



Commercial Project Management Program

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Building Official

Effective: November 1, 2013

Overview

The Commercial Project Management Program is the keystone of the Project Oriented Culture. The Project Oriented Culture promotes an environment of efficient processing and decision making by mitigating regulatory silos through:

1. Project Approach – The customer defines their “immediate project objective” by defining the project’s Scope of Work and the desired outcome (e.g., Site Development Plan Approval; Site Development Completion; Shell Building; Owner’s Improvements; Certificate of Occupancy). The County coordinates and facilitates the regulatory review and inspection processes to achieve the customer’s “immediate project objective.”
2. Partnership Approach to Customer Service – A partnership between the County staff and the customer, built on mutual trust and respect, provides superior project results. The partnership approach encourages open and positive communication that improves understanding, prevents errors, encourages options thinking and expedites issue resolution.
3. Project Management
 - a. The County has created the Development Project Manager (DPM) position to support the Commercial Project Management Program. The DPM is responsible for ensuring the County staff is “speaking with one voice” to provide consistent and timely feedback and direction to customers. The DPM’s key responsibilities are: facilitating Project Early Assistance; monitoring and tracking project progress to identify potential obstacles; and to ensure the Issue Resolution Process operates in an efficient and timely manner.
 - b. Customers are encouraged to appoint a project representative (i.e., Project Manager; Owner’s Representative) to promote the customer’s team “speaking with one voice” and to foster the partnership approach.
 - c. The Project Team includes the customer’s team members (i.e., owner; tenant; designer; builders; contractors) and the County’s team members (i.e., Plan Reviewers; Development Technicians; Inspectors). The Project Team is expected to communicate and resolve issues in a timely manner to support the completion of the project. If an issue cannot be resolved in a timely manner, the County DPM and customer’s project representative should be notified.



The County DPM and the customer's project representative are responsible for jointly overseeing the Project Team and the project and coordinating the resolution of issues that have been elevated by the Project Team.

Methodology

1. Project Assignments

- a. DPM Assignment – Each commercial project is assigned a DPM; and the DPM is responsible for providing Early Assistance when requested and for facilitating Issue Resolution when an issue is elevated. When the customer or their representative contacts the County to discuss their “immediate project objective” for their commercial project and the requirements of the development approval process, the County will assign a DPM to the project. The DPM's will be assigned based on the complexity of the project and each DPM's current workload.
- b. Project Complexity – The more complex a project, the more effort required from the Project Team to prevent or mitigate project obstacles. As a result, the DPM's project workload will be greater when the project complexity is greater. Project complexity is based on:
 - i. Technical Complexity – Projects that require sophisticated designs and/or use new technologies (i.e., Healthcare Facilities; Specialized Commercial Operations) can be technically challenging.
 - ii. Project Scheduling – The Office of Economic Development designates certain projects as Targeted Industry Projects. Most Targeted Industry Projects have an accelerated project schedule, which requires greater coordination and collaboration within the Project Team.
 - iii. Project Team Experience – The customer may be starting their first business and have minimal experience in the design/construction process. The customer's team members may not have previously worked in the County; and each team member brings varying experience and expertise to the project. The County staff may be working with a new project type that has specialized requirements that create challenges when applying the Building Code.

2. Project Early Assistance

- a. Goals – The goals are education and communication, preferably in advance of the submission of plans to the County. Early Assistance will be provided when requested by the customer. If the County determines a project has greater complexity, the DPM may recommend conducting a Project Early Assistance Meeting.
- b. Customer Perspective – Project Early Assistance provides an opportunity for the customer to educate the County staff about their “immediate project objective” and the potential project challenges. Project challenges may include site constraints



(i.e., access; soil conditions; steep slopes); technical complexity; project delivery system (i.e., Design-Bid-Build, Design-Build; Construction Management); and special scheduling requirements (i.e., phased or fast-track construction).

- c. County Perspective – Project Early Assistance provides the County the opportunity to educate the customer and their team about the applicable development review/approval process; the plan review, permitting and inspection requirements; special Code requirements; and applicable historical property/building information.

3. Issue Resolution Process

- a. Concept – The complexity of designing and constructing a commercial building, in combination with the complexity of applying and interpreting the Building Code, can lead to technical issues throughout the process that threaten to slow or stop project progress. The Issue Resolution Process provides a focus and methodology in conjunction with an expectation that issues will be identified and resolved in a timely manner through options thinking and the partnership approach.
- b. Responsibility – All Project Team members, County and customer, are responsible for identifying and resolving issues at their level of responsibility and authority in a timely manner. Each Project Team member is also responsible for quickly identifying when an issue needs to be elevated for resolution.
- c. Types of Issues and Issue Elevation
 - i. Code Requirement with No Flexibility – The DPM, in conjunction with the Project Team, elevates the issue(s) and the recommendation(s) to the Building Official for an interpretation or final determination. The customer has a right to appeal the Building Official’s decision to the Prince William Building Code Appeals Board.
 - ii. Options Thinking – The DPM is responsible for facilitating the Project Team’s discussions to develop/analyze potential solutions that meet the intent of the Building Code and the needs of the project. Decisions are made through Project Team consensus. In some cases a Code Modification approved by the Building Official may be required to formalize the solution.
 - iii. Individual/Team Performance Issues and/or Personality Conflicts
 1. County Internal Issue – The County team member and/or the DPM are expected to report the issue to the immediate supervisor/manager of the individual or the work unit. The supervisor/manager will make an initial determination of the issue and potential solutions. The supervisor/manager will report the issue and potential solution in accordance with their Branch’s procedures. The Branch Chief will decide whether or not to elevate the issue to the Building Official.



Between County staff and Customer Team Member – It is requested that the customer or their representative report their concerns to the County's DPM. The DPM will then report the concern to the appropriate supervisor/manager and to the Building Official. The supervisor/manager will make an initial determination of the issue and potential solutions. The Branch Chief will report the issue and potential solution to the Building Official.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Development Project Manager (DPM)

- a. Project Early Assistance – The DPM is responsible for scheduling Project Early Assistance Meetings. The DPM will facilitate the meeting and keep meeting minutes. The goal is to distribute the draft meeting minutes for comment within two business days.
- b. Plan Intake Quality Control (QC) Process – The Plan Intake QC Process is the responsibility of the Building Construction Services Branch. If the Development Technician needs technical assistance, they may request assistance from the Building Construction Review Branch.

There are two instances when the DPM has a role in the Plan Intake QC Process:

- i. The DPM and the customer may schedule a Plan Intake QC Meeting with the appropriate Project Team members. If the plans are QC Approved at the end of the meeting, the Plan Intake Counter will expedite the acceptance of the plans immediately following the meeting.
 - ii. If the plans are QC Denied, the Development Technician is to advise the customer of the DPM assigned to their project and provide the DPM's contact information. The customer will be advised if they would like to schedule a Project Early Assistance Meeting to contact the DPM. (NOTE: DPM's are not expected to conduct a Project Early Assistance Meeting immediately upon the QC Denied.)
- c. Project Schedules – Based on the Project Early Assistance Meeting and the project needs, the DPM may work in collaboration with the customer and/or the customer's representative to develop and track the significant project milestones (i.e., Building Plan Submittal; Building Permit Issuance; Close-In Inspections Approved; Final Inspections Approved and Certificate of Occupancy Issued). If the DPM identifies that a project milestone may not be met, the DPM will notify the Project Team.
 - d. Site Visits – The DPM may conduct site visits in conjunction with meetings scheduled between the County staff and the customer's team.
 - e. Project Closeout
 - i. New Structures – For all assigned projects, the DPM is to track the expiration of a Temporary Occupancy Permit and the resolution of outstanding Inspection deficiencies. The DPM is to advise the Project Team of the



pending expiration of the Temporary Occupancy Permit. Once the Final Occupancy Permit is issued, the DPM will close out all the project files within 30 days and notify the County's Land Development Project Manager of the building completion to facilitate the tracking of the Bond Release Process.

- ii. Tenant Layout – For all assigned projects, the DPM is to track the expiration of a Temporary Occupancy Permit and the resolution of outstanding Inspection deficiencies. The DPM is to advise the Project Team of the pending expiration of the Temporary Occupancy Permit. Once the Final Occupancy Permit is issued, the DPM will close out all the project files within 30 days.

2. Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Members are expected to:

- a. Resolve issues in a timely manner; and only when needed, elevate the issues in a timely manner.

For projects determined to have a higher complexity, communicate with the DPM on the project status and potential issues that may require resolution; and invite the DPM to significant project meetings.