



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: November 18, 2008
To: Honorable Mayor & City Council
From: Anne Browning McIntosh, AICP, Community Development
Director (Interim)
Katie E. Lichtig, Assistant City Manager
Subject: Presentation of the Management Analysis Report of the
Community Development Department

INTRODUCTION

On June 19, 2007, Matrix Consulting Group was hired to conduct a comprehensive evaluation and analysis of the Community Development Department's permit and land use entitlement processes, management and organizational system. This audit was to further the City's continuing effort in increasing and providing more efficiency in customer service, fiscal responsibility and work practices of its city departments. The management analysis report which resulted from the many tasks and assessment studies Matrix performed provides the Council with an overview of the evaluation processes used as well as recommendations for implementation.

DISCUSSION

The Department's two divisions, Planning and Building and Safety involve permit and land use entitlement processes which have never been analyzed or evaluated for its efficiency in operations as well as for effectiveness of its management and organizational systems. As part of the city-wide effort to evaluate all Departments, an independent management consultant was engaged to evaluate the department's entire operation and management systems and provide recommendations for improvements.

To gather data and information necessary in their analysis, Matrix conducted interviews not only with department staff but also of other departments involved in the development process like Public Works, Fire and Community Services. The following is a summary of the different tasks performed by Matrix:

- Identified key issues and trends impacting operations
- Developed a department profile

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- Conducted focus groups to assess customer satisfaction with the processes
- Surveyed staff attitudes
- Benchmarked Beverly Hills in a comparative survey and against best practices
- Evaluated permit processes
- Evaluated staff utilization, work practices, and service levels
- Evaluated the zoning ordinance from the perspective of clarity, ease of administration, and opportunities to streamline the process
- Evaluated the plan of organization of the department
- Documented the recommendations and plans of implementation in a final report

These tasks resulted to the analysis of the department's organization and its two divisions including its administration section, the zoning ordinance, technology resources, and the operations of the other divisions involved in the development process particularly Civil Engineering and Transportation.

The draft management analysis report contains over 160 recommendations with the major recommendations falling into three categories:

PROCESSES:

- Update the City's Zoning Ordinance
- Streamline the land entitlement and building permit processes – application submittals, workflows, cycle time objectives, inter-departmental operations, appointment process, use of case managements systems
- Combine the Architectural and Design Review Commissions
- Convert the Building and Safety Division to a Special Revenue Fund
- Integrate Civil Engineering's counter operations into Building and Safety
- Re-evaluate method for calculating fees to ensure full cost recovery of development review fees.

STAFF:

- Authorize positions for a Permit Center Manager, Urban Designer and an Information Coordinator
- Transition customer service staff positions to Development Service Technicians
- Assign a Principal Planner position to the Permit Center

STRUCTURE:

- Expand the Online Business Center (OBC) to accommodate more online permitting functions and internal functions manageability such as its reporting abilities, financial transactions.
- Increase the use of the Geographical Information System (GIS) through improved infrastructure and more staff training
- Develop an information technology strategic plan for the department

The final draft report was submitted to staff in March, 2008 and a team of management staff was created to develop an implementation plan to include the assessment of each recommendation, and the implementation strategy of the accepted or approved recommendation. Many of the recommendations have already undergone this process and have been included in the department's work plan for this fiscal year.

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Recommendations requiring budget adjustments or code changes approval were and will be presented to Council as appropriate.

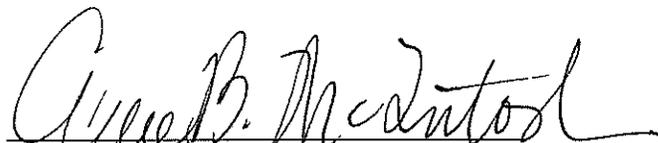
Additionally, the Department has moved back to City Hall, to a newly renovated Permit Center, in the fall of 2008. As a result of recommendations included in this report and implemented concurrently with the opening of the Permit Center, the customers should experience a smooth transition of operations in the new center.

FISCAL IMPACT

Matrix has provided an Executive Summary in the final draft report which contains the estimated cost savings and cost increase associated in the implementation of its recommendations. Staff has included and will include these fiscal impacts in the budget process.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Council receive the presentation from staff and file the report.



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(Interim)



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