



County of Fairfax, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 17, 2018
TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Joseph M. Mondoro, Chief Financial Officer
SUBJECT: Responses to BOS Budget Questions – Package

Attached for your review is Package 7 of responses to Board questions on the FY 2019 budget. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. The following responses are included in this package:

Question Number	Question	Supervisor	Pages
38	Please provide metrics on the improvement in the permitting process since the booster shot program was approved in 2014? How many positions have been added since approving this program and what have the results been to date?	Herrity	112-114
39	What development process changes have been made? What requirements of industry have been added or removed? How have we improved time to market?	Herrity	115-125
40	Please provide an update to the number of PIO's in each department and the resulting labor costs.	Herrity	126-128

It should be noted, the estimated time to compile this response was 77 hours. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Attachment

cc: Bryan J. Hill, County Executive
Tisha Deeghan, Deputy County Executive
David J. Molchany, Deputy County Executive
David M. Rohrer, Deputy County Executive
Robert A. Stalzer, Deputy County Executive

Response to Questions on the FY 2019 Budget

Request By: Supervisor Herrity

Question: Please provide metrics on the improvement in the permitting process since the booster shot program was approved in 2014? How many positions have been added since approving this program and what have the results been to date?

Response:

With support from industry, the Booster Shot was approved on December 2, 2014 and raised development-related fees (exclusive of zoning fees) to provide additional resources to bring site and building plan review queues and timelines back in line with expectations. Prior to the Booster Shot, review timelines were increasing as the volume of permit applications outstripped the existing capacity to manage the workload in a timely manner. As part of the Booster Shot, 28/28.0 FTE positions were created in FY 2015. More specifically:

Agency	Positions/FTE
Land Development Services (LDS)	15/15.0
Fire and Rescue Department	5/5.0
Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ)	3/3.0
Department of Transportation	2/2.0
Health Department	1/1.0
Stormwater Services	1/1.0
Office of Capital Facilities	1/1.0
TOTAL	28/28.0

It should be noted that review times are also affected by other factors, including the complexity and quality of applications submitted. Recent demand for infill and mixed use development has increased the complexity significantly. The customer service-oriented approach emphasized under Fairfax First has resulted in a higher level of collaboration with industry which has improved the quality of applications entering the review process, thereby having a positive impact on review times.

As shown in the following tables, despite significant increases in workload between FY 2012 and FY 2015, commercial building plan review and site plan submission review times improved. However, the increased work volume did result in over 29,000 “holdover” first inspections that could not be completed as requested. With the Booster Shot, review times have continued to improve and are now within the targeted timeframes. Additionally, increased review capacity has resulted in a significant reduction of 60 percent in holdover inspections despite the sustained trend of increased work volume.

LDS Work Volume

	Pre-Booster Shot			Post-Booster Shot	
	FY 2012	FY 2015	% Change	FY 2017	% Change from FY 2015
Infill Lot Grading Plans Submitted	704	950	35%	1,201	26%
Major Site Plan Reviews Completed	168	194	15%	200	3%
Total Building Permits (New)	1,123	1,270	13%	1,400	10%
Total Building Permits (Alteration)	12,639	13,764	9%	14,094	2%
Total Site/Building/Trade Inspections	185,753	204,115	10%	216,750	6%

Selected LDS Process Times & Metrics

	Pre-Booster Shot			Post Booster Shot		
	FY 2012	FY 2015	% Change	FY 2017	% Change from FY 2015	GOAL
Average # of Days for LDS Review of:						
1 st New Commercial Building Plan	49	45	-8%	39	-13%	40
1 st Site Plan	68	59	-13%	43	-27%	45
Holdover Building/Trade Inspections	NA	29,130	NA	11,766	-60%	1,000

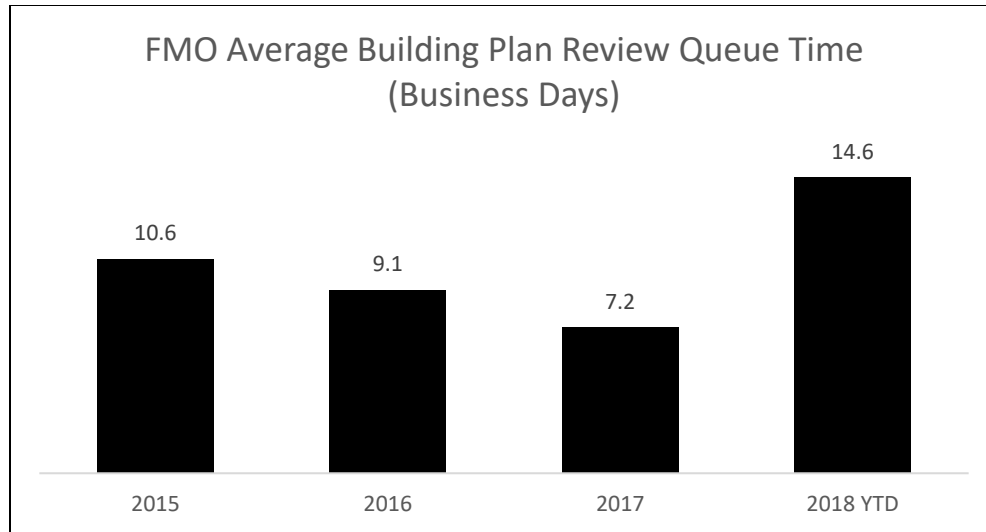
With Booster Shot resources, DPZ was able to dedicate support to facilitate the transition between the entitlement stages of the process to the site review stage. This additional capacity has helped to address zoning compliance, proffers and development conditions concerns and improve review and approval timelines. As a result, site plan-related proffer questions are now addressed concurrently with the site plan review to reduce and eliminate delays in site plan approval.

In the Fire Marshal's Office (FMO), the plan review workload increased 48 percent between FY 2009 and FY 2015 and continued to sustain this high work volume after the Booster Shot was implemented.

The FMO tracks queue times for several different plan types to measure of the office's ability to meet industry demand, including reviews of architectural plans for new construction which some of the positions created with the Booster Shot support. The goal queue time for the architectural plan reviews is less than 10 business days. The additional capacity created by the Booster Shot helped the FMO meet this goal in FY 2016 and FY 2017; however, growth in the demand for plan reviews has outstripped available capacity and, through March 2018, queue times have more than doubled to 14.6 business days and are now exceeding the less than 10 business day goal.

FMO Plan Review Workload

	Pre-Booster Shot				Post Booster Shot	
	FY 2009	FY 2012	FY 2015	% Change FY 2009 to FY 2015	FY 2018 (estimate)	% Change from FY 2015
Plans Reviewed	7,432	8,763	11,004	48%	11,700	6%



The Booster Shot also created additional Fire Inspector capacity to support additional witnessed testing of fire protection systems, with the goal of providing inspections in less than 5 business days. This measure was not tracked before the implementation of the Booster Shot, but anecdotally, wait times of more than 21 business days were occurring regularly. The FMO now tracks three types of inspections – hydrostatic testing of fire sprinkler systems, fire alarm inspections, and visual inspection of fire sprinkler systems – since the time required to complete each type of inspection is different. Beginning in 2018, these wait times are now being tracked and have been cut in half compared to the Pre-Booster Shot period.

Fire Inspection Wait Times

Time Period	Category	Wait Time (Days)
Pre-Booster Shot	Anecdotal Experiences	21+
Current Average Wait Times (January-March 2018)	Fire Alarm Inspection	11.6
	Hydrostatic Testing	11.1
	Visual Inspection	6.6

Overall, the Booster Shot funding and the associated staffing resulted in improved review times initially. However, increased volume and complexity is causing review times to edge up. It should be noted, though, that in addition to the Booster Shot, an extensive effort to improve the development review process is underway. Many changes have been implemented and others are under development which will contribute to improved review times and customer outcomes.

Response to Questions on the FY 2019 Budget

Request By: Supervisor Herrity

Question: What development process changes have been made? What requirements of industry have been added or removed? How have we improved time to market?

Response:

While the development process is complex with many steps and stakeholders, improving and minimizing the time to market is a shared goal. As a result, the Booster Shot and Fairfax First reflect the collaborative efforts between industry, outside review agencies, and the various land development agencies in Fairfax County to address this goal. The Booster Shot, implemented in FY 2015 and supported by industry, increased development fees to facilitate improvements in processing and review times through staff augmentation (see Question #38 for more details). Fairfax First, which began in FY 2016, is an ongoing initiative to review all development processes, as well as organizational factors, and to identify areas for improvement and modernization.

Improving the land development process is iterative. Significant and broad-based efforts to identify and implement improvements, refine development process metrics, and communicate changes to customers are underway and staff continue to identify further improvements. To date, more than 80 enhancements have been implemented. These changes are summarized in the table and narrative that follows. Where available, the quantifiable benefits of the changes are identified (see shaded sections of the detailed narrative). It should be noted, however, that many of these modifications, such as those that support a positive shift in organizational culture through emphasizing customer service and improving communication with industry, are difficult to quantify discretely. Over time, these adaptations, along with those changes that are more measurable, will result in a more consistent, more predictable and more timely development process in Fairfax County.

It is important to recognize that individual development projects vary significantly in size and complexity, and applications and reviews must address the unique characteristics of each project. These factors all impact the time to market. Time to market is also affected by external factors such as financing and market position. Industry and outside review agencies are continuing to work on these and other barriers that often result in extended timelines. In addition to helping to identify opportunities for improving the development review process, the continuing emphasis on collaboration under Fairfax First promotes a better understanding of the development review process among industry stakeholders, resulting in better applications.

Recognizing these factors, measures like the average number of days to complete the first review of building plan submissions, and queue times for plan reviews and inspections by the Fire Marshal's Office are used as the County's performance measure and these measures show a key part of the overall story – please see the response to Question #38 for data on these measures.

Further discussion of land development metrics and selected targets is planned for the upcoming meeting of the Economic Advisory Commission's Implementation Committee, scheduled for June 8, 2018.

Development Process Changes - Summary

Category	Description	Selected Examples
Process Improvements	Changes to business practices designed to improve customer service, increase agility and streamline reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ zMod ▪ Project Management Program ▪ Customer Information Center ▪ Residential Plan Review ▪ Parking Reduction Improvements ▪ Single Issue Proffered Condition Amendment process ▪ Cell Equipment Review Waiver
Service Realignments	Improvements achieved by the reorganization of staff and better coordination between business areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joint Training Academy ▪ Super Tech Program ▪ Inspections Merger ▪ Building - Fire Review Coordination ▪ Improved Proffer and Development Condition Support for Site Plan Reviews
Plan Quality Improvement Efforts	Partnership with industry designed to promote submittals that meet reviewable standards to ensure quality plans can advance through the review process in a predictable, timely manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Submission Triage ▪ One Plan Set ▪ Coversheet ▪ Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR) Reporting
Education and Information Sharing	Strategies to improve customer access to information and internal coordination for consistent service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building Official's Blog ▪ Plan Review Comment Language ▪ Development Process Advisory Council ▪ Restaurant Start-Up Guide
Technology Improvements	Tools and solutions that provide platforms for collaboration, improve access to the development process or automate steps to reduce cycle times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Electronic Plan Review ▪ Planning and Land Use System (PLUS) ▪ Record Digitization ▪ Electronic Proffer Compliance Tracking

Development Process Changes - Details

Process Improvements

The following changes to business practices are being implemented to improve customer service, increase agility, and streamline reviews.

- **Cell Equipment Review Waiver** – With the owner's acknowledgement and a Virginia-licensed registered design professional certification, the plan review for new cell equipment on an existing monopole or tower can be waived – requiring only a permit (without a plan review).

Permit application time can be reduced from 30 days to hours.

- **Commercial Walk-Thru** - The goal of the Commercial Walk-Thru Program is to review incidental commercial alterations, such as systems furniture, kiosks, and signs, while the customer waits rather than requiring the customer to make one trip to drop off the submission and a second trip after the review is complete. The program has had a soft launch to modest success, and when fully implemented it is expected to be added to and merged with Residential Walk-Thru staff to provide greater depth. This program currently applies to three types of projects.

Review times have been reduced by an average of 3 days

- **Critical Structures Meeting Waiver** – Projects identified by the building code as requiring special inspections compel the building owner to hire a private company with the expertise necessary to conduct those inspections. Critical structures meetings assemble County staff, structural designer contractor, and the inspection company for each identified project. With the number of projects requiring special inspections soaring, a backlog of weeks for meetings resulted in delayed projects. A standard operating procedure has been developed to permit projects with incidental special inspections to have their critical structures meetings waived.

The meeting backlog has been eliminated; projects are no longer delayed.

- **Expedited Plan Review** – The expedited plan review program was first implemented in 1997 and since then, the nature of construction has changed; however the program had remained largely unchanged affecting the more than 500 plans submitted annually for expedited review. Beginning in early 2017, a group of stakeholders was convened to determine how the expedited review program should evolve to meet the needs of today's construction. Moving forward, the program will benefit from a dedicated staff member assigned to implement the group's final recommendations. One such recommendation limits the County review to solely an administrative review for tenant improvement plans certified by seasoned peer reviewers.

The queue time for peer-reviewed tenant improvement plans was reduced from 3 weeks to 4 days.

- **Implementation of a Customer Information Center** – Serves as a first line of information for customers with two Planners-of-the-Day and one Engineer-of-the-Day available to assist walk-in and call-in customers. Enables the provision of quick answers to the most common inquiries and facilitates faster, easier navigation of the planning and development process. While not directly a part of the development process flow, it saves valuable time to applicants and reviewing staff.
- **HVAC Certifications** – Reviews to certify new residential HVAC systems have been simplified. Certifications are also completed with online submissions, entirely saving customers the trip to the Herrity Building.

HVAC Certification review times have been reduced from three weeks to a matter of minutes.

- **Mall Kiosk Review Waiver** – Kiosks in existing malls that are 300 square feet or less, do not have a roof, and do not have a hard-wired power source can be issued a permit without a plan review process (County plan review is waived).

Permit application time can be reduced from 30 days to less than an hour.

- **Parking Reduction Improvements** – Land Development Services (LDS) led a multi-agency effort to clarify, streamline and modernize development parking obligations. The final results included streamlined processes between Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) and LDZ, codifying routine parking reductions and improved website information. Consequently, many applicants can achieve their specific project needs without working through a parking reduction process at all.

Many applicants can achieve project needs without the multi-month parking reduction process.

- **Phased Occupancy** - A partnership between LDS, the Fire Marshal's Office, and industry representatives has developed a model that allows developers to bring completed stages to market while

construction is ongoing, provided critical safety requirements are met and construction areas are buffered from occupied areas. Each phase must still satisfy occupancy requirements to be brought to market, so it should be noted that this can result in several piecemeal inspections rather than a single comprehensive inspection as prescribed by the traditional occupancy model. However, this added inspection burden pales in comparison with bringing high value portions of a project to market months (and sometimes many months) ahead of the entirety of the project.

Completed building floors or sections can be brought online months earlier.

- **Process Mapping** – Approximately 50 development processes have been mapped to set a baseline for process improvements, to provide a direct input into PLUS Development and to provide tools that can communicate processes to industry. In addition, this work provides a foundation for major future improvement.
- **Project Management Program** – For select projects, this program assigns a project manager to support a development application through the review process. Focused on delivering a high level of customer service, this program facilitates mutual cooperation, resulting in a proactive, cohesive, predictable and efficient development process for all stakeholders. One key item of this program is the creation of a baseline schedule that includes all facets of the development process. Within this framework, all stakeholders are held accountable. This effort has yielded results that reflect faster than average plan review times, which positively impacts time to market. The lessons learned from these specific project experiences efforts are being leveraged to decrease timelines and enhance customer service across LDS.

Projects in this program have experienced site review time savings from 1 to 3 months.

- **Project Management (Building Division)** - As part of a broader customer-centric, project management focus, four engineering positions in Building Plan Review have been deployed to work in unison with Operations Division project managers to assist customers in the plan review and inspections portion of the project.

As of April 10, 2018, these project managers are currently supporting 26 projects.

- **Residential Plan Review** - In 2015, residential plan review was separated into its own organizational group. The new group worked heavily with residential inspections to verify the exact information that was necessary to verify code compliance on the plans versus in the field. Anything that could be verified in the field was not required to be included on the plans.

Residential plan review times have been reduced from 18 days to 6 days.

- **Single Issue Proffered Condition Amendment (PCA)** – DPZ has established a special process for applications that propose a single amendment issue, such as a change in building mass or a change in a specific proffer or development condition.

Single Issue PCAs can be completed in 90 days instead of 6 months for an average PCA.

- **Zoning Ordinance Modernization (zMOD)** – A major focus of this project is revising and streamlining ordinance definitions and requirements to facilitate review of common applications and to create flexibility to respond to an evolving development environment. The use of plain language will also help to improve understanding of the Ordinance. The Board of Supervisors has adopted several

amendments resulting from the zMOD work. The first zMOD amendment, “Minor Modifications to Approved Zonings,” was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on November 21, 2017. This amendment added flexibility to the minor modification process to expand the circumstances in which minor changes to proffers and development conditions can be approved administratively by staff based upon a determination of substantial conformance. The amendment added flexibility in five areas: building height, gross floor area, signage, minor building additions and building setbacks. The minor modification process is an alternative to the need to file a formal amendment application to an approved zoning which requires a public hearing before the Planning Commission and the Board. The amendment also added flexibility and streamlined the development process by creating a new avenue for the Board of Supervisors to act on certain types of requests for “Minor Variations” to proffered conditions as Action Items at Board meetings.

As a result of zMOD, minor modifications typically take approximately 30 days to complete as opposed to the 6 to 8 months that it can take to process an amendment to an approved zoning. Minor Variations take approximately 60 days to complete, as compared to an average processing time of 6 months for a proffered condition amendment application.

Service Realignments

The following improvements have been implemented either through reorganization of staff or through better coordination between business areas.

- **Alternative Placement of Personnel** - Some fire department personnel who cannot meet the certification requirements of a firefighter due to on-the-job injuries are assigned to the Fire Marshall’s Office to use their skill set to augment inspection capacity.
- **Building Division Fast Track Team** – Fast Track plans are small, non-complex commercial tenant improvements in existing buildings. LDS Building Division (Building Division) has created a team dedicated reviewing these plans so that engineers can concentrate on complex new buildings with the goal of lowering the review time for both types of projects. In the past 10 years, the number of Fast Tracks have increased significantly from 12 per day to over 200.

Since January 2018, review times for Fast Track plans have been reduced by two days.

- **Building and Fire Review Coordination** - To reduce overlap between the fire and building review disciplines, LDS and the Fire Marshal’s Office (FMO) created a division of duties based on building code requirements. In addition, the Fast Track team was given permission to conduct fire reviews on behalf of the FMO, thus freeing FMO engineers to dedicate time to complex projects.
- **Customer Bill of Rights** - Staff across all development process agencies worked together to develop a customer bill of rights. Agency heads have reviewed this with staff and have posted it at all customer counters.
- **Culture Change** – Leaders across all development process agencies have sought to implement a customer-centric focus. A cross-agency working group developed and issued an employee survey based on the industry-standard Gallup 12-Question Poll. Data garnered from this exercise informed additional efforts including establishing a unified set of interagency values and the customer bill of rights.

- **Dedicated GIS Staffing** – A dedicated GIS position was established in LDS in the *FY 2017 Carryover Review*. This position is responsible for leading and organizing a GIS implementation plan for LDS, enhancing emergency response, and making GIS intrinsic to business operations.
- **Dedicated Parking Reduction Staffing** – In addition to minimizing the need for site-specific parking reductions through aforementioned process changes a dedicated parking reduction position was established in LDS in the *FY 2017 Carryover Review*. This position is responsible for processing site-specific parking reductions and liaising with DPZ and FCDOT to ensure that the parking reduction piece of the development review process does not become the stumbling block for applicants.
- **Implementation of Standard Operating Procedures** – All LDS operating procedures are documented to ensure accuracy, consistency and knowledge transfer. This work also supports succession planning, business planning and consistent process implementation. This knowledge-base is available to staff in an online intranet database searchable in a “Google-like” webpage. Every new LDS employee is trained on this at orientation.
- **Improved Proffer and Development Condition Compliance Support for Site Review** – The Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) created a new function that provides dedicated proffer and development condition response and analysis for Site Plan Reviews. Utilizing two positions established in association with the Booster Shot, this function replaces informal, weekly coordination with standard, daily support. Since this program was created, 720 proffer compliance questions have been addressed.

This function has resulted in an estimated 10 percent reduction in formal proffer interpretation requests. Formal responses can now be provided in less than 30 days concurrent with the site review, allowing site plan approvals to proceed without delays.

- **Improved Zoning Compliance Support for Site Review** – The Booster Shot supported the creation of a new function in DPZ that provides full-time zoning compliance support for the Site Review process in LDS. Since this function was established in 2015, 225 zoning ordinance questions have been addressed by this function.
- **Inspector Scheduling** - In order to provide customers with more predictable service, inspections are now scheduled based on available capacity. Prior to this change, hundreds of scheduled inspections were held-over to the next day, deepening a gap between customer expectation and the service delivered. With this strategy in place, nearly 100 percent of the 150,000 inspections LDS conducts are completed on the day requested.

Holdover inspections have been reduced to less than 3 percent.

- **Inspection Merger** - The commercial and residential inspections groups have been merged into one organization instead of two separate silos to best apply staffing resources as needs fluctuate. Staff from both of these areas share identical credentials, allowing for significant resource sharing.

Holdover inspections have been reduced to less than 3 percent

- **Joint Training Academy (JTA)** – Housed in LDS, the JTA offers cross-training to staff in all development review agencies. Within the next year, all personnel (approximately 650) with development-related assignments will have participated in the JTA. The training facilitates a shared clarity of mission and greater understanding of the County’s role in the development process and

economic development as well as important steps in the process. The work of the JTA also establishes more effective connections between agencies. The improved mutual understanding between development process agencies helps to improve customer experiences and reduce complaints.

Across the development process agencies, reduced complaints save an estimated 750 hours a year for staff and customers alike.

- **Joint Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)-LDS Roadway Inspections** – An improved process that allows developers to self-inspect and complete documentation prior to joint inspections by VDOT and LDS. This process reduces County inspection time, repair and replacement costs for developers, and reduces the time required for a street to be accepted into VDOT maintenance.
- **LDS-FMO Work Group** – This collaborative group meets monthly to develop and continually update a shared workplan to tackle shared issues. This work has fostered an improved culture that allows for more effective cooperation and reduced response times for urgent matters.
- **LDS-GIS Work Group** – This collaborative group meets monthly to develop more effective working relationships and address shared concerns. This group serves as a direct liaison between LDS and DIT GIS to allow LDS staff and customers more timely and detailed information.
- **LDS-Health Department Work Group** – This collaborative group meets monthly foster an improved culture that allows for more effective cooperation and reduced response times for urgent matters.
- **LDS-Maintenance and Stormwater Management Division (MSMD) Work Group** – Regular coordination meetings between LDS site review and inspection staff with MSMD stormwater maintenance staff have reduced future maintenance costs through cost-avoidance and improved design of improvements that become County maintenance responsibility. They developed and continually update a shared workplan to tackle shared issues.
- **LDS-Zoning Evaluation Division (ZED) Work Group** - This collaborative group meets monthly to develop more effective working relationships and address shared concerns. They developed and continually update a workplan to tackle shared issues. This work has fostered an improved culture that allows for more effective collaboration and reduced response times for urgent matters.
- **Site Code Academy** - Parallel to the existing Building Code Academy, the Site Academy will ensure that staff are properly trained on subject matter and provide consistency in service delivery. This will bring a full array of training for 100 site regulatory staff, allowing LDS to reduce staff time and training costs associated with third-party training. This addresses one of the key complaints of submitting engineers, ‘inconsistency of reviews across the site review engineers.’ By continually training together on the array of site review issues the division will attempt to resolve this inconsistency.
- **Special Study Process Improvement** – Staff capacity created by the Booster Shot has allowed DPZ to collaborate with LDS on a new process for noise studies and Environmental Assessments which allows for improved tracking and faster reviews.
- **Super Tech Program** – Employees have been trained to handle multiple stages of the plan review process for certain applications. As a result, customers have a one-stop-shop experience and do not have to visit multiple counters to obtain permits.

Plan Quality Improvement Efforts

The following strategies are being implemented to ensure that the quality of plan submittals meet a reviewable standard in order to focus reviewer time on quality plans that can be addressed more quickly.

- **Coversheet** - To ensure the minimum plan information is in one place and to combine several forms into one, a coversheet was created for all submissions of residential and commercial building plans. This cut down on the number of forms required to be completed and attached to the plans and allows for a speedier review by County staff.
- **LDS-Engineers and Surveyors Institute (ESI) Working Group** – This collaboration is focused on improving the quality of plan submissions and enhancing the effectiveness of ESI' role in the plan review and approval process. ESI Minimum Submission Review ensures that plan submissions meet minimum standards of completeness and quality. This group developed and continually update a shared workplan to tackle shared issues.

By preventing incomplete plans from entering the County review process, this partnership saves an estimated 3,000 hours of review time annually, the equivalent of 1.5 full-time employees.

- **Riser Diagrams** - With the proliferation of the electronic drafting tool Revit, isometric plumbing riser diagrams became the standard method of showing pipe sizes and fixture layouts. This incredibly difficult and often inaccurate depiction was costing building owners and staff added hours for every plumbing review for complex buildings. The County made two-dimensional layouts the minimum standard policy to enable engineers to identify code violations more easily and to ensure quicker reviews.
- **Submission Triage** - Plan intake staff now review submissions for completeness at the point of submission. If incomplete, the plans will not be accepted. This ensures engineering staff are reviewing plans for technical issues rather than administrative issues.
- **Single Plan Set** - To better align with records policy, electronic record storage, and the eventual conversion to electronic plan review, only one set of paper plan is required for submission for plan review.

Customers save time and a minimum of \$500 per project on printing and editing the plans for revisions.

- **Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR) Reporting** - In coordination with neighboring jurisdictions, professional engineers and architects in violation of DPOR regulations are being reported to state officials for investigation. County staff is subject to the same professional regulations and have the obligation to register complaints against licensed professionals. Whether or not reports result in disciplinary action, designers are on notice that submissions to the County must meet state laws and be of high quality. To date, seven applicants have been reported to DPOR by the region. This ensures that the community is protected from substandard engineering and quality submitters are held up in the development review process while reviewers expend an inordinate amount of time and effort of poor submittals.

Communication Improvements

The following communications platforms have been deployed to improve access to information and services for external customers and to strengthen internal communication between collaborating agencies to ensure consistent service delivery.

- **Building Official's Blog** - The [Building Official's Blog](#) was created to increase communication between the County and the development community in a less formal setting than other types of notifications. This unique weekly blog talks about trends in design, offers solutions to common errors and provides weekly updates on the goings-on of the Building Division.
- **Building Review and Site Review Metrics Online** - Consolidated building and site review timeline metrics are posted on County's website along with targets to provide easy estimation of review times to applicants.
- **Business Experience Program (BizEx)** – A Business Experience partner role has been created to provide a touch point for customers seeking process guidance while establishing or expanding a business in the County. BizEx serves as a front door to the regulatory process for entrepreneurs and assists customers with identifying the path to establishing their business. In addition, BizEx also gathers feedback on customer experiences and coordinates evaluation of the development process through surveys, one-on-one sessions, and small group meetings.
- **Code Talk** - Taking advantage of a new medium of communication, the Building Division, with the assistance of Channel 16, has created a podcast called ["Code Talk."](#) To date, three podcasts have been produced and each episode has a talk-show set-up where a code official is interviewed about a timely building code-related topic.
- **Developing News Newsletter** – Quarterly newsletter available at counters, via email list-serv, [online](#), and industry meetings to highlight significant improvements in the development review process. Changes and improvements to the development process have not been communicated historically and this publication is part of the strategic communication plan under Fairfax First to close communication gaps and reduce time wasted in the review process.
- **Development Process Advisory Council (DPAC)** – In 2017, a focus group was created to proactively get feedback and insight from industry professionals. DPAC is roughly composed roughly of 75 percent industry professionals and 25 percent County staff. The ongoing open dialogue provides a forum to resolve shared challenges collaboratively.
- **Letters to Industry and Technical Bulletins** - The Building Division has recently increased its use of [Technical Bulletins](#) to memorialize interpretations of code provisions and policy. Rather than alert the development community of a difference in interpretation during a failed plan review, notices are now accessible online and are advertised through an email list. DPZ's [Letters to Industry](#) provide similar announcements regarding development policy.
- **Plan Review Comment Language** - To reduce the adversarial relationship between County reviewers and designers, standard review comments were rewritten to improve the tone and eliminate abrasive text. In addition, staff was provided with two training sessions on how to better write their own "free form" comments using the same parameters as standard comments.
- **Restaurant Start Up Guide** – In order to reduce barriers to entrepreneurship and small business creation, LDS, DPZ, the Health Department, Fire and Rescue, the Department of Tax Administration and the County Executive's Office collaborated to publish an overview of the steps a prospective business owner needs to take to establish a restaurant in Fairfax County and the associated County resources. This resource is available [online](#).

Technology Improvements

The following tools and solutions are being implemented to provide platforms for collaboration, improve access to the development process or automate steps to reduce cycle times.

- **DriveCam** - LDS drives 675,000 miles annually in carrying out inspection duties across the 400 square mile county. In an effort to improve driver behavior for those on the road and reduce the county's risk LDS implemented a DriveCam program for its entire fleet.
- **Electronic Proffer Compliance Tracking** – LDS has developed a new proffer compliance form in concert with DPZ. This proffer compliance form was published electronically on July 2017 and now all projects must comply with this enhanced tracking system managed in LDS.
- **Elevator/Escalator Certification Online** – The certificates required for every elevator and escalator within the County are issued by the Building Official and are now accessible for immediate download via the County web site once the County has issued the certification. This eliminates the time associated with mailing documents and the inconvenience of lost documentation. With over 6,000 elevators and escalators in Fairfax County requiring at least one new certificate annually, this solution helps a significant number of customers.
- **Inspector Smartphones** – All inspectors have been issued smartphones. This upgrade created a unified platform to deploy navigational tools tied to FIDO; access to e-mail and opportunities to use photographic/video evidence for self-inspections. By improving access to these tools in the field, LDS has been able to eliminate 1 inspection round for minor building inspection failures per day.

With the improved access to these tools in the field, LDS has been able to eliminate 1 inspection round for minor building inspection failures per day.

- **Online Form Submission** – With the introduction of new technology available online, forms that were once required to be printed and then completed by hand can now be filled out online and sent directly to the county electronically. This has enabled agencies to shift resources from administrative tasks to technical reviews. Thus far, three forms have been converted to a fillable digital format and five more forms are planned for conversion.
- **Planning and Land Use System (PLUS)** – Development of a new, unified permitting and inspection system is underway. PLUS will consolidate the review and inspection information that is currently managed in several stand-alone legacy systems into a software platform shared across all planning and development functions. With the new digital access and shared documentation that PLUS supports, submissions can be made electronically and shared between staff for concurrent review. In addition, the PLUS project will deliver a customer service portal for constituents and industry partners with more real time status and transparency about permit applications and land use transactions. Other significant benefits to citizens and staff include GIS integration, modernized mobility platforms for customers and staff, integration with e-Plans, decreased processing cycles, opportunities for business transformation, a scalable and flexible configuration to support evolving business needs, future improvements, and delivery of improved metrics and reporting capabilities.
- **QLess System** – A new online, app-based system has been implemented so customers are now able to get in line at the permit application center virtually, thereby reducing in-person wait times.
- **Records Digitization** - Beginning in 2015, ongoing, concerted efforts to archive records and convert to electronic archives to allow for quicker responses to customer inquiries, including Freedom of

Information Act (FOIA) requests, and reducing the space required to retain records in the Herrity Building. Since then, thousands of backlogged plans have been boxed and shipped to the county warehouse. Starting in early 2017, records for all existing active projects are now scanned and stored on servers rather than boxed. The enormity of this project is unrivaled in the Building Division and aligns efforts to the conversion to electronic plan review. To date, over 3,000 boxes of plans have been archived and over 500,000 plan sheets have been scanned.

- **Unified Development Process Website** – An online one-stop-shop that will replace the current separated, agency-based web experience is under development. A new, aggregated news page will consolidate all the news (process improvements, code changes, proposed zoning changes) coming out of separate agencies.

Response to Questions on the FY 2019 Budget

Request By: Supervisor Herrity

Question: Please provide an update to the number of PIO's in each department and the resulting labor costs.

Response:

Attached is a list of positions whose functions are primarily associated with internal/external communications, emergency communications, public information management, public affairs, internal/external relations, web content management, social media management, any communication policy development, and serving in any capacity as a point of contact for any media. Salaries are not listed for each individual, but the midpoint for the positions are identified in the table.

Multiple position classifications are represented; however, most are Information Officer and Communications Specialist positions. Based on a study conducted in January 2007, the two classifications were created and can be distinguished as follows:

1. Information Officers – These positions primarily perform traditional information officer work within the Office of Public Affairs (OPA), or for positions outside OPA, that primarily perform media relations and serve as the top media spokespersons for an agency.
2. Communication Specialists – Positions within this class primarily manage and implement communication programs to support the mission of the agency.

Position Title	Agency	Midpoint of Salary Range
Communications Specialist II	Community Services Board	\$76,221
Communications Specialist II	Community Services Board	\$76,221
Information Officer III	Community Services Board	\$87,767
Administrative Assistant III	Family Services	\$50,155
Administrative Assistant III	Family Services	\$50,155
Communications Specialist III	Family Services	\$87,767
Communications Specialist II	Family Services	\$76,221
Communications Specialist II	Family Services	\$76,221
Communications Specialist II	Family Services	\$76,221
Communications Specialist II	Family Services	\$76,221
Communications Specialist I	Family Services	\$66,164
Internet/Intranet Architect I	Family Services	\$76,221
Public Information Officer III	Family Services	\$87,767
Battalion Fire Chief	Fire and Rescue	\$118,446
Communications Specialist II	Fire and Rescue	\$76,221
Public Information Officer IV	Fire and Rescue	\$103,149
Public Information Officer III	Fire and Rescue	\$87,767
Communications Specialist II	Health Department	\$76,221
Communications Specialist II	Health Department	\$76,221
Management Analyst III	Health Department	\$87,767

Position Title	Agency	Midpoint of Salary Range
Public Safety Information Officer IV	Health Department	\$103,149
Information Officer III	Housing	\$87,767
Information Officer II	Housing	\$76,221
Communications Specialist II	Human Resources	\$76,221
Communications Specialist II	Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court	\$76,221
Information Officer III	Land Development	\$87,767
Communications Specialist III	Library	\$87,767
Communications Specialist I	Library	\$66,164
Communications Specialist II	McLean Community Center	\$76,221
Communications Specialist I	McLean Community Center	\$66,164
Graphic Artist III	McLean Community Center	\$60,213
Publications Assistant	Neighborhood and Community Services	\$52,434
Communications Specialist II	Office of Strategy Management for Human Services	\$76,221
Communications Specialist II	Park Authority	\$76,221
Communications Specialist I	Park Authority	\$66,164
Communications Specialist I	Park Authority	\$66,164
Communications Specialist I	Park Authority	\$66,164
Communications Specialist I	Park Authority	\$66,164
Information Officer III	Park Authority	\$87,767
Information Officer II	Park Authority	\$76,221
Internet Architect II	Park Authority	\$87,767
Internet Architect I	Park Authority	\$76,221
Instructor IV	Park Authority	\$79,934
Management Analyst II (900 Hour)	Park Authority	\$76,221
Administrative Assistant III	Police Department	\$50,155
Assistant Producer	Police Department	\$63,067
Management Analyst III	Police Department	\$87,767
Police Officer II	Police Department	\$71,667
Police Officer II	Police Department	\$71,667
Police Officer II	Police Department	\$71,667
Police Officer II	Police Department	\$71,667
Police Lieutenant	Police Department	\$100,843
Public Safety Information Officer IV	Police Department	\$103,149
Public Safety Information Officer III	Police Department	\$87,767
Communications Specialist I	Public Affairs	\$66,164
Information Officer IV	Public Affairs	\$103,149
Information Officer IV	Public Affairs	\$103,149
Information Officer III	Public Affairs	\$87,767
Information Officer III	Public Affairs	\$87,767
Information Officer III	Public Affairs	\$87,767
Information Officer III	Public Affairs	\$87,767
Information Officer II	Public Affairs	\$76,221
Information Officer II	Public Affairs	\$76,221
Information Officer I	Public Affairs	\$66,164
Information Officer I	Public Affairs	\$66,164
Public Safety Information Officer IV	Public Affairs	\$103,149
Communications Specialist II	Public Works and Environmental Services	\$76,221

Position Title	Agency	Midpoint of Salary Range
Information Officer III	Public Works and Environmental Services	\$87,767
Communications Specialist II	Reston Community Center	\$76,221
Information Officer I	Reston Community Center	\$66,164
Information Officer I (900 Hour)	Reston Community Center	\$66,164
Communications Specialist II	Retirement	\$76,221
Information Officer III	Sheriff	\$87,767
Communications Specialist III	Transportation	\$87,767
Communications Specialist II	Transportation	\$76,221
Communications Specialist II	Transportation	\$76,221
Communications Specialist II	Transportation	\$76,221
Information Officer III	Transportation	\$87,767
Information Officer II	Transportation	\$76,221
Management Analyst IV	Transportation	\$103,149