

APRIL 2019

Customer-First Development Services

Establishing a Culture of Innovative Service
Delivery for Economic Development in
Orange County



Orange County Government
Development Services



Mandate

2019 Regional Economic Summit - Mayor Jerry Demings - “We want Orange County to be known not only as the premier place to do business, but a home for the entrepreneurial spirit and a hub for innovation. That starts with invigorating a culture of top-notch customer service in our Orange County Government operations. From the top down, we are evaluating our policies and procedures to help optimize the development process and seek out efficiencies. We must not forget that time is money for businesses.”

Transition Team Report - Orange County Government will be recognized at a local, state and national level as a model government that citizens and businesses are excited to work with. The County is committed to providing a superior experience for both its employees and customers and will be a place where employees are proud to work and are empowered by leadership to think outside the box and be creative problem solvers. It will create a strong culture of collaboration, with a focus on being solution-oriented and ensuring customer satisfaction.

Goal

Develop a comprehensive **Development Services Action Plan** that identifies customer service gaps, opportunities for improvement, and key action items that will lead to innovative service delivery and a customer-first culture for developing property in Orange County.



Purpose

The purpose of this initiative is to discuss how Orange County Government can provide value-added service delivery, offer innovative solutions to challenges, and instill a culture of "Customer-First Development Services". The members of the Mayor's Transition Team that focused on Customer Service and Business Development identified general customer service deficiencies, particularly in technology, where they desired improvements. The members look for staff at Orange County to become more nimble and flexible in order to help customers move quickly through the development process. They desire more resources and training for staff in order to elevate its customer service and opportunities for collaboration. In order to overcome the perception that it is hard to do business with Orange County, leadership must provide an increased and purposeful focus on customer service.

This initiative will address the challenges identified by the Mayor's Transition Team by collaborating with the development community for mutual success. Success will be evident when both employees and customers feel committed, empowered and excited about working together. The recent Regional Economic Summit identified the priorities of local elected officials, which includes nurturing and growing a regional ecosystem and developing Central Florida as a hub for innovative entrepreneurship providing high paying jobs and economic advancement for all residents. Attracting economic development to our region will take a combination of customer education, effective branding, a predictable process, and a County government that is aligned and focused on helping customers reach their goals.

In order to identify opportunities for improvement and ensure development services and processes are efficient, a series of discussions must take place. These discussions will be transparent and accessible, with a goal of involving our citizens and customers in the decision making process. To center the effort and engage the appropriate stakeholders, four **Focus Areas** will be examined.

Focus Areas

The following areas will be the focus of this customer service initiative:

1

Development Review

This group will focus on examining the processes under the Development Review Committee, including Planned Developments, Preliminary Subdivision Plans, Development Plans and related processes. The plans submittal and review process, particularly the coordination between applicants and County staff, will be an area of focus.

2

Engineering Plans Review and Site Work Permitting

This group will concentrate on examining the horizontal plans review process, including subdivision plans, engineering plans and utility plans. This group will also cover the site work permitting process which includes underground utilities, right of way permits, mass grading, excavation and fill.

3

Site Construction and Inspections

This group has the responsibility to examine the horizontal site construction process that results from the engineering plans reviewed, including site inspections. Particular emphasis will be placed on customer interaction, coordination and resolution of issues that arise during construction, and the use of technology.

4

Vertical Permitting

While many of our recent customer service initiatives have focused on improving the vertical permitting process, there are likely to be additional areas with opportunity for innovative improvements. This group will focus on aspects of the building permit process, with a particular focus on customer education, complex project review, and project completion process.

Focus Area Support

Orange County Government is committed to world-class service delivery in supporting economic development and through it, opportunities for all citizens. In order to fully deliver on these commitments, our business practice leaders must be at the forefront of this initiative by understanding customer expectations, establishing shared values, communicating expectations across the organization, and ultimately ensuring their business is being successfully managed. The following key staff will facilitate the discussions for the **Focus Areas**:

- Development Review (Eric Raasch & Liz Johnson)
- Engineering Plans Review & Site Work Permitting (Diana Almodovar & Doug Hettrich)
- Site Construction & Inspections (Andres Salcedo & Luis Alvan)
- Vertical Permitting (Alan Plante & Scott Workman)

In addition to the staff leads, top management including County Administration, Department Directors, and key County staff will support the initiative. As part of the effort, three **Feedback Topics** will be reviewed and discussed in each Focus Area:

- Staffing, Culture & Communication (Tim Boldig)
- Technical Standards & Code (Alan Marshall)
- Process & Technology (Scott Skraban)



These Feedback Topics form the pillars of successful service delivery and largely transcend the Focus Areas, especially where most development projects deal with some aspect of each Focus Area and may be currently managed by multiple County Departments. The staff identified above supporting the initiative are proven and respected leaders within the County, will provide consistency across the various Focus Areas, and ensure recommended actions and outcomes will accomplish the goal of creating a customer-first culture regardless of where in the organization the business is being managed.

Commitment to Industry Engagement

In order to ensure this initiative is successful and maximizes the opportunities for improvement, an **Oversight Panel** will be established. This panel will consist of eight key industry leaders with the charge to validate findings and recommendations of the initiative, and ultimately endorse the resulting **Development Services Action Plan**. Led by Chris Testerman, this panel will meet regularly with the core team and staff leads to review progress and provide direction. The eight industry leaders are:

- Richard Levey, Levey Consulting
- Byron Lastrapes, Rhodes + Brito Architects
- Diane Ibarra, Ibarra Collaborative International
- Tim Lemons, L2 Studios
- Mark Wylie, Associated Builders & Contractors
- Richard McCree, Jr., McCree General Contractors & Architects
- Christina Baxter, Poulos & Bennett
- Robert Paymayesh, PE Group



The Process

Initial Staff Assessment

To prepare for discussions with our customers, staff will complete an **Initial Staff Assessment** within each Focus Area. Staff will meet internally to discuss issues of concern, known gaps, and opportunities for improvements across the feedback topics. The assessment should provide for an honest reflection of the state of each business, allowing us to approach the development community with ideas and suggestions of how we can improve service delivery for the customer. Staff should prepare a known list of necessary code amendments, workflow changes, resource concerns, and technology enhancements that should improve service delivery to our customers.

Development Services Road Show

For each Focus Area, staff will then conduct a series of meetings with key customers that regularly conduct business with Orange County. It is essential that we hear from our largest customers as they can provide the best input as to what is working, where we can improve, and the real-life consequences of prior County decisions and actions. This **Development Services Road Show** should engage technical experts within their business and not just project principles. These meetings should provide valuable perspective on the Staff Assessment, and acquire specific feedback to incorporate into the final action plan including gathering information that otherwise might not be shared in a larger meeting format.

Developers Charrette

Upon completion of the road show meetings, multiple **Developers Charrettes** will be held to discuss issues in each Focus Area, initial feedback, and recommendations. These workshops will bring together a broader group from across the development industry and will allow for additional feedback and discussion on implementation feasibility.

Communications Plan

In order to attract interest and achieve success with the seminars, a **Communications Plan** will have to be developed with assistance from Orange County's Senior Public Information Officer Doreen Overstreet. The Communications Plan will include outreach tools including email, direct contact with major firms, social media and through other methods as appropriate.

Discussion Strategies

The Mayor's Transition Team identified many action items that they felt warranted further discussion. The following issues from the report will be discussed during the initiative and the results clearly identified in the **Development Services Action Plan**. A full list of discussion items is included at the end of this document.

Staffing, Culture & Communication

- Identify customer expectations and business management tools
- Operational changes including staffing needs, roles and responsibilities
- Barriers to economic development, particularly for targeted industries with high-wage potential
- Guidelines for ensuring a culture of innovation is in place
- Examination of barriers to communication and coordination between the divisions in the development review process
- Customer service delivery locations
- Customer expectations for general communications, including resource availability, initiatives and process modifications
- Implement a comprehensive customer service training program

Technical Standards & Code

- Comprehensive Plan modifications to solidify Smart Growth Vision
- Code modifications reflecting changes in industry best practices and regional sustainability needs
- Exploring barriers and incentives needed to enhance growth in technology manufacturing, sustainable development and urban ag

Process & Technology

- Innovation throughout the development review process
- Workflow enhancements including technology and accountability
- Technology enhancements including communication protocols and electronic interaction with County staff
- Expectations for records management including public access to records

The Products

The **Customer-First Development Services Initiative** will lead to a series of deliverables that will document the proceedings and provide guidance for implementation. It is expected that these products will build upon each other as the initiative progresses through the process and will culminate with a **Development Services Action Plan**. This plan will group recommendations under the Focus Areas and will cover the feedback areas and other items for improvement identified through the process.

- **Initiative Work Plan**
- **Communications Plan**
- **Initial Staff Assessment**
- **Road Show Synopsis**
- **Developers Charrette Summary**
- **Development Services Action Plan**

The Development Services Action Plan is the final product of the initiative and will contain specific recommendation to ensure initiative success. The Action Plan will identify project prioritization, timeline and funding.



The Timeline

1

April

- Initiative formation and pre-planning

5

October

- Action plan development
- Oversight Collaboration

2

May/June

- Internal self-assessment
- State of the County Announcement
- Communications Plan
- Oversight Panel Begins

6

November

- Plan validation and implementation

3

June/July

- Development Services Road Show sessions
- Oversight Check-in

4

August/September

- Developers Charrettes
- Oversight Check-in



Transition Team Review

The following action items are taken from the **Transition Team Report** Presented to Mayor-Elect Demings on November 16, 2018. All items related to development services are included and assigned to one of our three feedback topics. The issues in this list will be discussed with our customers throughout the initiative, and any recommendations for change will be included in the Action Plan.

Staffing, Culture & Communication

1. Identify staff across the County who will focus on developing a culture of innovation and be responsible for driving innovation within their business areas.
2. Create a culture of innovation within Orange County by empowering staff at every level to suggest new approaches to challenges they face and enable business areas to pilot new programs, technologies or processes with an iterative design-thinking/MVP approach.
3. Make division and department names more customer-service friendly and intuitive.
4. Leverage communication tools to update residents, businesses and employees about changes in the organization chart and the opportunities it will present.
5. Strengthen communication and coordination between the divisions and departments in the development review process.
6. Continue to study the feasibility of consolidating all development-related divisions to one location.
7. Identify centralized customer service-oriented personnel to oversee and monitor interactions with citizens.
8. Analyze hiring qualified third-party personnel to conduct building inspections to alleviate some of the load from staff and implement systems to account for variable development volume.
9. Create a comprehensive customer-service training program to be implemented across the organization.
10. Provide the resources and conduct the necessary outreach to encourage and/or require companies, with the capacity, to utilize electronic permitting.

Transition Team Review

Staffing & Culture

11. Utilize external surveys and customer-service metrics for customers going through the development review process. The responses (and related data) should then be provided to staff and senior administration.
12. Create a Public Information Officer for the Community Environmental and Development Services Department to conduct outreach to the development community about available resources, online permitting, etc.
13. Study current outreach and engagement tactics.
14. Host meetings with relevant stakeholders to continually review and refine the customer-service experience.
15. Complete yearly performance surveys on customer service, outreach and engagement.
16. Collaborate with the Chief Technology Officer and Communications Division on outreach.
17. Strengthen the message and appropriate behaviors with staff that affirms “Orange County Government is open for business.”
18. Ensure innovation is an integral part of the culture strategy and prioritize innovation activities.

Technical Standards & Code

19. Establish a working group that includes outside support to review what regulatory frameworks need to be put in place to ensure Orange County is ready for “new” innovation and technology. Identify opportunities for Orange County to improve the regulatory environment in order to support innovation and a more competitive tech ecosystem.
20. Review the zoning and land use classifications related to manufacturing to address evolving technology manufacturing, potentially adding new industry-specific classifications.
21. Sustainable Development Standards — Offer incentives to developers of both residential and commercial projects higher density for sustainable developments and other enhancements.
22. Building Code Enhancements — Two-pronged ... a certain level of requirements and a certain level of incentives.

Transition Team Review

Technical Standards & Code

23. Roof Top Agriculture – Develop an ordinance to allow building owners to lease rooftops to farmers.
24. Create an “urban agricultural” definition under County Zoning Ordinance to allow for mixed-use agricultural enterprises and to create urban agricultural standards.
25. Create incentives for developers to propose community gardens as components of planned residential developments.
26. Adjust landscape code to allow for a percentage of lawn for gardening.
27. Establish a Smart Growth Vision including a plan with updates to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code.
28. Engage citizens for input to establish and define an urban growth boundary including definitions for urban and rural with the County’s Comprehensive Plan.
29. Initiate the process to adopt a new Land Development/Zoning Code with context-sensitive zones, including Countryside Conservation Communities.
30. Implement and evaluate the Smart Growth Vision and Future Land Use Plan.
31. Adopt new Land Development/Zoning Code.
32. Amend County Code to implement the (Regional Affordable Housing Initiative) report.
33. Orange County shall require Florida Friendly landscaping and more efficient irrigation for new development and encourage property owners to retrofit existing development.
34. Orange County shall engage with the South Florida, Southwest Florida and St. Johns Water Management District to make sure there is conformity with irrigation rules and conservation activities.
35. Accelerate the process for Inclusionary Zoning that allows for more diverse neighborhoods from very expensive to moderately priced.
36. Orange to Green – Revive this program of expedited permitting and make it meaningful.

Transition Team Review

Process & Technology

37. Develop and recognize programs to upgrade skills for County staff on technology-based applications.
38. Develop a strategic vision on where to invest in improvements to technology in order to enhance the customer experience, allowing internal resources to be focused on the most valuable initiatives.
39. Conduct an inventory of the current state of customer service-based technologies within Orange County and analyze the effectiveness of those technologies.
40. Create simple “how to conduct business” manuals within each division that can be found online.
41. Study customer-service and development-review processes being successfully implemented in innovative and similar-size governments with comparable growth/development.
42. Study current technology assets, strategies and plans.
43. Study current online permitting program.
44. Strive to incorporate innovation throughout the development review process.
45. Empower staff to think outside the box and problem solve by enhancing training and investing in technology.
46. Develop performance measures for County services, measuring the quantity and quality of service and cost.
47. Train employees to incorporate technology to make moving through government easier, such as requiring and/or encouraging companies with the capacity to apply for online permitting.

