

# Department of Planning and Zoning

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LOB #74:

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE, APPLICATIONS INTAKE AND ACCEPTANCE**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this LOB is to provide direct personal customer service to any person who calls or visits the Zoning Evaluation Division. Typical customers include the public seeking general zoning or specific zoning application information, applicants seeking appointments with planners to discuss pending or future cases in addition to applicants who have filed zoning applications seeking case status information on meeting the minimum submission requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

### **Description**

This LOB consists of administrative staff who serve as the first point of contact to callers and visitors to the Division, staff who maintain the zoning case files both electronic and hard copy versions, staff who process Division correspondence, and staff who review all submitted zoning applications to determine if the minimum submission requirements of the Zoning Ordinance are satisfied.

Staff at the front counter also provide guidance to individuals who are unsure of what agency/division to contact. In addition, staff schedules pre-application meetings for customers who wish to discuss the viability of rezoning proposals prior to submitting a completed application, including payment of fees. Staff also conducts preliminary research on properties for use in pre-application meetings.

### **Benefits**

This LOB provides customers with immediate contact with a planner or other knowledgeable staff to answer general questions. Based upon the nature of the customer inquiry, this line of business serves to re-route the customer to the appropriate land development agency or division. When more in-depth research is needed to respond to a customer inquiry, staff will refer the customer to the planner of the day or initiate the appropriate procedures to request a pre-application meeting with a senior staff person. When an applicant has submitted a zoning application, multiple staff contacts are provided to assist the applicant understand the nature of minimum zoning application submission requirements and eliminate application deficiencies.

### **Mandates**

None of the components of this LOB are mandated. However, there is a zoning ordinance compliance component to the line of business in that the minimum zoning application submission requirements are stipulated by the Zoning Ordinance. Zoning Applications are not accepted for review and scheduled for public hearing until it is determined that the application satisfies the minimum requirements.

### **Trends and Challenges**

The increased use of technology is becoming more prevalent in this LOB, particularly the self-service aspects of new and improved land development databases and application forms. Increasingly more land use information is becoming available to the public and applicants via the County website. While this trend has resulted in a reduction in visits to the office to obtain general information, an increase in the number of telephone inquiries regarding where to find information and forms on the website is evident. As the County land development submission process moves forward with electronic submission and review of zoning applications, the organization and maintenance of the County website and other information

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technology resources will become more critical to the County staff users, the public and the development community. It will also require direct assistance to applicants less familiar with the technology involved.

## Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
<b>LOB #74: Customer Service, Applications Intake and Acceptance</b>			
<b>FUNDING</b>			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$812,557	\$772,554	\$892,160
Operating Expenses	76,431	61,804	61,623
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$888,988</b>	<b>\$834,358</b>	<b>\$953,783</b>
General Fund Revenue	\$290,087	\$333,588	\$301,268
<b>Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund</b>	<b>\$598,901</b>	<b>\$500,770</b>	<b>\$652,515</b>
<b>POSITIONS</b>			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	12 / 12	12 / 12	12 / 12
<b>Total Positions</b>	<b>12 / 12</b>	<b>12 / 12</b>	<b>12 / 12</b>

## Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Average number of phone calls per month to the main phone line for the Division	NA	NA	NA	1,000	1,000
Average number of visitors per day	NA	NA	7.5	8	8
Number of applications received per year	283	535	327	280	280

Three metrics are identified for DPZ Customer Support, Applications Intake and Acceptance:

- 1. Average number of phone calls per month to the main phone line for the Division**  
 This new metric is an indicator of the volume of inquiries from all customers and includes those requests that can be resolved over the phone through immediate response, website assistance and/or redirection to appropriate staff.
- 2. Average number of visitors per day**  
 This metric is an indicator of the number of walk-in customers seeking zoning application information generally without a scheduled appointment. Applicant teams and other customers with an appointment to meet with a planner are generally excluded from this metric.
- 3. Number of applications received per year**  
 This metric indicates the number of zoning applications reviewed per year for compliance with the submission requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.