
11. My division has the information technology it needs to accomplish its functions efficiently and effectively.	0	3	4	12	7	1
	11%		15%	70%		4%
12. Coordination between my division and others involved in development review and permitting processes is effective.	3	7	6	8	3	0
	37%		22%	41%		0%
13. The City of Lawrence makes it easy for applicants or the general public to obtain complete, accurate information about all aspects of the development and permitting processes.	1	10	7	7	2	0
	41%		26%	33%		0%
14. Customer complaints are handled quickly and courteously in my division.	0	0	3	10	14	0
	0%		11%	89%		0%
15. My division uses processes that allow different types of projects to be processed differently according to their complexity and the number of approvals required (such as the use of over-the-counter permits, the issuance of permits on-line, etc.).	1	6	10	6	4	0
	26%		37%	37%		0%
16. My division is clear and consistent in its interpretation of regulations and permit or development standards.	1	4	2	14	6	0
	19%		7%	74%		0%
17. The City of Lawrence's permit processes ensure that applicants are advised of <u>all</u> application requirements and permit standards early in the process.	1	6	9	8	3	0

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Question	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	No Answer
	26%		33%	41%		0%
18. It is rare that new requirements are added by staff after the applicant submits the project and the application is deemed complete.	1	5	6	10	5	0
	22%		22%	56%		0%
19. Managers in my division are receptive to new ideas and employee suggestions for improvements in the building permit and land entitlement processes.	1	2	4	11	9	0
	11%		15%	74%		0%
20. Managers of my division delegate responsibility for processing of development/ permit applications to an appropriate level, while taking steps to ensure good quality control.	1	2	6	10	8	0
	11%		22%	67%		0%
21. The City of Lawrence delegates authority to staff for approval of minor permits to speed and simplify the development approval process.	1	3	8	12	3	0
	15%		30%	56%		0%
22. The City of Lawrence has developed clear and understandable codes, regulations and development standards for staff and the public (such as design review guidelines, zoning ordinance, standard specifications, building codes, etc.)	5	7	9	5	1	0
	44%		33%	22%		0%
23. Applicants have easy access to staff to obtain information about permit application and approval requirements.	0	2	3	13	9	0

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Question	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	No Answer
	7%		11%	81%		0%
24. My division provides a high level of service to the City of Lawrence.	0	1	0	13	13	0
	4%		0%	96%		0%
25. The development review process overall results in a high level of service to the City of Lawrence.	0	4	13	6	4	0
	15%		48%	37%		0%
26. I am encouraged to take the initiative in resolving problems faced by applicants in the development review processes.	0	1	4	13	9	0
	4%		15%	81%		0%
27. I receive sufficient ongoing training to maintain and improve my skills and fulfill my responsibilities in the development review process.	3	3	6	8	7	0
	22%		22%	56%		0%
28. Most of the time, the information submitted by permit applicants is complete and adequate to allow prompt action on an application.	4	8	8	5	2	0
	44%		30%	26%		0%
29. The City of Lawrence's codes, regulations and development standards do not present unreasonable or unnecessary obstacles to development.	1	3	14	6	3	0
	15%		52%	33%		0%

ATTACHMENT B
RESULTS OF COMPARATIVE SURVEY

Results of the Comparative Survey

	Lawrence, KS	Columbia, MO	Overland Park, KS	Ames, IA	Lincoln, NE	Lenexa, KS	College Station, TX
Number of Building Inspections Performed	12,671	46,131	28,236	N/A	25,992	15,927	13,242
Number of Building Permits Issued	694	3,277	4,107	N/A	4,496	1,159	2484
Valuation of Building Permits Issued	\$131,265,191	N/A	\$464,624,807	N/A	\$481,836,169	\$182,485,707	\$163,523,566
Number of Commercial Plan Reviews	232	570	1968	N/A	4650	248	66
Number of Residential Plan Reviews Performed	354	0	919	N/A	9058	501	627
Number of Site Plan Reviews Performed	101	2660		44	135	39	36
Number of Preliminary Plats Reviewed	28	UNK	36	4	19	8	22
Number of Final Plats Reviewed	46	UNK	77	9	153	39	46
Number of Development Plans Reviewed	28	N/A	135	Development plan=Site Plan	15 (PUD)	47	33
Number of Public Improvement Plans Reviewed		N/A			1	47	3
Number of Rezoning Processed	83	N/A	29	6	58	15	20
Number of Zoning Variances Processed	6	N/A	10	0	14	0	

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Development Review Function/ Building Department (#of FTEs)	Lawrence	Columbia, MO	Overland Park, KS	Ames, IA	Lincoln, NE	Lenexa, KS	College Station, TX
Commercial Building Plan Review	5 (includes Inspectors)	2	8	NA	NA	1	1
Residential Building Plan Review	5 (includes Inspectors)	0	8 *(same 8)	NA	NA	1	1
Site Plan Reviews	1	3	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Commercial Inspections	4	6	8	NA	NA	4 (total inspectors)	4
Residential Inspections	4	9	8 *(same 8)	NA	NA	4 (total inspectors)	4
Development Review Engineering	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
Engineering Construction Inspection	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Zoning Enforcement	NA	9	NA	NA	NA	1	4
Administration	3		8 & 3	NA	NA	1	4
TOTAL FTE's	7	12	27	NA	18	8	14

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Question	Lawrence	Columbia, MO	Overland Park, KS	Ames, IA	Lincoln, NE	Lenexa, KS	College Station, TX
Does your Department provide residential plan checks?	Yes	No	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes.
What proportion (%) of building permit plan checks are performed by consultants?	None	None	None		5%	None	None.
To which departments are copies of building permit plans routed for review and comment following submission?	Fire, Neighborhood Resources	Fire Marshal	Planning, Development Fire		Public Works, Planning, Health, NRD, NRC, Fire	Planning, Building, Engineering, Fire	Fire, Planning, Electrical, Water, Wastewater.
How long do these departments have to return comments to the Building Department?	5 days for residential, 10 for commercial	10 work days	15 days for commercial and 2 days for residential		Commercial 10 working days	20 days	5 days.
Does your department perform structural plan checks? If so, for what types of permits.	Yes, commercial and multi-family	Yes. Commercial and multi family.	Yes, single family homes		Yes, commercial	Yes. Decks, room additions, new buildings	Yes.
Do you require construction-level drawings for site plan reviews?	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes- for new buildings; preferred for others	Yes.
Has your City adopted processing targets (turn around times) for building permit plan checks? If so, could you please attach a copy of those targets for the following categories:	Yes, informal	No	Yes.		Yes	Yes.	Yes
Single Family Residential	5 business days		5 days.		5 days	5-7 days.	7 days

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Question	Lawrence	Columbia, MO	Overland Park, KS	Ames, IA	Lincoln, NE	Lenexa, KS	College Station, TX
Multi-Family Residential	10 business days		15 days.		10 days	20 days	14 days
Apartment Complexes	10 business days		15 days.		10 days	20 days	14 days
Small Commercial	10 business days		48 hours.		10 days	10 days	14 days
Large Commercial	10 business days		15 days.		10 days	20 days	14 days
Does your Department provide over-the-counter building permit plan checks? If yes, for what types of permits?	Yes, simple trade permits	No	Yes, residential remodels, additions, decks, alterations.		Yes, decks, sheds, additions, small commercial, re-reviews.	Yes, decks; basement finish; residential additions; accessory structures	Yes. Moving Permits, tent permits.
What is the estimated proportion (%) of building permit plan checks that are performed over-the-counter?	20%	0%	50%		40%	40%	10%.
Does your Department utilize combination inspectors?	Yes	Yes	Yes		No	Yes	Yes.
Do you utilize specialist inspectors (electrical inspectors, plumbing/mechanical inspectors, etc.)? If so, what types of inspections are these inspectors utilized for (such as commercial electrical)?	Yes, commercial -all	No	No		Yes, All Plumbing, mechanical, Electrical, Bldg and Fire	No	No, combination inspectors.
Do you utilize combination plan checkers (i.e., one plan checker for structural, electrical, plumbing, etc.)?	No	Yes	No		No	Yes	No.

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Question	Lawrence	Columbia, MO	Overland Park, KS	Ames, IA	Lincoln, NE	Lenexa, KS	College Station, TX
What percentage of inspection requests are inspected the next working day?	Unknown	90%	98%		All within 24 hours if requested.	100%, unless actually specify a later day	100%, 4 hour turnaround.
What ICC certifications do you require for your building inspectors? What ICC certifications are required for plan checkers?	Currently require one ICC certification within 6-18 months (electrical, building, plumbing, mechanical) Building Plans Examiner and/or an Inspector Certification	None	Inspector I Minimum college degree and/or residential certification. Inspector II - same as above + commercial certification. Senior Inspector - same as II + Master Code Professional Plans Examiner - Same		ICC Bldg Certification. ICC Plan Review Certification	BI 1: ICBO Cert as building inspector or degree or 4 yrs experience. BI 2: ICBO Cert as building inspector plus degree or experience. BI 3: ICBO Cert as building, electrical, plumbing and mechanical inspectors. Plans analyst: must obtain ICC certification as plans examiner within 18 mo of hiring. Senior plans analyst: must be Kansas licensed architect or eng. or ICC certified Master Code Official	None

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Question	Lawrence	Columbia, MO	Overland Park, KS	Ames, IA	Lincoln, NE	Lenexa, KS	College Station, TX
Can building permits be applied for and issued electronically? If so, what types?	No	No	Yes, permits that do not require plans AC permits, etc..		Not yet.	Yes, all types	No.
Do you use a case manager concept for the processing of building permits? If so, what is the position title and in which departments is it located?	Inspectors and Plans Examiner/Inspection Supervisor all manage permits	No	Yes (not always)		Yes, permit coordinators are the counter plan reviewers-commercial projects use this concept. Residential projects have assigned reviewers.		
Do you provide building inspection and plan checking services Monday through Friday?	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes		
Do you charge a building permit plan check fee? If so, what is the fee?	No, part of permit fee. However, charge for additional plan review.	Yes. 50% of permit fee.	Yes. 50% of permit fee.		Yes See schedule		
How are your building permit plan check fees and inspection fees set? Can we get a copy of your plan check and inspection fees?	Based on value of construction.	Plan check fee- 50% of permit. No inspection fee charged.	Residential flat fee - \$100. Commercial fee - 15c/square ft.		By valuation see schedule.		
Has your City adopted processing targets (turn around times) for administrative and discretionary planning	Generally target 14 calendar days for initial review of permits. Processing	No	The goal is set so that targets are achieved 90% of the	Yes	Admin Approvals= 30 days plus 14 day appeal. Change of		

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Question	Lawrence	Columbia, MO	Overland Park, KS	Ames, IA	Lincoln, NE	Lenexa, KS	College Station, TX
permits (site plans, zoning, rezoning, plats, etc.)? if so, please describe the processing target or attach a copy of these targets.	targets are also determined by Commission meeting dates.		time. They are able to achieve them 95% of the time.		Zone=52 days (effective 15 days later). Special Permits= 27 days (plus 14 day appeal). Use Permits=27 days (plus 14 day appeal).		
Do you utilize a computer system to track plan review activities and building permits? If so, what systems are you currently utilizing? Are review comments from other departments entered directly into this system?	Yes, HTE. Review comments are entered directly into system.	Yes. HTE. Review comments are not on HTE.	Tidemark. Review comments are handled separately.	Yes. Microsoft Access Application. No other departments. No other departments do not access this system directly.	Yes, Accela Permit Plus. Yes other department reviews are entered and reviewed on Permit Plus.		
Where is Zoning Enforcement organizationally located in your organization (Building Department, Planning Department)	Building and Safety Department (Neighborhood Resources)			Combination of Building and Planning. No Code Enforcement Officer.	Building and Safety Department.		
What types of Planning and Zoning permits can be approved administratively?	Lots splits, simple division of lots, site plans, minor alterations.			Permitted Home Occupations and Certificate of Appropriateness	Minor amendments to special permits, dev. Plan, all final plats, waivers to design standards (separate from zoning)		

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Question	Lawrence	Columbia, MO	Overland Park, KS	Ames, IA	Lincoln, NE	Lenexa, KS	College Station, TX
What departments and how many individuals are routed copies of site plans (preliminary and final) to review and make comments? (Public Works Engineering, Stormwater, Utilities, Fire, etc.)	Neighborhood Resources, Utilities, Public Works, Parks, Fire, Police, Telephone, Sanitation			Inspections, Fire Inspector, Public Works, Electric Administration, Water Plan, Planning and Housing others as needed.	10 dept/agencies, 18 individuals		
How long do these departments have to return comments to the Planning Department?	Typically 10 working days			1 day for preliminary comments	10 days		
What departments and how many individuals are routed copies of plats (preliminary and final) to review and make comments? (i.e. – Public Works Engineering, Stormwater, Utilities, Fire, etc.	Neighborhood Resources, Utilities, Public Works, Parks, Fire, Police, Telephone, Sanitation			Inspections, Fire Inspector, Public Works, Electric Administration, Water Plant, Planning and Housing, others as needed.	Prel. Plats;10 Depts/agencies, 18 Individuals. Final Plats:8 Depts./agencies, 10		
How long do these departments have to return comments to the Planning Department?	Typically 10 working days			One week.	10 days		

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Question	Lawrence	Columbia, MO	Overland Park, KS	Ames, IA	Lincoln, NE	Lenexa, KS	College Station, TX
What department and how many individuals are routed copies of development plans to review and make comments? (i.e.- Public Works Engineering, Stormwater, Utilities, Fire, etc.)	Neighborhood Resources, Utilities, Public Works, Parks, Fire, Police, Telephone, Sanitation			Inspections, Fire Inspector, Public Works, Electric Administration, Water Plant, Planning and Housing, others as needed.	10 dept/agencies, 18 individuals		
How long do these departments have to return comments to the Planning Department?	Typically 10 working days			One day for preliminary comments.	10 days		
What department and how many individuals are routed copies of rezoning requests to review and make comments? (i.e.- Public Works Engineering, Stormwater, Utilities, Fire, etc.)	Neighborhood Resources, Utilities, Public Works, Parks, Fire, Police, Telephone, Sanitation			Inspections, Fire Inspector, Public Works, Electric Administration, Water Plant, Planning and Housing, others as needed.	8 depts./agencies 10 individuals		
How long do these departments have to return comments to the Planning Department?	Typically 10 working days			One day for preliminary comments on the pre-application	10 days		

CITY OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS
Management Study of Development Review Process

Question	Lawrence	Columbia, MO	Overland Park, KS	Ames, IA	Lincoln, NE	Lenexa, KS	College Station, TX
				meeting.			
Are specialty planners (long range planners) involved in the development review process in an manner? For example, do they serve as Planners of the Day, handle counter work as backup staff, etc.	Specialty Planners share Planner of the Day responsibilities.			Yes, each planner does cover lunch hour once a week. We also have a common staff meeting once a week in which we discuss current/long range/GIS projects.	One long range planner participates in Dev. Review staff reviews and takes occasional cases. One long range planner handles long range and Dev. Review cases in the "county."		