# Development Permitting Updates

LUTI - April 15, 2025



# **Agenda**

- 1. 2024 Results
- 2. Lessons Learned
- 3. Site Development Plan Initiatives Concept and Formal Content Reduction
- 4. Average Plan Review Times Website Updates
- 5. New Website Landing Page
- 6. 2025 Priorities
- 7. Denver Permitting Office



#### 2024 Results

Re-envision the development permitting process and reduce city review time by

30% by 12/31/2024

#### GREAT VIBRANT SAFE **AFFORDABLE** DENVER DENVER DENVER GOVERNMENT CUT IMPROVE **BUILD A SHARED** ALL IN **ROADS TO** SAFE CITY VISION FOR A **AFFORDABLE** PERMITTING CITY MILE HIGH RECOVERY HOMES VIBRANT DENVER TIME SERVICES Move 200 Engage the public Reach a total of Permit, secure. Reduce violent Re-envision the Reduce our individuals across the 11 council 2,000 people finance or gun crime by development response time to struggling with districts to envision moved indoors support the 20% and permitting the top 3 addiction or vibrant neighborhoods from unsheltered development improve process and constituent mental health and a vibrant and preservation customer reduce city concerns by homelessness by of 3,000 longout of the satisfaction by review time by 20% by downtown, identifying Dec. 31, 2024. criminal justice 30% by Dec. 31, 2024. funding for both by term affordable 15% by system and into Dec. 31, 2024. housing units by Dec. 31, 2024. Dec. 31, 2024. a coordinated Dec. 31, 2024. intervention. treatment, and pipeline by Dec. 31, 2024. SHARED OWNERSHIP Improve employee engagement by 5% by Dec. 31, 2024. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

**2024 GDALS** 



# Subgoals

Cut City Permitting
Time by 30%



#### Subgoals

Reduce initial intake by 30%

Cut time for SF/Duplex & Small existing commercial

Reduce SDP review cycles and review time

Improve customer service

Streamline and modernize the development review process



### 2024 Results

At the end of 2024, we saw the following improvements in city review time and total city possession time:





## 2024 Results

#### **Key Initiatives**



Piloted an Al-assisted plan review tool



Allowed "approved with Conditions" + pre-inspection path for interior-only singlefamily/duplex



Consolidated residential construction permits



Established protocol to escalate reviews at 4+ cycles



Facilitated cross-agency workshops to redesign the concept/SDP process



Addressed backlogs and identified opportunities to streamline applications



## **Lessons Learned**

#### **What Worked Well**

Staff innovations from customer feedback

Collaborative staff and customer discussions on the innovations

**Revamped Technical Advisory Board** 

New Microsoft Teams page improves ability to work across departments

Downtown 16<sup>th</sup> St Express Permitting Pilot



#### What We Learned

More innovations than we were able to complete in 2024

**Prioritization and staff availability** 

Importance of regular updates to all team members



# **Site Development Plan Innovations**

#### Re-Envision the purpose and intent of the Concept Plan phase

- Create future state vision of a 'One and Done Concept Plan review
- Purpose: compliance review 

   feasibility assessment
- Result in standardized Concept Plan experience for customers
- Majority of Concept Plan reviews = one round, unless additional rounds are requested by the customer

#### Clarify and streamline Formal SDP content requirements

- Creation of a new Site Development Plan Manual
- Documents a comprehensive and streamlined account of content
- Facilitates consistent, coordinated reviews across agencies
- Minimizes need for duplicative work



Site Development
Plan Manual

#### Site Development Plan Manua

#### Introdu

#### is Manual

This Site Development Plan Manual is a customer guide to assembling a Site Development Plan (SDP) for city review. Following this manual will help customers provide a comprehensive, standardized, flexible, and clear presentation of the development proposal. Each requirement aims to:

- 1. Ensure Compliance
- · Demonstrate adherence to applicable regulations.
- 2. Facilitate Consistent, Coordinated Review
- Allow review agencies to evaluate key aspects of the proposal accurately and efficiently by
  minimizing the time spent searching for information, expediting the review process, and reducing
  any conflicting review comments.
- 3. Clarify Intentions
  - Clearly convey the final conditions of the site, including building layouts, estimated utility connections, grading, landscaping, lighting, parking, and more.
- 4. Reduce Redundancy and Rework
  - Streamline the information provided to avoid unnecessary details, making the review process more straightforward for both customers and city reviewers, as well as avoiding future SDP modifications.

This document encompasses most, but not all, new-build commercial and multifamily developments. For Planned Building Groups, SDP emendments or modifications, or other special circumstances, the review team will identify variations from this manual within review comments. Reach out to your Project Coordinato (PC) with any cuestions.

#### Purpose of a Site Development Plan

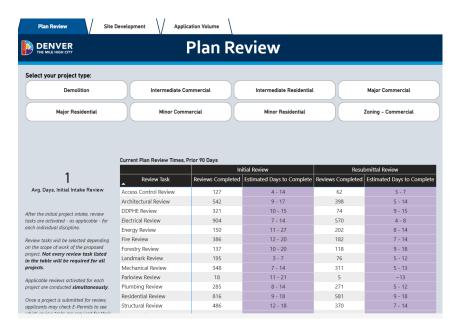
A Site Development Plan (SDP) is a document that demonstrates how private property development meets the regulations of the Denver Zoning Code (DZC) while providing appropriate considerations for other applicable city standards, rules, and regulations. The SDP is recorded against the property and serves as the basis for issuing Zoning Use and Construction Permits. Overly specific or detailed SDPs limit the flexibility of landowners and contractors to modify designs after SDP approval.

The SDP is generally not reviewed for engineering details, construction methods, demolition, site furnishings, or flight-of-Way (ROW) design, however, SDP approval may be (and other is) held until other related processes, such as Dedications. Transportation Engineering Plans (TEPs), Storm and Sanitary Plan Review (SSPR), or Address Assignments (see Related Applications, below) and completed.



# **Average Plan Review Times Website**

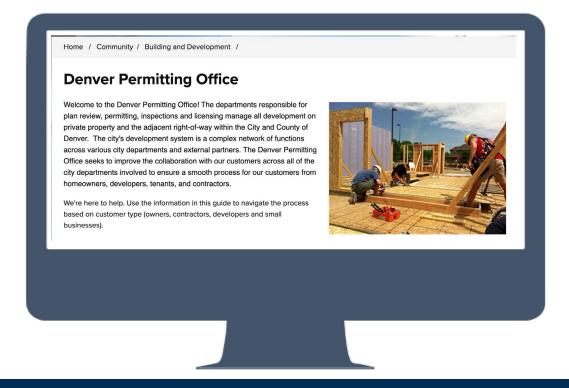
- Added overall project duration and time to complete reviews across all disciplines for a more thorough timeline view
- Moreoved filtering, sorting, and definitions to help users navigate and understand review data
- Refreshed dashboard layout for **better usability** across desktop and mobile
- Dashboard continues to be **refreshed** daily



https://denvergov.org/Government/Agencies-Departments-Offices/Agencies-Departments-Offices-Directory/Community-Planning-and-Development/Plan-Review-Permits-and-Inspections/Average-Plan-Review-Times



## **New Permitting Landing Page – denvergov.org/dpo**





#### **2025 Priorities**

**Proposition 123 Fast Track process and pilot** 

Develop tracking mechanism for projects that exceed 180 days of city review time and tracking of overall project time

**Complete submittal package requirement - ensure all initial and resubmittals contain complete information before acceptance** 

Unified comment process - Implement a process that groups comments for better delivery to customers and streamlines the way all disciplines provide comments

Al customer intake and limited plan review tools

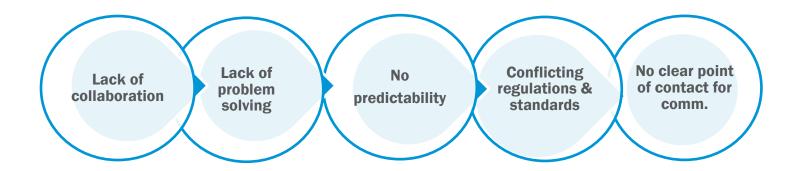


# **Denver Permitting Office**



#### **Problem Identification**

Dozens of review processes involving many city agencies may be needed to obtain final project approval and permits. The different review steps, agency approaches, and authorities are not aligned, causing delays, inconsistencies and lack of a clear process. This leads to:





#### **Executive Order**

- Creates the Denver Permitting Office (DPO) within the Office of the Mayor
- Outlines key commitments
- Memorandum outlining roles and responsibilities of DPO and permitting staff
- Applies to all city employees whose duties directly relate to, or are integral to, development and construction permitting processes











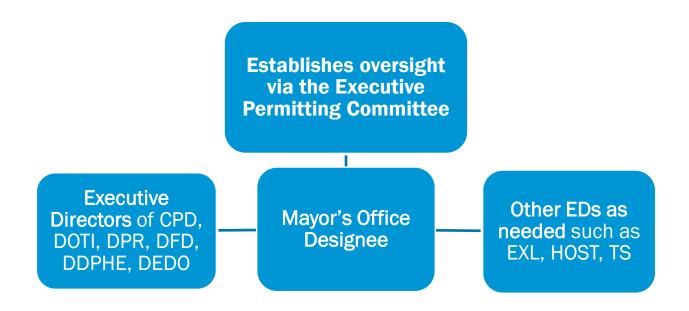






## **Executive Permitting Committee**

**Establishes oversight via the Executive Permitting Committee which includes:** 





# **Creating the Denver Permitting Office**

Serves as the centralized office responsible for alignment, accountability and coordination within the permitting process for development and construction projects



#### Mission

The mission of the DPO shall be to ensure that the City's development permitting process is efficient, consistent, and timely. The DPO shall establish and oversee systems and metrics to support effective city approvals; coordinate activities of all City departments and agencies involved in permitting functions (hereafter referred to as "department or agency" or "Permitting Department"); and provide strategic guidance to facilitate private development and associated improvements to public property.



#### **Commitments**

- Requirement to complete plan and permit reviews within 180 days or less of city review time from the date the City accepts a complete submittal
  - Elevated to the Executive Permitting Committee (EPC) if City exceeds that time within 14 days
  - May lead to a potential refund of some site development plan and building plan review fees if not resolved following EPC review and documented next steps
- Inter-departmental escalations Requires the creation of intra- and interdepartmental escalation policies to provide enhanced transparency and reduce time spent for the customer trying to resolve on their own



#### **Commitments**

#### Enhanced customer service

Two business day response timeframe for customer inquiries

Permitting staff will be available at applicable permit counters Monday-Friday during business hours if a customer needs assistance

New development permitting landing page

Project champions
assigned to specific
projects with the
authority to
manage the
process,
collaborate and
resolve conflicts



# **180 City Review Time Process**

#### Project exceeds 180 days of city review time

DPO Director or Customer requests hearing with Executive Permitting

Committee within 14 days

#### **Findings Presented to the EPC**

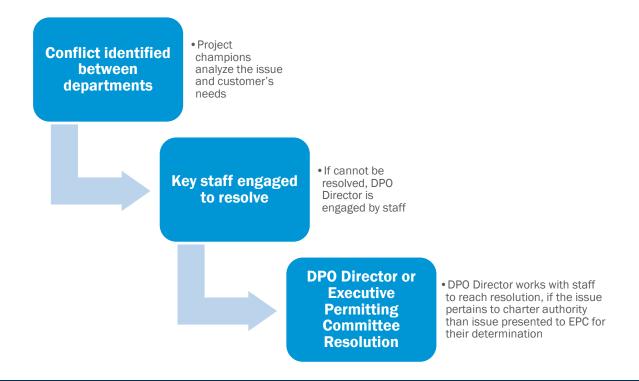
EPC determines proposed resolution



If not resolved within 30 days, partial refund of site development plan and/or building permit plan review fees may be authorized



## **Inter-departmental Escalations**





# **Next Steps**

- Executive Order effective 30 days following signature
- Within 60 days: Develop inter-departmental escalation process and procedure; departments must complete their intra-departmental escalation process and procedure
- Within 90 days: Develop counter staffing plan to ensure there is a consistent daily presence of staff at counters to provide customer assistance



# **Questions & Answers**

