

City of Prescott

City Council - Study Session



May 12, 2026 | 1:00 PM
201 N Montezuma Street
Council Chambers, 1st Floor
Prescott, AZ 86301

AGENDA

The following Agenda will be considered by the **Prescott City Council** at its **Study Session** pursuant to the Prescott City Charter, Article II, Section 13. Notice of the meeting is given pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes, Section 38-431.02. One or more members of the Council may be attending the meeting through the use of a technological device.

Viewing & Participation

This meeting may be viewed on Channel 64, Facebook Live or on the City's website: [City of Prescott Live Meeting Feed](#)

Public comments for Council may be submitted through the City website: [Public Comment Form](#)

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **ROLL CALL**
3. **DISCUSSION**
 - A. Presentation & Discussion Regarding an Operational Analysis of the Community Development Department.
 - B. Presentation & Discussion Regarding the Charter Review Committee Additional Proposed Charter Revisions for Council Consideration and Addition to the Ballot of the City's Special Election to be Held November 3, 2026.
4. **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon a public majority vote of a quorum of the City Council, the Council may hold an executive session, which will not be open to the public, regarding any item listed on the agenda but only for the following purposes:

- (1) Discussion or consideration of personnel matters (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(1));
- (2) Discussion or consideration of records exempt by law (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(2));
- (3) Discussion or consultation for legal advice with the city's attorneys (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3));
- (4) Discussion or consultation with the city's attorneys regarding the city's position regarding contracts that are the subject of negotiations, in pending or contemplated litigation, or in settlement discussions conducted in order to avoid litigation (A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(4));

- (5) Discussion or consultation with designated representatives of the city to consider its position and instruct its representatives regarding negotiations with employee organizations (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(5));
- (6) Discussion, consultation or consideration for negotiations by the city or its designated representatives with members of a tribal council, or its designated representatives, of an Indian reservation located within or adjacent to the city (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(6));
- (7) Discussion or consultation with designated representatives of the city to consider its position and instruct its representatives regarding negotiations for the purchase, sale or lease of real property (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(7)).

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING OF NOTICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the foregoing notice was duly posted at Prescott City Hall on 5/7/26 at 11:00 a.m. in accordance with the statement filed by the Prescott City Council with the City Clerk.

Sarah M. Thornhill

Sarah M. Thornhill, City Clerk



TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA: May 12 Study Session
DATE: May 12, 2026
DEPT: Community Development
ITEM #: 3.A
SUBJECT: Presentation & Discussion Regarding an Operational Analysis of the Community Development Department.

ITEM SUMMARY

This item is for Council to receive a presentation from the City's consultant, Raftelis, on their draft Operational Analysis of the Community Development Department. The intent is to receive input from Council prior to finalizing the document.

BACKGROUND

During the FY26 budget process, Council approved funds for the City to engage a consultant to perform a review of the Community Development Department. The Request for Proposal scope of work included 3 key points for the analysis to determine if:

1. The Department's processes, procedures and technology are optimally and efficiently designed and implemented;
2. The Department's organizational structure and staffing levels are appropriate for volume of work to meet strategic goals and statutory regulations; and
3. The Department is using best practices to communicate expectations and requirements to developers, owners, contractors and other interested third parties.

Today's Study Session is a presentation of the draft report and will cover a summary of the findings, as well as recommendations for the Department to implement.

After receiving feedback from Council, Raftelis will finalize the report and begin working to implement the recommendations with the Department through a Process Improvement Workshop.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item. The overall project is funded from Community Development's operating budget.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

This item is for discussion only. No formal action will be taken.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Report - Prescott Community Development Department Operational Analysis
2. Operational Analysis Presentation

CITY OF
Prescott

**Operational Analysis of the
Community Development Department**

Draft Report / April 24, 2026

April 24, 2026

Dallin Kimble, City Manager
City of Prescott
201 N. Montezuma Street
Prescott, AZ 86301

Subject: Operational Analysis of the Community Development Department

Dear Mr. Kimble:

Raftelis is pleased to submit this draft Operational Analysis report of the City of Prescott Community Development Department (CDD). This report represents the culmination of a comprehensive evaluation aimed at optimizing the Department's Development Services Processes (DSP) and ensuring that the City is prepared to manage the complexities of modern municipal growth and resource management.

The purpose of this document is to provide a data-driven, independent roadmap for CDD's future. Following a decade of lean staffing models and a period of significant leadership transitions, the Department is currently stabilizing. However, as Prescott continues to evolve, the CDD requires a structural reset to ensure its operations are resilient, transparent, and aligned with the City's broader strategic goals—particularly regarding the critical management of water resources.

Our assessment involved a multi-disciplinary approach, including:

- Staff and stakeholder engagement
- Process mapping and review
- Benchmarking against other similar operations and industry best practices
- Technology review
- Data analysis of thousands of CDD records.

Together, these foundational pieces resulted in a collaborative and comprehensive view of CDD operations, allowing our team to pinpoint strengths and areas for improvement.

The findings detailed in this report highlight the high level of dedication within the CDD staff while acknowledging systemic hurdles that currently limit their efficiency. We have provided 17 specific, actionable recommendations for improvement. We are happy to integrate additional staff, management, and City Council input into the final report.

Raftelis extends its sincere appreciation to the City staff, stakeholders, and policymakers who contributed their time and insights into this process. We believe the strategies outlined herein will empower the Community Development Department to provide exceptional service to the Prescott community and its development partners for years to come.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Ingram
Vice President - Organizational Assessment

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Executive Summary

The City of Prescott (City) engaged Raftelis to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the operations, staffing, and customer service strategy in its Community Development Department (CDD). This review evaluates the Department's Development Services Processes (DSP) and provides a strategic roadmap to ensure the organization is positioned for sustained excellence, operational efficiency, and a more consistent applicant experience.

To ensure a holistic view of the department, Raftelis applied multiple methods of analysis:

- **Deep-Dive Stakeholder Engagement:** Interviews with City Council, executive leadership, 28 staff members across multiple departments, and applicants/stakeholders to understand internal and external pain points.
- **Technology Review:** Raftelis' IT specialist interviewed several staff specifically regarding technology impacts on process efficiency.
- **Process Optimization:** Raftelis conducted four collaborative workshops with staff to map existing workflows and identify opportunities for technological and procedural modernization.
- **Quantitative Performance Analysis:** A rigorous data analysis effort including more than 8,000 permits and 44,000 route-level records to identify bottlenecks and establish baseline performance metrics.
- **Peer Benchmarking:** Our team reviewed staffing and structure, as well as operational components, of Prescott against several similar organizations that were identified in collaboration with the City.

Staff reductions resulting from the 2008 recession and leadership transitions in the Director, Chief Building Official, and Planning Manager roles in recent years (sometimes for extended periods) had resulted in some instability in the Department. While authorized headcount has recently grown to 26 FTE, much of this increase reflects the addition of the Engineering and Water Resources Divisions rather than core technical capacity. Data shows that between 2023 and 2025, application review slowed, though performance is beginning to stabilize and improve as new leadership takes hold. Surveys and stakeholder interviews reveal general satisfaction and even compliments regarding staff customer service and professionalism.

Policymakers and Council members consistently identified water resource management as the defining long-term planning challenge for Prescott. The community holds a range of perspectives on the availability and use of local water resources, and the City's Long-Term Water Management Plan, currently underway, is the appropriate vehicle for resolving those questions with data. The City's incomplete inventory of development agreements reduces staff efficiency and creates risk. The tracking of water obligation terms across those agreements has been inconsistent, and staff and Council members both identified this as an operational and legal priority.

The primary permit management software, CentralSquare, generally works well but lacks some intuitive workflows and has experienced ongoing limitations with mobile field inspection support as the department navigates a transition between app versions. Staff have relied on workarounds in areas where system configuration has not kept pace with operational needs.

While the Pre-Application Conference (PAC) is a process strength in Prescott, allowing applicants to meet with staff to review potential project needs and requirements prior to formal application submittal, its effectiveness is limited by incomplete submittals and inconsistent interdepartmental coordination.

As a result of its analysis, Raftelis has identified 17 actionable recommendations focused on improving workforce stability and capacity, ensuring that water review is better integrated into the process, providing applicant education and incentives for improving quality and reducing review cycles that lengthen processing times, making improvements to existing technology to build efficiencies, and engaging CDD staff in technology prioritization and implementation. A summary of report recommendations is provided in the table below.

Table 1: List of Report Recommendations

Number	Recommendation
STAFFING AND STRUCTURE	
1	Address vacancies and retention in Community Development.
2	Build opportunities for employee succession.
3	Add 1.0 FTE to the Water Resources Division.
4	Add 1.0 FTE Management Analyst to the Operations Division.
5	Add 1.0 FTE administrative position to the Operations Division.
6	Reorganize and move Development Services Representatives, Engineers, and Neighborhood Services Representatives to align with technical specialties.
PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS	
7	Formalize Water Resources participation thresholds and accountability in the pre-application conference (PAC) process.
8	Add Water Resources review steps to the CentralSquare workflow to eliminate manual workarounds.
9	Review and update submittal checklists by permit type to address the most common applicant errors.
10	Enhance education to applicants in preparing submittals.
11	Create financial incentives to reduce applicant resubmittals.
12	Include additional project types in the PAC process and incorporate administrative policy changes to improve effectiveness.
13	Implement processing time standards for DSP processes.
TECHNOLOGY AND DATA	
14	Develop an internal Information Technology User Group within CDD.
15	Dedicate external consultant staff capacity or internal City IT staff capacity to address CDD technology needs.
16	Continue moving toward data-driven management and process improvement.
COMMUNICATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY	
17	Build community confidence in the Department through consistent, proactive communication and transparency.

While the Prescott Community Development Department maintains a high commitment to customer service, it remains constrained by core capacity limits and technological hurdles. By investing in its workforce and modernizing its processes, the Department can move from a reactive posture to a proactive, data-driven service delivery model that strikes an important balance between timely customer service and fulfilling its regulatory function to ensure the health and welfare of the community.

Introduction

Background and Methodology

In November 2025, the City of Prescott engaged Raftelis to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the City's Community Development Department. The purpose of the assessment was to evaluate the Department's Development Services Processes (DSP) and identify opportunities to improve efficiency, service quality, staffing, organizational structure, and technology. The goals of this project include:

- Improving services and ensuring appropriate staff resources and organizational structure to meet current and future demand.
- Enhancing process efficiency and delivering a consistent, high-quality applicant experience for those navigating the development review process.
- Designing workflows that produce measurable improvements in permit processing speed and review timelines.
- Building a culture of continuous improvement and equipping staff to drive change in service delivery.
- Evaluating the overall effectiveness of CDD operations to ensure they meet the City's needs and the expectations of the development community.
- Positioning the City for sustained excellence in development services through evidence-based recommendations that are realistic and implementable.

The project team applied a combined qualitative and quantitative methodology tailored to the context and conditions of the City of Prescott. No single method or data source can fully capture the complexity of a development services process of this scope. The project team used multiple methods in combination: staff interviews, City Council and Mayor interviews, process mapping workshops, permit data analysis, benchmarking analysis, and employee and applicant surveys. Each method contributed additional insight, and the findings from each were examined alongside the others to identify patterns and themes to develop key insights and inform recommendations.

The project team conducted approximately 20 individual and small group interviews with about 28 City staff members representing all divisions and functional areas involved in the DSP. Interviews were conducted in December 2025 and included staff from Building Safety, Planning and Zoning, Operations, Water Resources, Neighborhood Services, Public Works, Fire, Airport, and CDBG. Conversations focused on each interviewee's role in the review process, workload and capacity, coordination across departments and disciplines, technology, and applicant experience. All interviews were conducted on a confidential basis; no individual comments are attributed by name in this report. The staff interviews provided the primary qualitative foundation for the assessment, surfacing operational realities and institutional knowledge that permit data cannot reveal alone.

The project team also conducted interviews with eight elected officials, including the Mayor, six current City Council members, and one former Council member. These interviews were conducted in December 2025 and focused on perceptions of the Department's performance, service quality, responsiveness to the development community, and how the Department can best demonstrate its performance to the public and to the City Council. The Council and Mayor interviews provided an external governance perspective that complemented the operational and process-level insights gathered from staff. They also surfaced the political and community context within which the Department operates.

To better understand how the DSP works in practice, the project team conducted four process mapping sessions with CDD staff in February 2026. The sessions mapped the end-to-end review and permitting workflow for four project types: 1) new commercial development with entitlement and Wildland-Urban Interface review; 2) single-family subdivision buildout; 3) small and simple permits; and 4) tenant improvements. Each mapping session traced the

process through all four phases, from pre-development inquiry through routing and plan review, approvals and issuance, and inspections and closeout. The process maps documented steps, decision points, responsible parties, handoffs between departments, and areas of delay or difficulty. They provided a structured and staff-validated picture of the current state process that informed the analysis and recommendations throughout this report.

Raftelis' IT specialist interviewed several CDD staff and central City IT staff to understand current technology status and to identify opportunities for improvement to enhance staff efficiency.

The study also included an analysis of permit data to complement and validate the qualitative findings from staff engagement. The project team analyzed route-level and permit-level data exported from the City's CentralSquare permit management system, covering January 2023 through December 2025, representing three complete and directly comparable calendar years. The dataset encompasses 38 permit types, more than 8,000 unique permits, and approximately 44,000 route-level records across the full range of Planning and Building permit activity. The analysis examined permit volume and portfolio composition; permit duration and timeline performance, which is the primary basis for evaluating Service Level Standard (SLS) compliance; review round volume and correction rates; applicant hold time; and the statistical relationships that drive performance differences across permit types and functional areas. The permit data analysis served as the quantitative backbone of the assessment, translating operational observations into measurable performance indicators and enabling year-over-year comparisons.

Benchmarking analysis rounded out the study, providing context for Prescott's DSP relative to comparable peer communities. The project team identified 12 peer communities selected based on population size, regional context, and shared characteristics including historic downtown areas, municipal airports, water resource management challenges, and comparable department scope. Peer communities included Boulder, Colorado; Carson City, Nevada; Coeur d'Alene, Idaho; Farmington, New Mexico; Fort Collins, Colorado; Grants Pass, Oregon; Harrisonburg, Virginia; Kingman, Arizona; Lake Havasu City, Arizona; Logan, Utah; Prescott Valley, Arizona; and Walla Walla, Washington. The benchmarking analysis examined staffing levels, organizational structure, permit review time standards, inspection turnaround standards, fee structures, and technology platforms. This comparative perspective provided a baseline for evaluating where Prescott's practices align with peers and where opportunities exist for improvement.

The project team administered two online surveys in December 2025. An employee survey was distributed to all 28 CDD staff members and received a response rate of 54%. The survey contained 22 questions covering topics including the review process, workload and capacity, technology, submittal quality, internal coordination, and process improvement opportunities. The project team also administered a separate survey to 38 applicants and members of the development community provided by CDD, including contractors, developers, consultants, and other participants in the City's development review process. Together, the two surveys captured perspectives from staff and applicants who may not have participated in individual interviews and confirmed consistent patterns identified across all methods of analysis.

The methodology reflects Raftelis' collective experience supporting similar assessments across cities of varying sizes, locations, and organizational structures, with an approach designed specifically for the City of Prescott. As with any assessment of this kind, inherent methodological limitations exist. Staff and Council member interviews represent the perspectives of those who participated and may not capture every viewpoint present within the organization. The permit data for this project was among the most complete and well-structured we have encountered in comparable assessments, enabling a level of statistical depth that is not always achievable. The data reflects what was recorded in CentralSquare, and any gaps in data entry carry through to the analysis; these were minimal, are documented where relevant, and did not materially affect the findings. Benchmarking comparisons are made across communities with different scopes, structures, and service contexts, which limits direct comparability across all dimensions. These limitations were considered throughout the study. With this understanding, the methods described above formed a

sound and mutually reinforcing foundation for the analysis, and the recommendations that follow are informed, realistic, and implementable.

About Prescott

The City of Prescott is located in central Arizona, approximately 100 miles north of Phoenix. The City lies south of the Chino Valley and served as the capital of the Arizona Territory from the territory's establishment through 1867, and again from 1877 to 1889, before the capital was permanently moved to Phoenix. Prescott developed as a mining community and retains a well-preserved historic downtown that remains central to its identity and to ongoing community debates about growth, preservation, and development character. The City's 2020 Census population was 45,827 residents, a figure that has since grown to an estimated 48,224 as of 2024.

Prescott draws its water supply primarily from the Little Chino Sub-Basin, a groundwater source within the Prescott Active Management Area regulated by the Arizona Department of Water Resources. Population growth over the past two decades has placed sustained pressure on this supply, and water resource management has emerged as the defining long-term planning challenge for local government. Council members and staff described the relationship between existing development agreements and available water supply as a central governance concern throughout this engagement. The City's Long-Term Water Management Plan, currently underway, is designed to provide the analytical foundation for managing that relationship over time.

Prescott's position within a ponderosa pine forest at the edge of the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) creates a persistent wildfire exposure that shapes both land use regulation and development review. Projects within the WUI zone require review for fire safety and defensible space compliance, adding a layer of technical complexity to the permit process that is specific to Prescott's geography and less common among peer communities of similar size. Alongside the wildfire context, the City is navigating a period of intensified political attention to growth and development. Some residents who prioritize sustainability and preservation of historic community character and some residents with different perspectives about the type of development Prescott needs to support its growing community shape nearly every consequential land use decision. These conditions form the operating context within which the Community Development Department carries out its work, and they surface throughout this assessment.

About the Community Development Department

STRUCTURE

The Community Development Department is currently organized into six functional areas: Administration and Operations, Planning, Building Safety, Private Engineering Review, Neighborhood Services, and Water Resources. The Director leads the department and reports to the City Manager. The Operations Manager position, created in August 2024, provides day-to-day management of the Development Services Representative (DSR) team, the Neighborhood Services Representatives (NSRs), and the Administrative Coordinator position. The Administrative Coordinator position was reclassified from a former Operations Analyst position in April 2025 to support operations-level administrative work as the Department added the new Engineering and Water Resources Divisions; as of December 2025 at the time of this review, the Administrative Coordinator position was vacant but has since been filled.

The Operations Manager is also currently supervising the Engineering review team due to the vacant Engineering Review Supervisor position which, when filled, will resume leadership of that team and report to the Director. CDD is housed in City Hall and serves as the primary point of contact for applicants throughout the permit life cycle.

The three DSR positions are responsible for reviewing plans for completeness at application intake and issuing permits. For applications routed through Private Engineering Review, an Engineering Permit Technician provides

similar counter service and intake support. They confer regularly with the Planning and Building Divisions. The two NSRs conduct field inspections for zoning and code violations and respond to code complaints. Compliance activities are primarily complaint-driven, with limited proactive enforcement given current staffing levels. Neighborhood Services staff report to the Operations Manager. The two-officer team covers a service area of approximately 50,000 residents and 25,000 structures. Code staff coordinate with planning staff on zoning and property maintenance violations that intersect with active cases.

The Planning Division supports both current and long-range planning functions. Current planning staff conduct zoning and entitlement reviews, process administrative approvals, support the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council on land use matters, and facilitate Pre-Application Conferences. The Planning Manager, hired in May 2025, oversees a team of two planners, one assistant planner, one temporary assistant planner, and a CDBG Coordinator. Planning staff balance DSP permit routing with broader community planning responsibilities, including the General Plan update. The Planning Division manages route-level review for all permits with a planning or entitlement component.

The Building Safety Division handles plan review, permit issuance, and construction inspections for all building permit types. Three Plans Examiners conduct technical plan review and are the primary reviewers for structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing submittals. Three Building Inspectors conduct field inspections, with the Lead Inspector managing daily scheduling and field assignments. The Chief Building Official (CBO), hired in January 2025 after a position vacancy of approximately 350 days, provides technical leadership, quality oversight, and staff development for both Plans Examiners and inspectors. The Building Safety Division is the highest-volume review unit within the DSP.

Water Resources staff have devoted significant time to permit-related reviews and applicant inquiries since joining CDD. Much of that time goes toward reviewing permits for water policy compliance, fielding public inquiries, and back-cataloguing water supply agreements to support the water obligation catalog, work that is foundational to the Long-Term Water Management Plan. Staff noted this workload predates the transfer to CDD; it was similarly present when the division was in Public Works. The Engineering Permit Technician handles counter-level intake and processing engineering-related permits. Back-end documentation and WSA evaluation fall to Water Resources technical staff, a division of labor the department is working to formalize. Until dedicated permit review staffing is in place, technically specialized water planning staff will continue absorbing work that a reviewer-level position could handle.

The Private Engineering Review function handles engineering plan review for private development projects, counter-level questions, and serves as the primary reviewing entity for water-related requirements at the permit level. One Civil Engineer and one Engineering Technical Reviewer conduct plan review for site improvements, grading, drainage, and related engineering submittals. A Permit Technician supports intake, processing, and counter service for engineering permit types. These staff were transferred from Public Works into Community Development at the beginning of Fiscal Year 2025-2026. The City Engineer, who serves concurrently as Deputy Public Works Director, contributes engineering review for subdivision projects and applications with a significant public infrastructure interface but does not serve as the primary reviewer for standard private engineering permits. As of December 2025, two of the three engineering reviewer positions were vacant, with the City Engineer carrying primary coverage during that period.

What makes DSP unique among many City processes is its requirement to cross multiple department boundaries, requiring internal coordination from departments outside of CDD's organizational control, primarily occurring through the permitting workflow in CentralSquare software. Engineering plan review for private development is handled within CDD by the Private Engineering Review function described above. Public Works contributes engineering review for projects with a significant public infrastructure component, primarily through the City Engineer's involvement in subdivisions and major public-private interface projects. The Civil Engineer Plan Reviewer

Supervisor position was vacant as of December 2025, and both engineering reviewer positions experienced disruption during the October 2025 period, leaving the City Engineer as the primary point of technical coverage. The City Engineer's dual role concentrates critical technical capacity in a single position, with limited ability to absorb additional volume or coverage during periods of high demand.

The Fire Department provides fire and life safety plan review and inspection services for applicable permit types. The Fire Division Chief oversees the function, with two combo inspector and plan reviewer positions, one new in FY2026. One dedicated Fire plan review position was vacant as of December 2025.

The Airport Division participates in the DSP for development projects with Airport Land Use Compatibility implications. The Airport Capital Manager handles airport-related plan review coordination. The Airport's role in the DSP is limited by permit type and project location, and the division does not operate as a high-volume reviewing entity within the standard workflow.

The organizational structure of CDD as of December 2025 is provided in Figure 1 below.

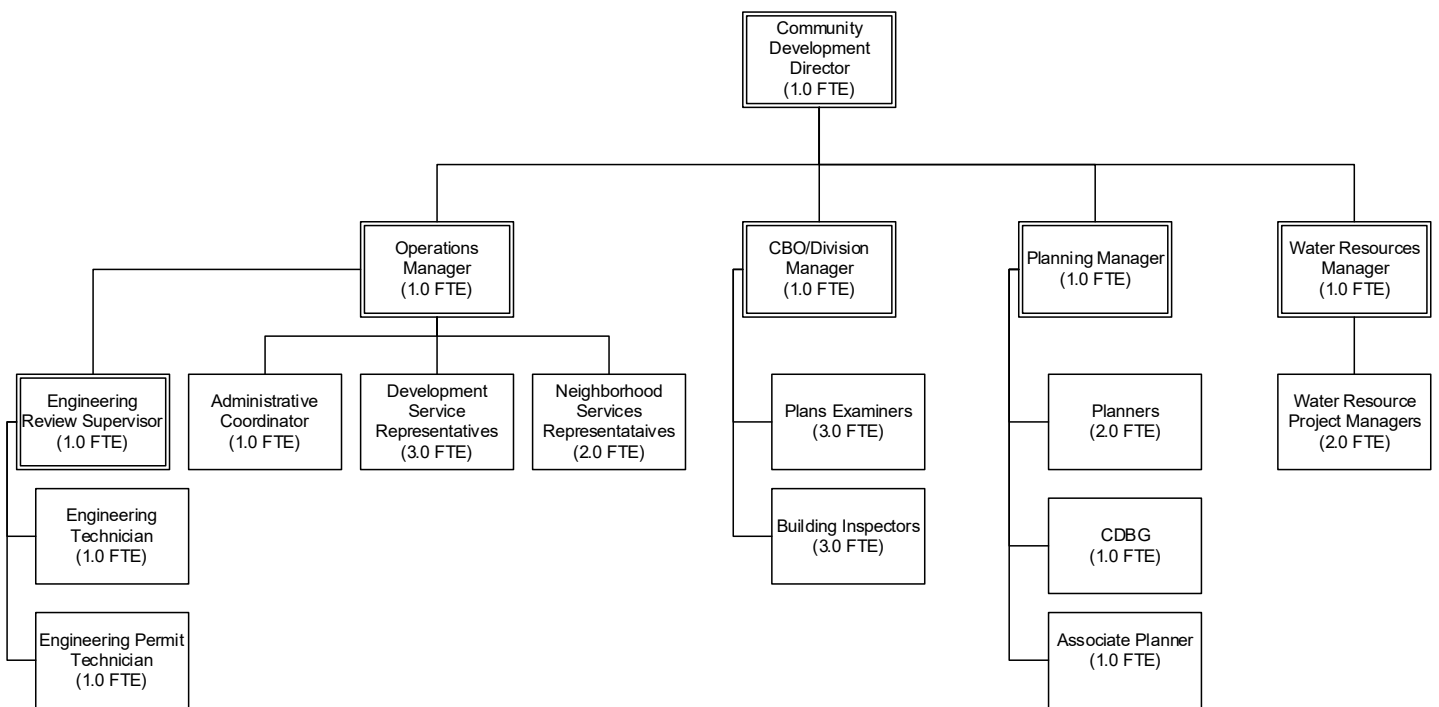


Figure 1: Prescott CDD Organizational Chart, December 2025

STAFFING

The table below outlines staffing levels in the Department from FY2022 – FY2026. As is shown, staff were added to create engineering and water resources divisions, resulting in a total staffing increase of 92.6% from FY2022 to FY2026. Within CDD, the most significant staffing additions were the Operations Manager position (created August 2024), the Administrative Coordinator position (reclassified from Operations Analyst, April 2025), and the Water Resources Division (formally transferred May 2025). These additions brought the CDD total authorized count to 26 FTE, up from 11 staff following post-2008 recession reductions that were never fully reversed. Within CDD, the Private Engineering Review function carried two vacant positions throughout most of the analysis period. Fire carried one vacant plan review position as of December 2025. A second combo inspector and plan reviewer position was newly filled in FY2026. Table 2 below presents authorized CDD staffing levels by division and year.

Table 2: Department Authorized Staffing Levels, FY2022– FY2025

Division/Function	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Actual	FY2025 Actual	FY2026 Budget	% Change FY2022 to FY2026
Administration	0.50	0.50	0.5	3.00	3.00	500.0%
Building Safety	7.00	7.00	7.00	9.00	9.00	28.6%
Planning and Zoning	6.00	5.50	7.50	5.00	5.00	-16.7%
Neighborhood Services	0.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	100.0%
Private Engineering Review	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.00	100.0%
Water Resources	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.00	100.0%
Total	13.50	15.00	17.00	18.00	26.00	92.6%

Key Insights: Structure and Staffing

During and after the 2008 economic recession, CDD staffing was reduced to 18 staff and the positions eliminated were never refilled despite growth in permit volume and community development activity.

The current 26 FTE count reflects two new operations positions since 2008 and the addition of the Water Resources Division (3 FTEs) and Engineering Division (3 FTE), not a restoration of core permit-processing capacity. For most of the past decade, the staff responsible for plan review, routing, and inspection were operating a permitting process that was not designed or staffed to manage current workload demand. The statistical evidence in the data analysis section reflects this condition: SLS compliance rates, round counts, and duration distributions all reflect a department that has been operating beyond its effective capacity as it has been simultaneously stretched by volume, vacancy, and complexity. The Department is only now beginning to stabilize.

The period from 2023 through 2025 brought the most significant period of leadership transition the department has experienced in recent years:

- The Director role was held by an interim for most of 2023 before transitioning to the current Director.
- The CBO position was vacant for approximately 350 days.
- The Planning Manager role transitioned from a long-tenured leader to a new hire.
- The Operations Manager position did not exist until August 2024.

During the window when permit data shows the highest permit volumes and longest median durations, the department was navigating these transitions.

The organizational timeline documented in this report explains data patterns that would otherwise appear contradictory. Median permit durations rose in 2024 as the department absorbed the pressure of simultaneous leadership gaps. Service Level Standard on-time rates improved over the same period as the department grew more consistent in meeting its published commitments. These trends describe the same reality from different angles: a department stabilizing, with performance becoming more reliable even as overall processing time remained elevated.

The interdepartmental structure of the DSP creates coordination dependencies that no single department controls.

Permit review requires inputs from Planning, Building Safety, CDD Engineering, Public Works Engineering, Fire, Water Resources, and in applicable cases, the Airport, each of which operates under its own management chain,

budget authority, and staffing constraints. A vacancy in Public Works Engineering or a capacity shortfall in Fire does not appear in CDD's staffing count but directly impacts permit timelines that are attributed to CDD's overall performance.

Two recurring structural patterns amplify the impact of individual vacancies beyond what headcount numbers suggest.

The first is the combined role approach, in which the City pairs job titles to reach market-rate pay. The City Engineer doubles as Deputy Public Works Director. When positions structured this way turn over, two functional responsibilities disappear simultaneously. The second pattern is the concentration of specialized technical knowledge in small teams with limited redundancy. Three Plans Examiners cover all technical plan review. The Private Engineering Review function in CDD carried two vacancies during the evaluation period, leaving the City Engineer as the primary point of technical coverage. Water Resources review for permits is handled primarily at the Engineering Reviewer level, and the engineering vacancies directly affected water-related permit processing as well. Fire plan review operated with two reviewers against an authorized count of three. In each of these areas, a single vacancy meaningfully reduces review capacity with no buffer to absorb the change.

The addition of Water Resources to CDD improves access to water review capacity within the permit workflow, but the division's integration into the DSP is still maturing.

While a good portion of intake and processing is handled by the Permit Tech, the two Water Resources Managers indicated that a considerable share of their time is consumed by permit reviews and inquiries, diverting capacity from the conservation and long-range water management planning work the division was established to perform. Staff state this was also the case when the division was previously located within the Public Works Department. The division does not yet have dedicated permit review staffing to handle routing coordination, meaning that technically specialized water planning staff are absorbing workload that a reviewer-level position could handle. This transition cost is temporary if addressed, but structural if left unmanaged.

Compensation and benefits trends are creating retention and succession pressure across multiple functional areas.

Staff described a pay structure in which the spread between entry and maximum salary is wide but the path to maximum is slow, with only annual percentage increases and no mechanism for advancement tied to certifications or expanded responsibilities. Only two or three CDD staff reported being able to afford to live in Prescott. The staffing and budget data in this section provide the fiscal context for the recruitment and retention recommendations in this report.

Engagement

The project team gathered qualitative findings through three engagement methods: structured interviews with 18 members of the Community Development Department staff and leadership conducted in December 2025; interviews with all seven City Council members, who served as the primary external voice for this engagement; and four process mapping sessions conducted across the department's major permit and project types. Findings from both an employee survey and an applicant-facing survey are woven throughout this section to reinforce and augment the interview themes. Together, these methods produced a detailed picture of the department's operational strengths, its structural challenges, and the areas where targeted improvement will have the greatest impact. The qualitative themes serve as invaluable context and leading indicators that the permit data analysis and benchmarking in subsequent sections validate. More detailed information regarding survey responses can be found in Appendix A.

Staff Interview Themes

The December 2025 staff interviews revealed a department performing at a higher level than its organizational context would predict. Staff are dedicated to customer service, actively engaged with their work, and clearly understand the systemic challenges that constrain performance. Six primary themes emerged across the 28 interviews conducted. The employee survey, completed by 15 of 28 CDD staff members, reinforced these findings.

Staffing capacity was the most consistent finding across all staff groups. The department was reduced to 11 positions following the 2008 recession and has never fully rebuilt. Multiple vacancies were active during the analysis window, including near-year absences in both the Director and Chief Building Official positions. Staff described a working environment shaped by institutional inertia and individual resourcefulness rather than adequate staffing depth. The employee survey reinforced this pattern: respondents consistently identified staffing constraints and workload volume as primary drivers of review timelines, using phrases such as "limited capacity" and "time constraints" across open-ended responses.

Technology and system limitations emerged as a shared concern across nearly every staff group. The department uses CentralSquare as its permit management system. Staff across Building Safety, Planning, and Operations reported that the platform is not intuitive, lacks the configuration to incorporate committee, commission, and Council hearing steps into the permit workflow. Staff training is needed on using the system and marking approval and correction status. CentralSquare does have a mobile application that staff use for field inspections; however, the existing version has functional limitations and spotty coverage, and a newer version under development by the vendor has not yet been successfully implemented in the City. Staff described the transition between versions as a source of inconsistency in field inspection support. More broadly, staff noted that CentralSquare has more functionality than is currently configured, and that a combination of incomplete setup and limited training time has prevented the department from fully using available tools. Staff described reliance on manual workarounds and secondary tracking systems outside CentralSquare in areas where configuration work has not been completed. The department's 2020 transition to 100% electronic submittal, completed ahead of most comparable jurisdictions, represents a genuine operational strength. However, the current system has not been fully built out to support the department operations.

Staff identified submittal incompleteness as the primary drivers of extended and repeat review cycles. Staff described a recurring pattern in which incomplete or inconsistent application materials require repeated corrections and additional review rounds. Reviewers across Building Safety, Fire, Private Engineering Review, and Water Resources noted that applicants sometimes do not fully understand what the City requires, resulting in submittals that cannot move forward efficiently.

Coordination across reviewing disciplines also creates delays, particularly when reviewer comments are not fully aligned or when new comments are introduced in later rounds. The employee survey confirmed this directly: "incomplete submittals," "re-reviews," and "coordination between departments" were among the most frequently recurring phrases across open-ended responses. Staff identified up-front completeness checks, clearer submittal requirements, and more standardized internal procedures as near-term improvement opportunities.

Staff described customer service and the pre-application process as areas of genuine organizational pride. Staff across all groups named customer service as something to preserve, and the Pre-Application Conference (PAC) process was consistently described as a meaningful advantage for applicants. Several staff noted that early cross-divisional collaboration during the PAC pays dividends later in the formal review cycle. Staff also identified improvement opportunities, noting that PAC effectiveness depends on who attends: when the design team is not present at the meeting, information provided is not always translated effectively to the people doing the work. Some reviewers noted that standardized PAC comments reduce the value of the process for complex or unique projects.

Compensation, retention, and succession were raised across multiple staff groups with consistent urgency. Staff reported that wages are not competitive with the private sector and that the City's compensation structure does not reward additional professional certifications. Several noted that an employee could be with the City for 20 years and still not reach the top of the pay range due to the annual step increase structure. The department lost more than 10 staff during the analysis period, and the majority of current staff have been with the City for fewer than five years. In some divisions, leaders have stated short-term retirement horizons and development of successors is critical to ensure continuity and institutional memory.

Table 3: Summary of Staff Interview Themes

Theme	Total Interviews	% of Interviews
Staffing Capacity and Vacancy Impact	17	94%
Technology and System Limitations	14	78%
Process Coordination and Submittal Completeness	15	83%
Customer Service and Pre-Application Engagement	13	72%
Compensation, Retention, and Succession	12	67%
Organizational Structure and Reporting Lines	10	56%

Mayor and Council Interview Themes

The project team also interviewed eight elected officials: the Mayor, six current City Council members, and one former Council member. These interviews served as the primary external voice for this engagement and produced a detailed, and at times divergent, set of perspectives on the Community Development Department, the development environment, and the City's long-term growth outlook. Several themes emerged across the eight interviews conducted.

Water resource management was the single most consistent theme across all seven Council member interviews. Every Council member named water as the defining long-term planning challenge for Prescott. The City draws from the Little Chino Subbasin, an Active Management Area under state regulation and subject to ongoing regional litigation over water sustainability. Some Council members expressed concern that existing development agreements, particularly those approving housing units in the northern part of the City, may have committed water resources that are not yet fully quantified against available supply. Council members cited estimates ranging from 10,000 to 20,000 units approved through existing agreements, though the full picture will depend on the outcome of the Long-Term Water Management Plan currently underway. Water was discussed not as a peripheral policy question but as the

foundational variable shaping every development decision the City makes. Development agreement management was raised with urgency in five of seven interviews. Council members described a backlog of development agreements in various stages, some dating back decades, with terms that are inconsistently tracked and not always enforced. Council members cited specific incidents in which the City failed to correctly apply development agreement terms, resulting in legal exposure and community conflict. Several Council members called for a dedicated inventory of all active agreements with a systematic review of terms, expiration dates, and City compliance obligations. Staff echoed this concern in interviews, describing development agreement review as an area that demands dedicated capacity the department does not currently have.

Growth versus community character was present in every Council interview and represents the defining political tension in Prescott's current development environment. Council members described a community navigating a tension between long-established residents who prioritize stability and community character and newer residents, who now hold a majority of Council seats and arrived with different expectations about growth and development. Development decisions are occurring against a backdrop of unresolved identity questions: how much growth, what kind, and whether Prescott's water supply and existing infrastructure can sustain what has already been approved through prior agreements.

Process and procedural issues were raised in six of seven Council interviews. Council members described concerns about transparency, predictability, and the City's ability to manage complex or high-profile development projects. Specific incidents involving discretionary decisions, development agreement interpretation, and public notification were cited as examples where process gaps generated community conflict and reputational exposure. Several Council members expressed interest in more visible performance tracking and process documentation.

Council members were asked directly about their vision for Prescott's development over the next 10 to 30 years. Despite divergent views on growth, Council members described a consistent set of priorities. Council members consistently named the preservation of Prescott's historic character and small-city identity as non-negotiable. Workforce housing and economic diversification were described as the most pressing and unmet development needs, with several members noting that the City's workforce cannot afford to live where it works. Water availability was named as the defining constraint on any growth strategy, and most Council members expressed a preference for infill and mixed-use development over continued outward expansion. The permit and entitlement system is the mechanism through which these priorities become practice. Its performance determines whether the City can translate a shared vision into outcomes on the ground, and it is the primary subject of this assessment.

Table 4: Summary of Council and Mayor Interview Themes

Theme	Interviews with Theme	% of Interviews
Water Resources and Development Constraints	7	100%
Development Agreement Management	5	71%
Growth versus Community Character	7	100%
Process and Procedural Issues	6	86%
Vision for Prescott's Development	7	100%

Stakeholder Survey Themes

Raftelis administered a separate online survey to 38 members of the development community, including contractors, developers, consultants, and other applicants identified by the Department, to capture the applicant perspective on the City's development review process. Despite multiple contact attempts to increase participation, 10 responses were

received, a 26% response rate. The response count limits the statistical weight of these findings. The responses were consistent in direction and reinforce themes that emerged across both the staff and Council interviews.

Respondents identified three process factors as most consequential to their experience: review timelines, consistency of comments across rounds, and clarity of expectations at the front end of the process. These three factors are not independent. When expectations are unclear at intake, inconsistent comments follow, which drives additional review cycles and extends total permit duration. Applicants described this chain as the primary source of delay, added cost, and uncertainty in project planning, and pointed to interdepartmental coordination as a recurring point of breakdown, particularly when comments from different reviewing disciplines arrive at different times or conflict with one another.

When asked about improvement priorities, respondents named four areas: clearer upfront guidance about what a complete and compliant submittal requires; more consistent interpretation of standards across reviewers and review rounds; consolidated and coordinated feedback so that all comments from all departments arrive together; and improved communication throughout the process to increase predictability. These priorities align directly with the process coordination and submittal completeness findings from the staff interviews and are addressed in the recommendations that follow.

Process Mapping Workshops Summary and Outcomes

The project team conducted three process mapping sessions with CDD staff in February 2026. Sessions covered three project types: new commercial development with entitlement and Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) review; single-family subdivision buildout; commercial restaurant in the historic district with tenant improvements. Each session brought together staff from across the reviewing disciplines, including Planning, Building Safety, Fire, Private Engineering Review, Water Resources, Development Services, and Airport, to walk through the full lifecycle of each permit type from initial project inquiry through certificate of occupancy.

The mapping sessions documented the complete current-state workflow for each project type, including which review disciplines are involved at each stage, where reviews run concurrently and where they run sequentially, where handoffs between departments and applicants occur, and where external entities including the County Health Department, the Arizona Department of Transportation, and the Federal Aviation Administration introduce dependencies outside staff control. For the commercial entitlement track, the mapping documented the interplay between the entitlement hearing process (Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Adjustment, Prescott Preservation Commission, and City Council) and the parallel building permit review, clarifying where these two tracks intersect and where they create coordination requirements that CentralSquare cannot currently manage.

Several findings emerged consistently across the sessions. The PAC process is a genuine operational advantage. Staff noted that when applicants attend without the members of their team who will execute the design work, PAC guidance does not always carry through into formal submissions. This is an applicant-side dynamic that CDD has limited control over but can address through clearer communication about who should attend. The concurrent review structure also creates coordination requirements at the issuance and inspection stages: when both a Building permit and a Private Engineering permit are active on a project, both must be finalized before a certificate of occupancy can be issued, a requirement that applicants frequently do not understand and that staff must actively manage. Water review integration between the permit center and the Water Resources division is not yet fully standardized: staff in both areas identified the handoff from Development Services to Water Resources as a source of delay and uncertainty, and described a need for clearer protocols, tools, or both.

The mapping sessions produced a secondary benefit beyond the current-state documentation. For many participants, the workshops represented the first time staff from across all reviewing disciplines had walked through the full permit

process together for each permit type, from initial inquiry to final issuance. The sessions reinforced multi-functional and interdepartmental understanding and surfaced operational assumptions that had not previously been named or tested. Participants described the sessions as useful not only for identifying improvement opportunities but for building shared understanding of how each division's work connects to the work of others. Figure 2 below is a sample of the mapping work done with staff; full-size process maps are included in Appendix B of this report.

City of Prescott, Arizona

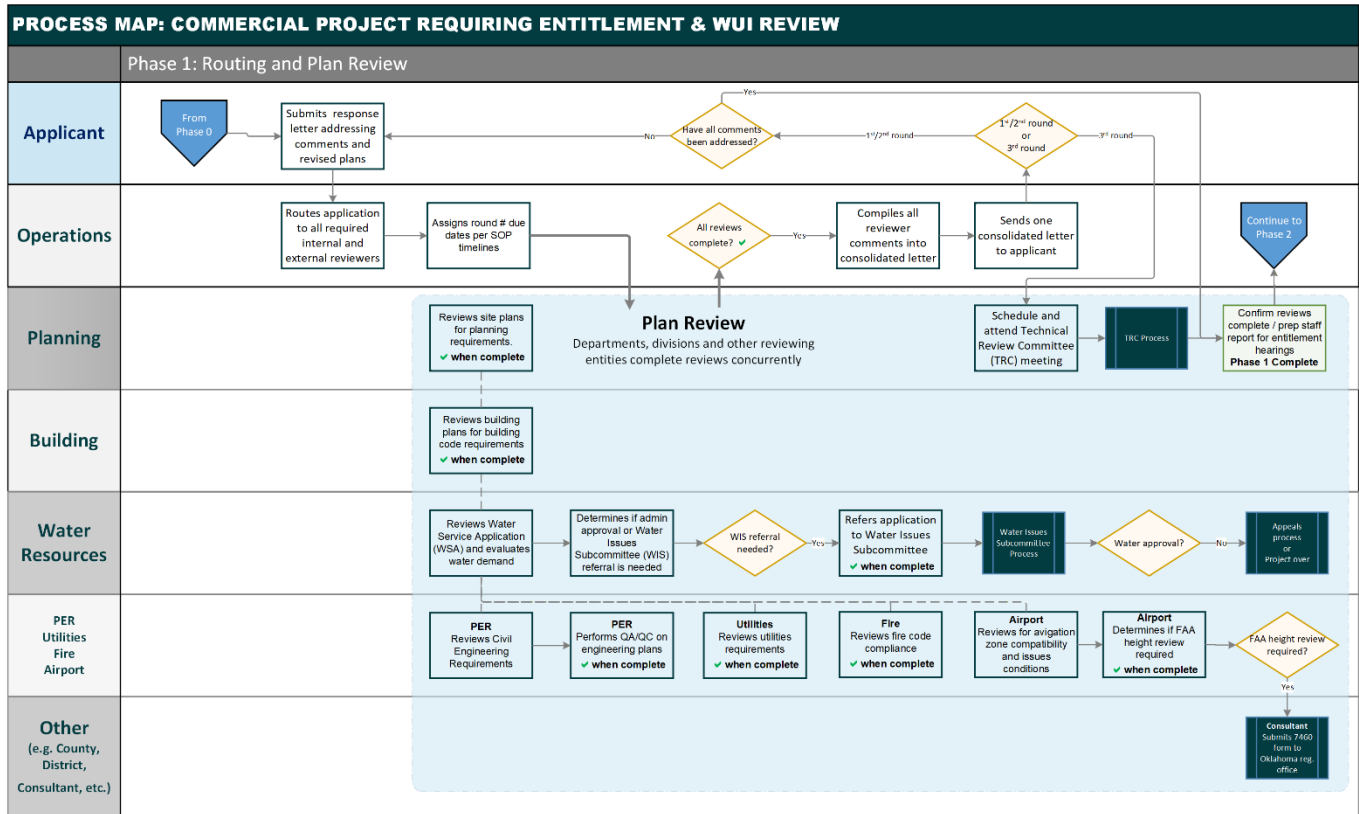


Figure 2: Sample Process Map

Key Insights: Process Mapping

Staff interviews, Council member interviews, and process mapping sessions each produced distinct findings, but the most useful analytical work is identifying where those findings converge and what they collectively reveal about where the department stands and what it needs.

Water resource integration and development agreement management establish the strategic foundation for everything that follows in this assessment.

The process mapping sessions showed that coordination between the permit center and the Water Resources division is not yet standardized, and staff in both areas identified this as a source of delay and uncertainty in the review workflow. Council interviews added context: the City carries a portfolio of historical development agreements, some with vague or open-ended water obligation terms that are currently being reviewed with City legal staff. The establishment of the water obligation catalog through the Long-Term Water Management Plan effort is designed to provide a clear picture of committed demand against available supply. These two issues together represent a structural risk to the permit system's ability to process development in a manner consistent with the City's actual

resource position. Addressing them requires both operational improvements within the review process and policy-level decisions about development agreement governance that extend beyond the permit system itself.

The City carries a backlog of development agreements in various stages, some dating back decades, with terms that are inconsistently tracked and not always enforced.

A key theme and perceived source of process delays is the City's many and varying development agreements which govern specific parcels. The City has over 50 known development agreements. The City's development agreement inventory is incomplete; staff interviews, Council member interviews, and the City Manager's office independently described instances in which the City was unaware of specific agreement terms and failed to enforce conditions, resulting in legal costs to the City as well as neighborhood disputes.

No comprehensive catalogue of development agreement contents, conditions, expiration dates, and water approval terms currently exists. Staff must research through a variety of sources including the City's GIS software layer that notes where agreements exist, then review the existing (incomplete) catalog of development agreement information, and finally look at the County Recorder's portal for additional information. The absence of a working inventory means that staff must research each project with an associated development agreement individually and from scratch. This increases risk to the City and limits the City's ability to proactively identify agreements that are approaching expiration, carrying unfulfilled conditions, or are no longer consistent with current policy.

In recognition of this issue, a Management Analyst position in the City Manager's Office has been tasked to spend part of their time on development agreement review and inventorying. This work represents a meaningful start, and the findings should be incorporated into the broader development review process effort described within this report. The role of City legal staff in interpreting agreement terms, identifying ambiguous or expired conditions, and advising on enforcement options should be clearly defined as part of the same effort. While outside of the control of the Community Development Department, the expedited creation of a comprehensive inventory of development agreements is critical to improve CDD review quality and timing. Ideally, such an inventory would document key terms including obligations, conditions, expiration dates, and water commitments, and identifying agreements that are expired, ambiguous, or in conflict with current policy, and the inventory should be in a consistent summary format for use by CDD and other City staff.

Each active agreement could have a high-level summary sheet for permit reviewers. This tool would ensure consistent application of terms across departments and significantly reduce the per-project research burden. To prevent future ambiguity, the City could also adopt a standard template for development agreements. This would ensure all future agreements have a consistent structure, defined expiration dates, and clear alignment with the Land Development Code. The template could be reviewed and approved by the City Attorney before adoption and updated on a defined cycle as policies and codes change.

Technology is constraining performance in ways that are not immediately visible in outcome data but are clearly visible in staff experience.

CentralSquare's limitations in mobile inspection support, workflow tracking for public hearings, and review action options require staff to develop and maintain workarounds that add time and consume capacity that could otherwise support review work. The department's commitment to electronic submittal before it became standard reflects genuine organizational capacity for continuous improvement. The current platform has not kept pace with what the department now needs to operate efficiently. Technology improvements recommended in this report are responses to documented functional gaps that are affecting daily operations across every division.

The qualitative findings collectively point toward a set of interconnected improvements that cannot be addressed in isolation.

Staffing investments without process standardization will not produce the consistency gains the data suggests are achievable. Technology improvements without adequate staffing to implement and maintain them will underdeliver. Process improvements without resolved organizational structure questions will create ambiguity about roles and accountability. The interview findings, survey data, and process mapping outcomes shaped the focus of the permit data analysis and benchmarking that follow and ensure that the recommendations in this report are grounded in the operational reality staff described, not only in the performance patterns the data reveals.

Council members described a community that wants to grow deliberately, protect its character, and ensure that infrastructure and services keep pace with what is approved.

The Council members surfaced this insight when asked about their vision for Prescott's development over the next 10, 20, and 30 years. The permit and entitlement system is the mechanism through which that vision becomes practice. Its performance, its predictability, and its capacity to manage complexity will determine whether the City can make and keep its development commitments. The recommendations in this report are designed to build a system capable of meeting that responsibility.

Data Analysis

Three years of permit data provide a reasonably clear picture of where the City of Prescott’s development review system stands, how it has changed, and where the most significant opportunities for improvement are. The analysis confirms much of what staff described in interviews and adds some specificity to those accounts.

The analysis draws on approximately 44,000 route-level records and 8,000 permit-level records from the City’s permit management system, covering January 2023 through December 2025. The data spans 38 permit types across three complete calendar years. Five findings organize this section, and each is stated at the outset and then supported by the data. Technical terms are defined where they appear.

Finding 1: The permit system is managing relatively stable demand today, but volume is likely to increase over the coming decade.

Permit applications held near 2,850 per year in 2023 and 2024 before declining to 2,273 in 2025. City staff consistently mentioned that a pipeline of 10,000 to 20,000 housing units has been approved through existing development agreements. As those projects advance from entitlements into construction, permit volume will likely increase, though the timing depends on market conditions and project pace.

Under a mid-range growth scenario, monthly permit intake could reach approximately 345 applications per month by the mid-2030s, a 56% increase above the current baseline. Planning for that increase now, through staffing, process design, and technology, will position the department to respond effectively as application volume increases.

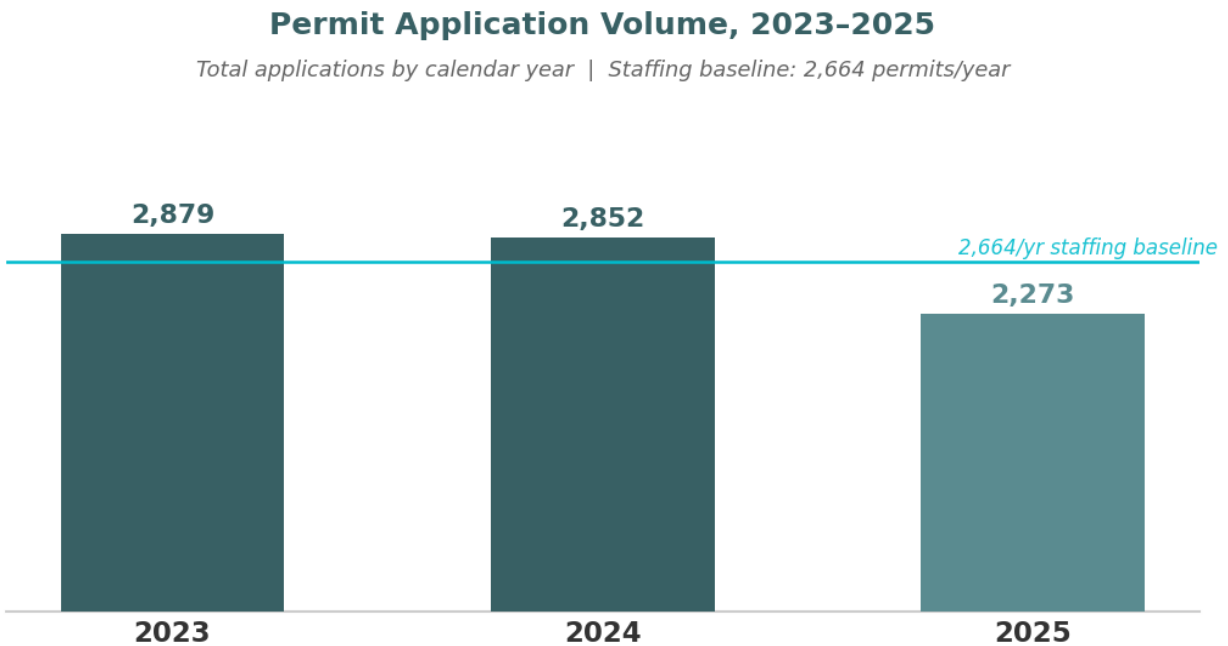


Figure 3: Permit Application Volume, 2023–2025

Projected Monthly Permit Volume by Growth Scenario

Based on entitled housing pipeline (10K-20K units) | Staffing baseline: 222 permits/month

Growth scenarios assume 12-year absorption period, 2026-2037

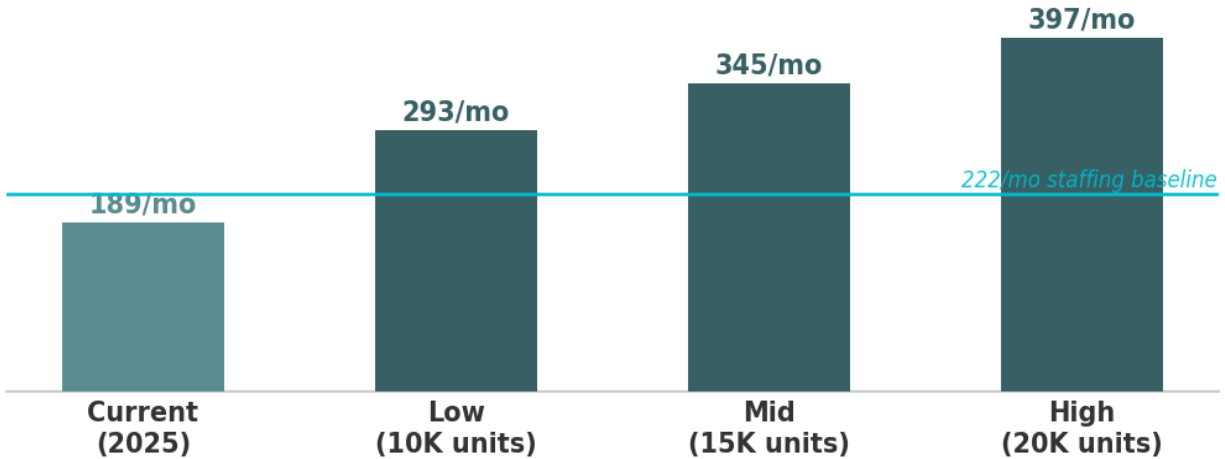


Figure 4: Projected Monthly Permit Volume by Growth Scenario

Finding 2: Permit timelines have improved, but the consistency of outcomes varies considerably across permit types.

The typical permit duration fell from 15 calendar days in 2023 to 10 in 2025, representing a 33% reduction. The longest permits also got shorter: the threshold above which a permit is considered unusually slow dropped from 513 to 141 calendar days. These trends reflect genuine improvement in permitting outcomes.

Consistency has improved more slowly. One way to measure this is the coefficient of variation, which captures how much outcomes spread around the average. A value near zero means most permits take roughly the same amount of time and a higher value indicates wider variation. System-wide, that measure declined from 1.6 in 2023 to 0.78 in 2025. A value of 0.78 still means the spread of outcomes is nearly as large as the average itself, which can make planning difficult for applicants with financing deadlines or contractor schedules to manage.

Duration also varies considerably across permit types. Simple permits like Plumbing Only and Mechanical Only typically process in a week or less. More complex permits like Single Family Residential and Commercial can take considerably longer. Variation within each permit type, not just across types, should be considered in process improvement design and implementation.

Permit Duration Trend, 2023-2025

Median and mean calendar days | Core population, issued permits

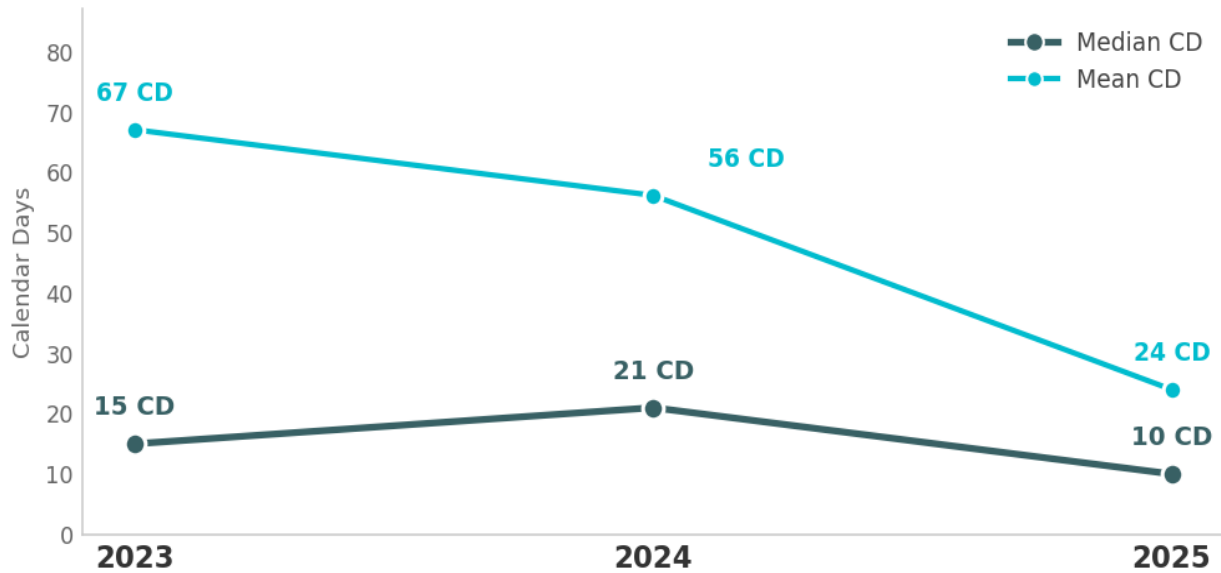


Figure 5: Permit Duration Trend, 2023–2025

Median Permit Duration by Type, 2025

Calendar days | Core population, issued permits | Types with n ≥ 5

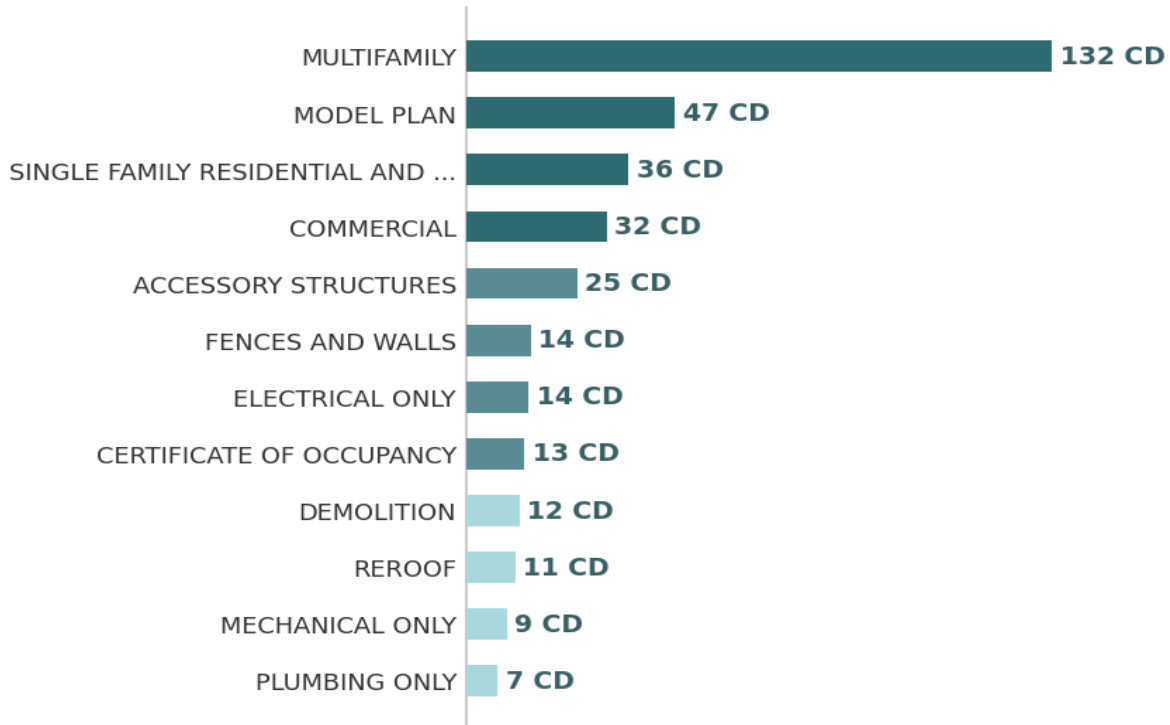


Figure 6: Median Permit Duration by Type, 2025

Finding 3: On-time performance has recovered from a 2024 decline, though it varies across permit types and remains below 90%.

The system-wide on-time rate, measured against the City’s published plan review timelines, reached 87% in 2025, up from approximately 73% in both 2023 and 2024. The rate remains three percentage points below the 90% goal used throughout the analysis.

The 2024 decline is useful context. On-time performance dropped while the Chief Building Official position was vacant and before the Operations Manager role was established, then recovered after those positions were filled. That pattern suggests the system’s performance is sensitive to leadership continuity in key functional areas.

Performance also varies across permit types. Plumbing and Mechanical permits run on time nearly 100% of the time. Model Plan permits ran on time just 33% of the time in 2025. The gap partly reflects differences in complexity, but also differences in how those processes are designed, resourced, and implemented.

System-Wide Plan Review On-Time Rate by Year

Plan Review Routes versus Published Standards | SLS goal: 90%

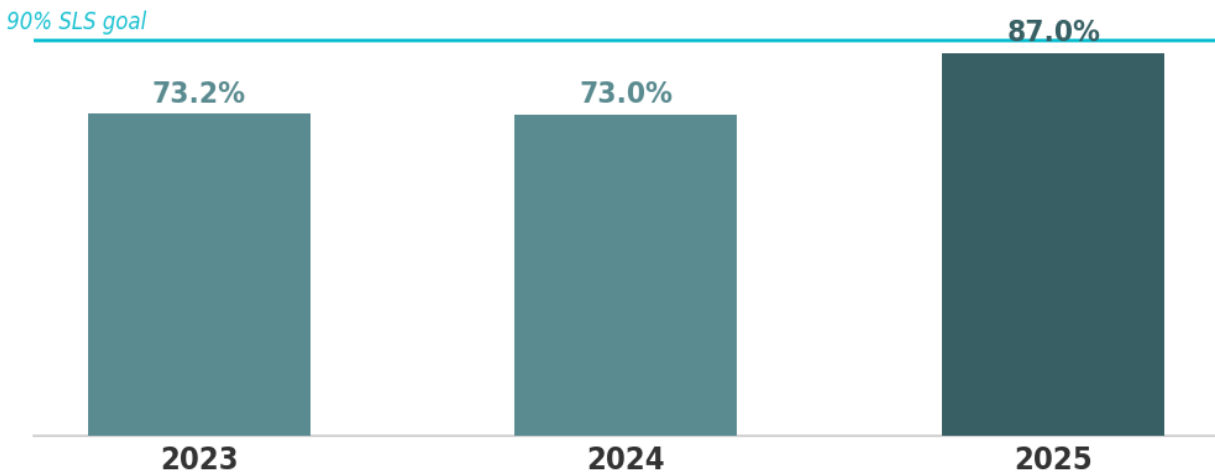


Figure 7: System-Wide Plan Review On-Time Rate by Year

Plan Review On-Time Rate by Permit Type, 2025

Plan Review Routes versus Published Standards | SLS goal: 90%

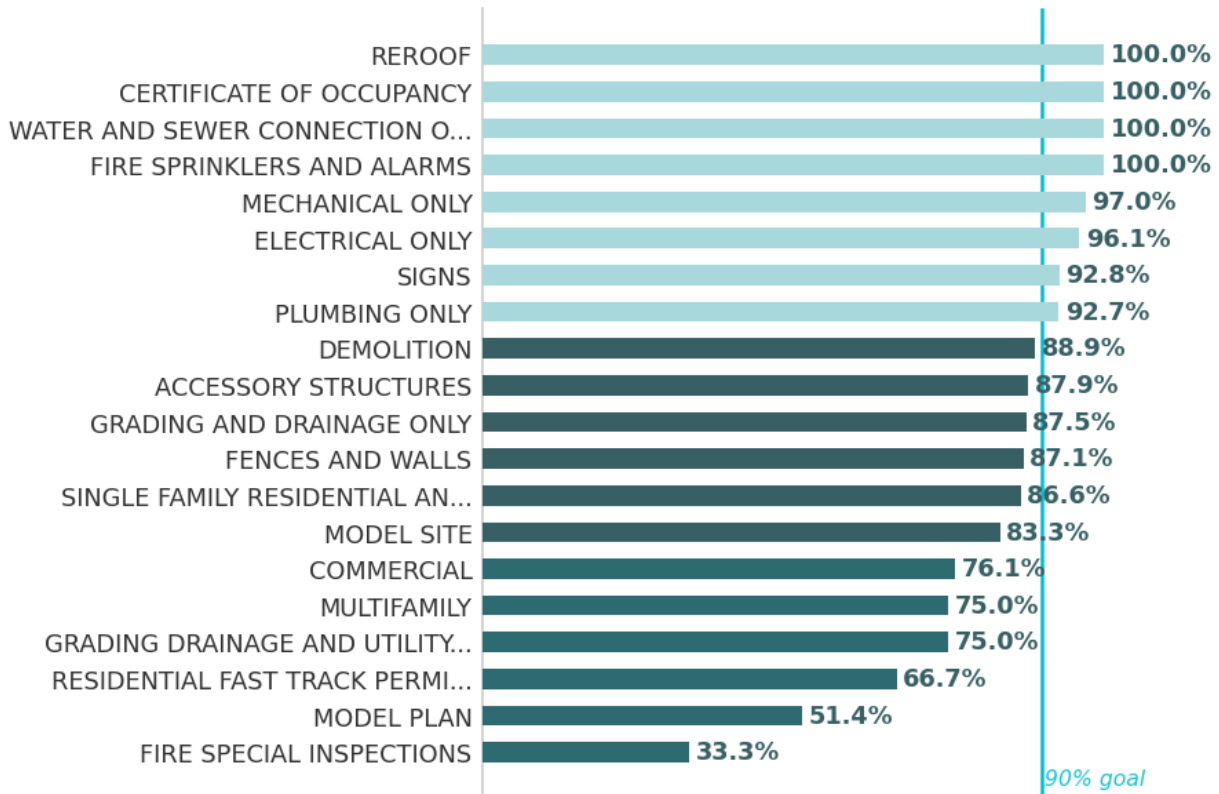


Figure 8: Plan Review On-Time Rate by Permit Type - 2025

Finding 4: The distribution of permit durations reveals more about applicant experience than averages alone.

System-wide, the mean permit duration in 2025 is 1.34 times the median, meaning a relatively small number of very long permits pull the average up above what most applicants experience. For permit types where that ratio is higher, quoting the average overstates the typical permit timeline. Signs (2.10), Commercial (1.90), Accessory Structures (1.83), and Certificate of Occupancy (1.75) have the largest mean-to-median gaps. For those permit types, communicating the average duration to an applicant would be misleading. Multifamily (0.80), Water and Sewer Connection Only (0.99), and Residential Fast Track (1.09) sit close to 1.0, indicating their averages are a reliable representation of typical experience.

Predictability is a related but distinct dimension. The coefficient of variation measures how much outcomes spread around the average for a given permit type. A lower value means permit duration outcomes are more consistent. A high value means outcomes are widely scattered, making their timelines more unreliable. Signs (1.40), Model Site (1.30), and Reroof (1.20) show the highest variation in the portfolio, meaning applicants submitting those permit types face the most uncertainty about where their application will land in the timeline distribution. At the other end, Multifamily (0.44), Model Plan (0.51), and Grading Drainage and Utility Combo (0.59) show the most consistent outcomes. The system-wide CV of 0.78 in 2025 represents a meaningful improvement from 1.6 in 2023. However, the value still carries enough variation that applicants across most permit types cannot reliably plan project timelines around their expected permit timelines.

Mean/Median Duration Ratio by Permit Type, 2025

All issued permits | Lower values indicate more reliable averages | 2025

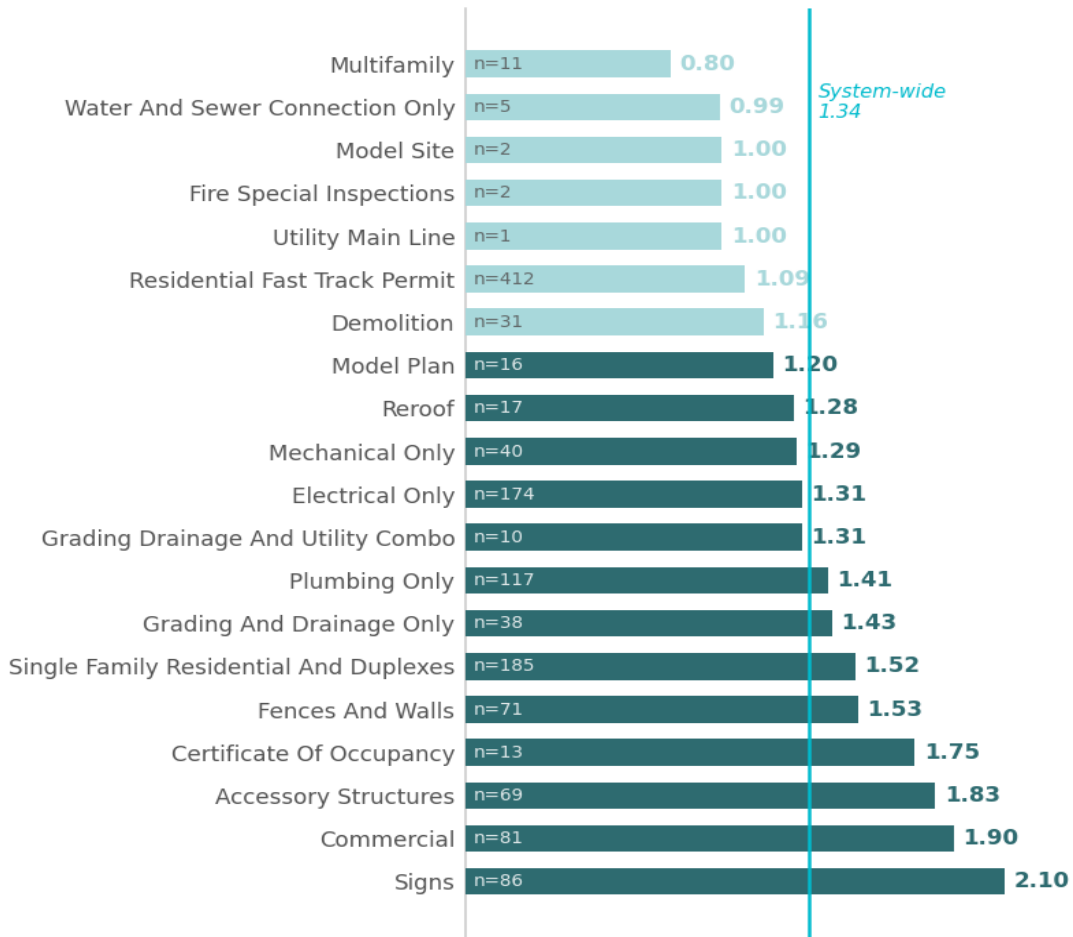


Figure 9: Mean/Median Duration Ratio by Permit Type, 2025

Process Consistency (Full CV) by Permit Type, 2025

Coefficient of variation, all issued permits | Lower = more consistent outcomes | 2025

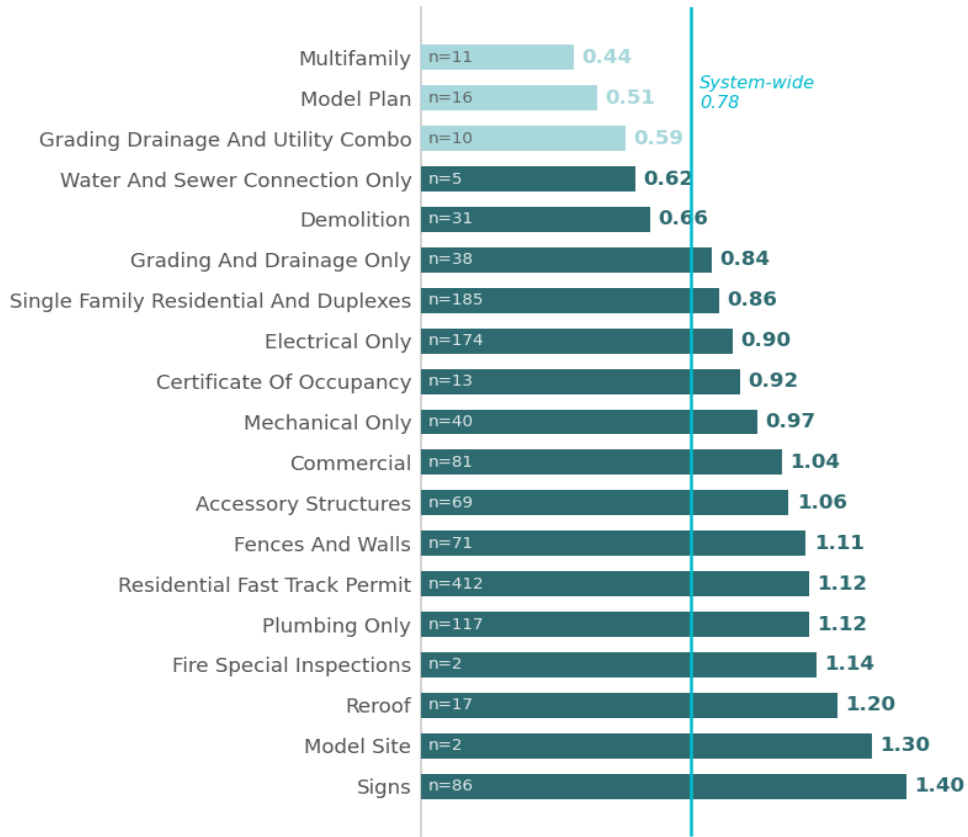


Figure 10: Process Consistency (CV) by Permit Type, 2025

Finding 5: Two factors observable at intake are associated with longer permit durations and higher correction rates.

Two factors are consistently associated with permits that run long or require multiple correction rounds, and both are observable before plan review begins. The first is the number of functional areas that need to review the permit. Each additional reviewing discipline is associated with roughly a 43% increase in total permit duration, while also increasing the likelihood that one discipline's delay will affect the overall timeline. The second is time spent in intake before routing. Permits that spend four or more days in intake are substantially more likely to require three or more rounds of corrections than permits that move through intake more quickly.

A statistical model incorporating both factors, along with applicant response time and year effects, explains approximately 69.7% of the variation in permit duration. That is a relatively high level of explanatory power and suggests that permit outcomes, while influenced by many factors, follow patterns that are to some extent predictable and addressable.

A structured intake review that identifies higher-complexity permits at submission could allow staff to direct additional coordination early in the process rather than responding to problems after multiple correction rounds have already extended the timeline.

R3+ Rate by Functional Area Count

Core population, issued permits | FA count observable at time of submission

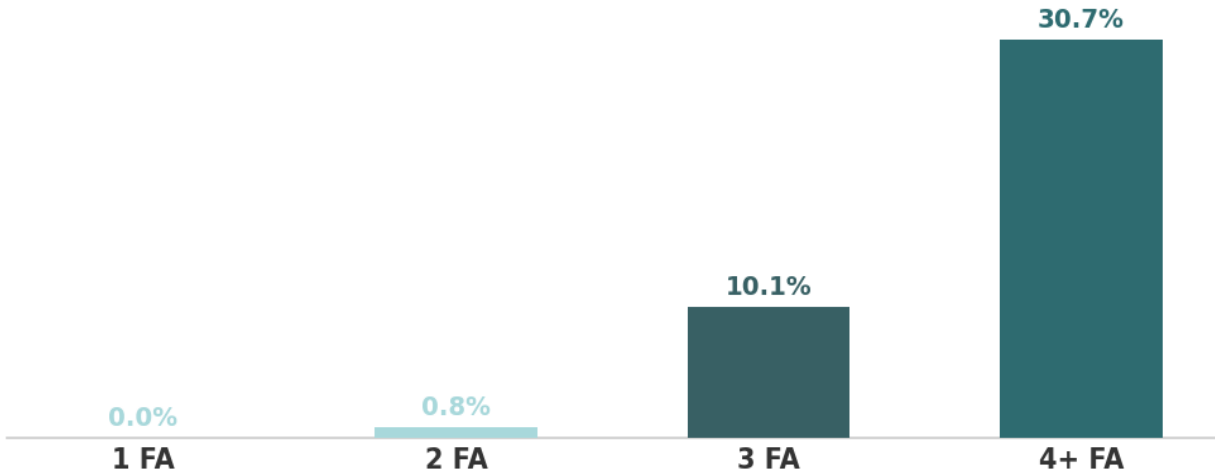


Figure 11: Additional Correction Rounds by Number of Reviewing Departments

R3+ Rate by Phase 0 Intake Duration Quartile

Core population, issued permits | Phase 0 duration observable before plan review begins

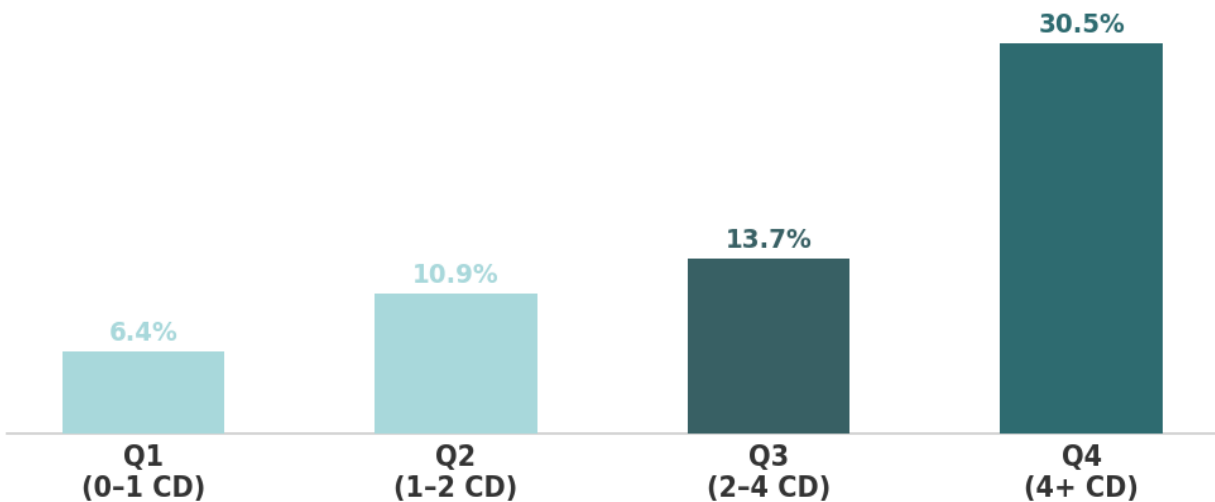
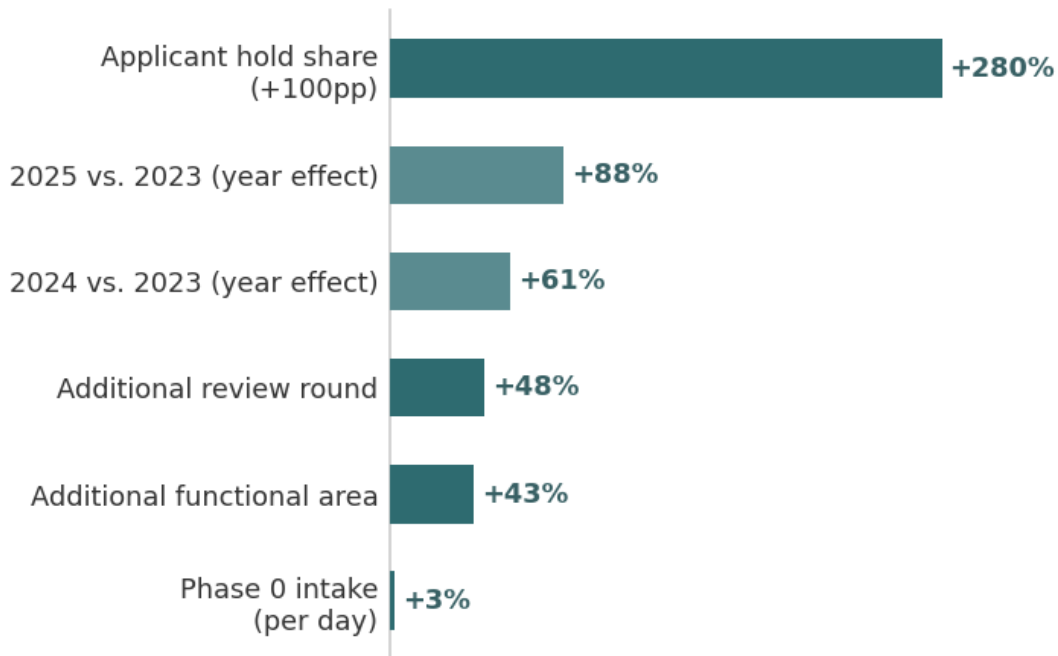


Figure 12: Additional Correction Rounds by Intake Duration

Duration Predictors: Effect per Unit, Regression Model

Log-transformed OLS regression | n=4,312 permits | Darker = within City control



$R^2 = 0.697$ — model explains 69.7% of permit duration variation

Figure 13: Factors Most Strongly Associated with Permit Duration

Key Insights: Data Analysis

The permit data confirms and adds precision to what staff and applicants described during the engagement. Six observations carry the most weight for the recommendations that follow.

The number of functional areas reviewing a permit is strongly associated with how long it takes.

Each additional reviewing department is associated with roughly a 43% increase in total permit duration, and each additional round of corrections adds another 48%. Both factors are within the City's operational control. The concurrent review structure means any one department finishing late affects the whole permit regardless of how quickly others have moved. Staff described coordination across departments as a common source of delay, and the data is consistent with that account.

Intake conditions appear to predict correction rates downstream.

Permits that spend the most time in intake before routing are substantially more likely to require multiple correction rounds than permits that move through quickly. Permits routed to four or more functional areas have a 30% rate of requiring three or more correction rounds, compared to less than 1% for permits routed to two. Both signals are visible at submission. A structured intake review could allow the system to direct additional resources earlier in the process for permits that show these characteristics.

Leadership continuity in key functional areas appears to affect permit outcomes.

Building Safety's on-time rate rose from 62% to 89% following the CBO hire in January 2025. The broader 2024 decline in system-wide performance coincided with leadership vacancies and transitions, and the 2025 recovery coincided with those positions being filled. Private Engineering Review and Fire currently carry vacancies. The CBO experience suggests that filling those positions may produce measurable improvement in those areas' performance.

Duration has improved more than predictability and reliability.

The typical permit takes 33% less time than it did in 2023. Variation across permits of the same type, however, remains wide. The spread of outcomes is still large enough that applicants generally cannot plan around permit timeline outcomes. In other words, while permit application timelines are faster, the applicant experience is often unpredictable (i.e. two applicants can have very different outcomes) and unreliable (i.e. two applicants cannot confidently assume they will have very different outcomes). Improving predictability and reliability will require process and resourcing improvements in addition to continuing to improve application timelines.

Correction volume is concentrated in a small number of permit types, each with different characteristics.

Single Family Residential, Commercial, and Accessory Structures together account for nearly 60% of all permits requiring additional correction rounds. These types differ from each other in ways that affect what an appropriate response looks like. SFR corrections reflect the volume of that permit type. Commercial corrections reflect multi-department complexity. Accessory structure corrections may reflect a submittal quality pattern specific to that applicant population. Interventions designed around the specific characteristics of each type are more likely to be effective than a uniform approach.

Projected demand growth warrants near-term attention to capacity.

Between 10,000 and 20,000 housing units have been approved through existing development agreements. As those projects move into construction, permit volume is likely to increase. Under a mid-range scenario, monthly applications could grow by approximately 56% over the coming decade. Proactively planning for that increase through staffing, process improvements, and technology investments will be more effective than responding after volume has grown.

Benchmarking

To provide context for the findings presented in preceding sections of this report, Raftelis conducted a benchmarking analysis comparing Prescott’s Development Services Process against a set of peer communities. The purpose of the analysis is not to rank Prescott against other cities or to identify best practices for wholesale adoption. Rather, it is to identify what is common across communities of similar scale and character and what is specific to how Prescott operates, and to ground the recommendations that follow in a broader understanding of how peer jurisdictions approach similar work.

Three questions guide the benchmarking analysis:

1. How does Prescott compare to peer communities in terms of size, staffing, and residential growth activity?
2. Where do observable differences between Prescott and its peers align with themes that emerged from staff and stakeholder engagement?
3. To what extent do those differences help explain the operational and applicant experience patterns documented in this study?

The analysis draws exclusively on publicly available data. The analysis does not compare permit processing timelines between Prescott and its peers. Peer timelines are not available at a level of detail or consistency that would support a valid comparison, and doing so would risk obscuring important differences in how communities define, measure, and report cycle times. Instead, the analysis focuses on the community and organizational factors that shape capacity and on the degree to which peer communities make service expectations visible to applicants.

Benchmark Communities and Selection Criteria

The benchmark community set includes 12 peer jurisdictions alongside Prescott as the subject community. The set was assembled using the following criteria: population scale broadly comparable to Prescott; active residential development and economic activity that generates permit workload; similar geographic and environmental conditions, including access to national forest land and mountain terrain; municipal airport operations, which add regulatory complexity to the development services function; and publicly available data sufficient to support comparison. The set intentionally includes communities across multiple states and regions to avoid conclusions that reflect regional regulatory culture rather than organizational performance.

Ten communities were identified as Strong or Close matches to Prescott’s profile: Carson City, Nevada; Coeur d’Alene, Idaho; Farmington, New Mexico; Grants Pass, Oregon; Harrisonburg, Virginia; Kingman, Arizona; Lake Havasu City, Arizona; Logan, Utah; Prescott Valley, Arizona; and Walla Walla, Washington. Two additional communities, Boulder, Colorado and Fort Collins, Colorado, are included as reference points. Both operate at a materially larger organizational and population scale and are used to illustrate how larger peer departments approach standards and technology, not for direct staffing or workload comparisons. Prescott Valley is included as a direct geographic and market neighbor that draws from the same applicant and developer pool as Prescott.

Data sources include the United States Census Bureau 2024 population estimates and land area data, community development and development services department websites, publicly adopted FY2026 city budgets where available, and direct staff outreach conducted in early 2025. Where data was unavailable or could not be confirmed, cells are noted accordingly in the tables that follow.

Community Context

The tables that follow present comparative data across three dimensions: community overview, department staffing levels, and residential building activity. Table 6 presents population, land area, and population density for Prescott and the full benchmark set, as well as best practice peers Boulder and Fort Collins, Colorado. Among the ten core peers, population ranges from approximately 33,900 residents in Walla Walla to approximately 59,000 in Lake Havasu City. Prescott at 48,224 sits near the middle. At nearly 45 square miles, Prescott’s land area is mid-range among core peers, though its dispersed settlement pattern at roughly 1,072 residents per square mile is toward the lower end compared to more compact peers such as Coeur d’Alene, Grants Pass, and Harrisonburg. Arizona peers Kingman and Prescott Valley share a similar combination of moderate population and dispersed geography, making those communities especially useful for direct comparison.

Table 5: Community Overview

Community	Population (2024)	Land Area (sq. mi.)	Population Density (per sq. mi.)
Lake Havasu City, AZ	59,037	42.00	1,406
Carson City, NV	58,148	157.88	368
Coeur d’Alene, ID	57,355	15.65	3,665
Logan, UT	56,770	18.23	3,114
Prescott Valley, AZ	51,440	40.46	1,271
Harrisonburg, VA	51,164	17.35	2,950
Prescott, AZ	48,224	44.97	1,072
Farmington, NM	46,262	34.46	1,343
Grants Pass, OR	39,468	11.23	3,515
Kingman, AZ	35,383	37.55	942
Walla Walla, WA	33,901	12.82	2,645
Boulder, CO	106,803	24.64	4,335
Fort Collins, CO	170,924	57.21	2,987

Table 7 presents FY2026 department staffing levels and staff-to-population ratios for communities where data was available. Staffing figures reflect departments or divisions responsible for building safety, planning and zoning, and related development services functions. The scope of included functions varies across communities based on how services are organized locally. For Prescott, the 26.0 FTE figure reflects the full FY2026 authorized complement for the Community Development Department, which spans Building Safety, Planning and Zoning, Water Resources, Engineering plan review, and Neighborhood Services. Carson City, Fort Collins, and Walla Walla did not make comparable staffing data available. The Grants Pass figure of approximately 4.0 FTE reflects only its narrowly scoped Community Development Management division and is not directly comparable to the other communities listed.

Staffing comparisons across communities require an important qualifier before the numbers can be interpreted meaningfully. Prescott's department carries a broader functional mandate than most peer departments in this analysis. The 26.0 FTE total includes Building Safety, Planning and Zoning, Water Resources, Engineering plan review, and Neighborhood Services. **Most peer departments cover a narrower set of functions, which means the headline ratio overstates Prescott's effective capacity for core permit processing relative to communities where those functions are split across multiple departments or not present at all.**

With that context, Prescott's ratio of 0.54 staff per 1,000 residents sits in the upper range among core peers with available data. Harrisonburg is at 0.47, Prescott Valley at 0.43, Kingman at 0.37, Lake Havasu at 0.35, and Logan at 0.28. Prescott Valley, which serves the same regional development market and permitted nearly twice as many new residential units in 2024 as Prescott, operates at 0.43 staff per 1,000 residents with a smaller authorized complement. The ratio is one point of context within a benchmarking analysis that is designed to inform interpretation of engagement findings rather than evaluate organizational performance. Staffing adequacy is addressed separately in the Analysis and Recommendations section.

Table 6: Department Staffing Levels and Staff-to-Population Ratios

Community	Dept. Staffing (FTE)	Population (2024 Estimate)	Staff per 1,000 Residents
Coeur d'Alene, ID	52.5	57,355	0.92
Prescott, AZ	26.0	48,224	0.54
Harrisonburg, VA	24.0	51,164	0.47
Prescott Valley, AZ	22.0	51,440	0.43
Farmington, NM	18.0*	46,262	0.39
Kingman, AZ	13.0	35,383	0.37
Carson City, NV	N/A	58,148	N/A
Lake Havasu City, AZ	20.7	59,037	0.35
Logan, UT	16.0	56,770	0.28
Grants Pass, OR	4.0**	39,468	0.10*
Walla Walla, WA	N/A	33,901	N/A
Boulder, CO	122.7	106,803	1.15
Fort Collins, CO	N/A	170,924	N/A

**Farmington represents a portion of a broader Community Services Department that includes typical public works functions; only planning, building, code, and inspection staff are included here.*

***Grants Pass figure reflects a narrowly scoped division, not a full development services department. Not directly comparable.*

Table 8 presents new residential dwelling units permitted in 2024. Among core peers, Prescott's production of 285 units at 5.91 per 1,000 residents sits in the middle of the range. Prescott Valley permitted 544 units at 10.58 per 1,000 residents, the highest normalized rate in the core peer set. Kingman, Coeur d'Alene, and Logan also show elevated normalized production relative to their populations. These figures reflect new construction activity in a single calendar year and should be interpreted as indicative of relative development pressure rather than definitive workload comparisons, as permit mix and project complexity differ across communities.

Table 7: New Residential Dwelling Units Permitted (2024)

Community	New Residential Dwelling Units (2024)	New Units per 1,000 Residents
Prescott Valley, AZ	544	10.58
Kingman, AZ	326	9.21
Coeur d’Alene, ID	482	8.40
Logan, UT	394	6.94
Prescott, AZ	285	5.91
Carson City, NV	251	4.32
Harrisonburg, VA	212	4.14
Walla Walla, WA	133	3.92
Grants Pass, OR	143	3.62
Lake Havasu City, AZ	182	3.08
Farmington, NM	114	2.47
Boulder, CO	168	1.57
Fort Collins, CO	798	4.67

In aggregate, the community context data confirms that Prescott is a broadly comparable subject for this analysis. The ten core peer communities are of similar population scale, face active residential development pressure, and share organizational and geographic characteristics that make comparison meaningful.

Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis focuses on the degree to which peer communities make their development services processes visible and accessible to applicants. This dimension was selected because it is directly observable from public-facing sources and because it connects to themes that emerged consistently during staff and stakeholder engagement: applicants want to know what to expect, how long the process will take, and where their applications stand. The analysis examines two observable factors: the permit management platform in use, which serves as a proxy for technology adoption in the permitting function; and published service level standards for building permit review, planning review, and inspection turnaround.

Carson City uses EnerGov and publishes standards across all three dimensions. Over-the-counter permits for minor residential and mechanical work are processed in approximately two business days. Planning review comments are issued approximately two weeks after application deadlines. Inspections are conducted within 24 hours if requested before 4:00 pm.

Coeur d’Alene operates a custom in-house permit management system and publishes standards for both building and planning review. Single-family residential building permits are targeted at seven to 14 days and commercial projects at four to six weeks. Inspection scheduling requires at least one business day of advance notice.

Farmington uses EnerGov but does not publish review or inspection standards for applicants. The absence of published standards is notable given the platform’s capacity to support applicant-facing communications.

Grants Pass uses EnerGov and conducts inspections the next business day after a request. Building and planning review standards are not published in a consistent or readily accessible format.

Harrisonburg uses a LAMA permit management system and publishes standards for all three dimensions. Applicants are informed that first building review comments will be issued within 20 business days. Planning reviews take at least 60 days. Inspections are conducted the same day if called in by 12:30 pm.

Kingman uses Granicus and publishes tiered building review standards of 10 days for residential projects and 20 days for commercial, with up to an additional 10 days for re-review. Revision reviews in planning are targeted at 10 business days. Inspections are conducted the same day if called in before 7:00 am, or the next business day after that.

Lake Havasu City's permit management platform is not documented in publicly available sources. The city publishes tiered building permit review standards ranging from 10 days for miscellaneous work to 35 days for multifamily and commercial projects, and planning review standards differentiated by project type. Inspection turnaround standards are not published.

Logan uses iWorQ and publishes review standards that differentiate between simple permits, which may be issued over the counter, and permits requiring plans, which carry up to a two-week review period. Inspection scheduling is managed by the permit holder at required project stages.

Prescott Valley's permit management platform is not documented in publicly available sources. The city does not publish building review or planning review standards. Inspections may be requested before 6:30 am for same-day service and can be scheduled up to five days in advance.

Walla Walla uses Granicus and does not publish service level standards for building review, planning review, or inspection turnaround.

Boulder uses EnerGov and publishes general review timeframe guidance for applicants. Inspection scheduling runs approximately 12 days out. Fort Collins uses Accela and publishes the most detailed service level standards in the benchmark set, with building review timeframes differentiated by project type and inspection service within 24 hours if requested before 11:00 pm.

Table 9 on the next page summarizes these findings across the full benchmark set.

Table 8: Stakeholder-Facing Resources and Published Service Level Standards

Community	Permit Management Platform	Published Building Review Standards	Published Planning Review Standards	Published Inspection Standards
Prescott, AZ	CentralSquare (under evaluation)	Published per ARS §9-835; not actively communicated to applicants	Not published separately	Not published
Carson City, NV	EnerGov	Yes (OTC permits approx. 2 business days)	Yes (approx. 2 weeks after deadline)	Yes (24 hours if requested before 4:00 pm)
Coeur d’Alene, ID	In-house system	Yes (7–14 days SFR; 4–6 weeks commercial)	Yes (40-day compliance report requirement)	Yes (1+ business day advance notice)
Farmington, NM	EnerGov	Not published	Not published	Not published
Grants Pass, OR	EnerGov	Not documented	Not documented	Yes (next business day)
Harrisonburg, VA	LAMA	Yes (up to 20 business days first review)	Yes (at least 60 days)	Yes (same day if called in by 12:30 pm)
Kingman, AZ	Granicus	Yes (10 days residential; 20 days commercial)	Yes (10 business days for revisions)	Yes (same day before 7:00 am; next day after)
Lake Havasu City, AZ	Not documented	Yes (tiered by type, 10–35 days)	Yes (30–35 days by type)	Not published
Logan, UT	iWorQ	Yes (up to 2 weeks; OTC for simple permits)	Yes (dependent on meeting schedules)	Yes (scheduled by permit holder at required stages)
Prescott Valley, AZ	Not documented	Not published	Not published	Yes (same day if called before 6:30 am)
Walla Walla, WA	Granicus	Not published	Not published	Not published
Boulder, CO	EnerGov	Yes (up to 8 weeks for full review)	Yes (results approx. 3 weeks after review track)	No (12 days reported; not formally published)
Fort Collins, CO	Accela	Yes (9–21–35 days by project type)	Yes (up to 60 days completeness; schedule varies)	Yes (within 24 hours if before 11:00 pm)

Key Insights: Benchmarking

The ten core peer communities span a population range of approximately 33,900 to 59,000 residents, placing Prescott near the center of a comparable cluster.

Most share Prescott’s combination of moderate population, mountain terrain, national forest proximity, and municipal airport operations. Boulder and Fort Collins are larger in organizational and population scale and are best used as reference points for understanding what published standards and technology adoption look like at greater capacity, not as direct operational benchmarks.

Prescott's staffing ratio of 0.54 staff per 1,000 residents sits in the upper range among core peers, but this figure reflects a department that carries more functions than most peer comparisons account for.

Water Resources, Private Engineering Review, Neighborhood Services, and Airport review are included in Prescott's count and are not present in most peer departments. The effective capacity available for core permit processing is proportionally smaller than the headline figure suggests.

Prescott Valley, Prescott's closest geographic and market peer, permitted 544 new residential dwelling units in 2024 at a normalized rate of 10.58 per 1,000 residents, compared to Prescott's 285 units at 5.91 per 1,000.

Both departments serve overlapping applicant and developer pools and operate within the same regional market. The staffing ratio does not account for this difference. Process design, technology capability, and organizational focus likely all contribute. This should be researched further to determine variables likely responsible for the difference in outcomes. This will help staff to communicate more effectively, providing the necessary insight to accurately contextualize perceived and real differences between each organization's permitting process and outcomes.

Prescott already publishes building permit review timelines as required under Arizona Revised Statutes §9-835.

While time standards exist already, they are not actively communicated to applicants in the way most peer communities do, and they are not consistently used as an internal performance accountability mechanism. Time standards should reflect the relative requirements and complexity of each permit type and should not take a one-size-fits-all approach. Importantly, achieving service level standards consistently across all permit types depends on coordination, staffing, and process execution across all functions involved in plan review. In other words, the successful provision of development services is a city-wide team effort.

Inspection turnaround standards are published by most peer communities and most target same-day or next-business-day service.

Prescott provides next-business-day inspection service and publishes this standard on the department website, which is consistent with most peer communities in the benchmark set. The lead inspector currently schedules routes manually before work because the current system does not support in-field dynamic scheduling. Addressing that limitation through the technology improvements described in Recommendation 15 would improve both the efficiency of scheduling and the department's ability to report on inspection performance over time.

Most core peer communities use commercial permit management platforms, including EnerGov, Accela, Granicus, and iWorQ.

The applicant experience themes from the surveys are consistent with a platform that limits transparency: applicants reported uncertainty about where their applications stood and what to expect next. Addressing that experience gap will depend in part on how CentralSquare is configured and what functionality is built out, which is addressed in the recommendations. The applicant experience themes from the surveys are consistent with a platform that limits transparency: applicants reported uncertainty about where their applications stood and what to expect next. Peers have addressed this problem in part through platform selection. Prescott's upcoming technology decision is the primary opportunity to close this gap.

The benchmarking data points to three specific and addressable gaps between Prescott and its peers:

the active communication of service standards that in several cases already exist, technology platform capability, and the organizational infrastructure needed to monitor and report performance consistently. None of these represent fundamental structural failures. The Building Safety recovery from 62.9% to 96.0% SLS compliance following a targeted leadership hire demonstrates that the department’s underlying capability is sound. Recommendations in this review address the supporting structure needed to sustain and replicate that result across the full operation.

A final and important qualification applies to all benchmarking comparisons of this kind.

It is nearly impossible to construct a true apples-to-apples comparison between any two development services operations. Communities differ in what they count as a permit, how they measure a review cycle, what functions sit within a department, how their land development codes define review obligations, and what level of service applicants expect and have historically received. Published timelines and formal service level standards are useful for one specific purpose in this analysis: understanding what applicants and developers see when they compare Prescott to other communities where they do business. A developer who works in Kingman, Lake Havasu City, and Prescott simultaneously makes comparisons based on what is visible. Whether those published standards reflect operationally equivalent processes, or whether communities meeting their published standards are doing so under similar levels of complexity and constraint, is not answerable from publicly available data. The value of the benchmarking in this report is therefore contextual, not evaluative. It describes the environment Prescott operates in, not a performance ranking within it.

The analysis and recommendations that follow draw on the full body of evidence gathered in this study: staff and stakeholder engagement, permit data analysis, and the benchmarking context presented here.

Analysis and Recommendations

This project began in November 2025 with six guiding goals:

- Align staff resources and organizational structure to meet current and future demand.
- Enhance process efficiency and deliver a consistent, high-quality applicant experience.
- Design workflows that produce measurable improvements in permit processing speed and review timelines.
- Build a culture of continuous improvement and equip staff to drive change in service delivery.
- Evaluate the overall effectiveness of CDD operations against the City's needs and the development community's expectations.
- Position the City for sustained excellence through evidence-based, realistic, implementable recommendations.

These goals shaped how staff and Council interviews were structured, how the permit data analysis was framed, and how benchmarking was used to interpret what was heard and observed.

As the engagement progressed, individual findings began to connect across topics, and the same underlying conditions showed up across multiple methods. As staff interviews, Council interviews, process mapping workshops, applicant and employee surveys, permit data analysis, and benchmarking were reviewed together, five improvement categories emerged. The sections below frame those categories and set up the supporting recommendations.

The 17 recommendations that follow address the challenges and opportunities identified across this analysis.

Staffing and Structure

This section includes recommendations related to issues of staffing and structure that impact Department operations.

Recommendation 1: Address vacancies and retention in Community Development.

Of 26 authorized positions in Community Development, four were vacant at the time of this review, a vacancy rate of approximately 15%. Over the past five years, the Director and Chief Building Official positions were each vacant for nearly one year. Additional vacancies in Planning, Building, Operations, and Neighborhood Services have stretched staff across multiple roles simultaneously. Staff interviews identified similar vacancy challenges in the Fire and Public Works Departments, both of which participate in the development review process and whose delays are reflected in the Department's plan review timeline data.

In staff interviews and survey responses, compensation and job duty inconsistency were cited as contributing factors to turnover. Specific examples included staff moving to other City departments where job duties for the same classification were less demanding, and staff departing for the private sector or neighboring jurisdictions with more competitive pay. Prescott's high cost of living amplifies this dynamic. Building inspectors interviewed during this engagement noted that only two or three staff in the entire Department could afford to live in the city at current wage levels, and that starting pay has not kept pace with the local housing market. The CBO observed that the City was eighth in the hiring order for its most recent inspector vacancy because qualified candidates accepted higher offers elsewhere.

The cost of vacancies is not limited to recruitment. In the industry, it can take up to one year to bring a permit reviewer fully up to speed on local codes and requirements. Each vacancy represents not only a gap in capacity but a gap in institutional knowledge that compounds over time, particularly in a department where the Director and CBO have both been in their roles for less than two years and where planned retirements are approaching in the next several years.

To address these challenges, CDD should work with City Human Resources to ensure that compensation and benefits for development review positions are assessed against current market conditions, with particular attention to Building and Engineering plan reviewer classifications where recruitment difficulty is most acute. Internally, the Department should document the specific reasons behind staff departures and internal transfers and use that information to develop targeted retention strategies for the hardest-to-fill roles. CDD should track vacancy rates in reviewing functions, including Fire and Public Works positions outside of CDD that directly affect development review timelines, and report them to the Director and City Manager as a service delivery metric. This recommendation connects directly to Recommendation 2, which addresses career ladder development as a longer-term retention tool.

Recommendation 2: Build opportunities for employee succession.

Community Development has several long-tenured staff approaching retirement eligibility in technically specialized positions. Staff interviews confirmed awareness of this risk. Some managers, who have a short horizon before retirement, have identified and begun to train successors to fill their roles, including the CBO, who has identified the Lead Inspector as a likely successor and is actively cross-training plan reviewers and inspectors in anticipation. That level of intentional succession planning is not yet embedded as a department-wide practice, and no formal promotional title structures exist to support it.

In the absence of defined career ladders, staff have limited paths for advancement other than waiting for a supervisory position to open. This constraint was raised in staff interviews across multiple divisions. One staff member with significant tenure noted going years without clarity on how to advance or earn more. The Planning Manager, who is six months into her role and managing her first supervisory assignment, similarly identified management training and long-range planning experience as gaps she would benefit from developing, and noted that no formal development pathway exists to support that growth.

To address the structural gap in career development, Community Development should collaborate with City Human Resources to add promotional titles for Planners, Building Inspectors, and Plans Examiners. For Planning, this would involve splitting existing titles into Assistant and Associate Planner grades consistent with American Planning Association standards, while retaining Planning Technician as an entry role and Senior Planner and Planning Manager above. For Building, a four-step ladder of Apprentice, Inspector I, Inspector II, and Senior Inspector would provide meaningful progression. For Plans Examiners, an Apprentice grade alongside the existing Examiner I and II levels would follow the same model. Each promotional step should carry a modest salary increase and increased project-level responsibility, not supervisory authority. The Apprentice classifications are particularly valuable because they create a financially accessible entry point for candidates with limited experience, which is a practical tool for building succession depth in a difficult recruitment market.

This recommendation can be phased in over time and does not require all levels to be filled simultaneously. It is likely that a given division might have two staff at one level and none at another. The Department should coordinate with City HR on classification descriptions and compensation alignment. The framework is most effective when tied to a formal mentorship or assignment structure that connects promotional progression to actual skill development, not just tenure.

Recommendation 3: Add 1.0 FTE to the Water Resources Division.

The Water Resources Division consists of three full-time positions: a Water Resources Manager and two Water Resource Project Managers. One of those positions is also responsible for permit plan review and applicant inquiries related to water. In interviews, staff confirmed that half of working time for that position and 25% of the other Water Resources Manager's time is consumed by permit processing and inquiry response, leaving limited capacity for the water conservation, demand management, and scenario modeling work that is higher priority for the Division.

The Division also faces a substantial backlog of strategic work. The City has over 50 of known development agreements, many of which carry water approval terms, and many of which have not been comprehensively reviewed or catalogued. A Long-Term Water Management Plan is underway but proceeds slowly given the competing demands outlined above. Staff also described redundancy as a concern: if any one of the three Division positions were to become vacant, the City would lose critical expertise in a key function.

To address these capacity and redundancy gaps, the City should add 1.0 FTE to the Water Resources Division with primary responsibility for water-related plan review. Shifting review duties to a dedicated position would free existing technical staff to focus on the Water Management Plan, development agreement assessment, and water allocation coordination. The new position would also provide the Division with a degree of operational redundancy it currently lacks. The title and classification for this position should be developed in coordination with City Human Resources.

Recommendation 4: Add 1.0 FTE Management Analyst to the Operations Division

Community Development provided a significant volume of detailed operational data for this engagement, including permit processing records, review cycle data, and timeline performance by permit type and reviewing department. The analysis that Raftelis produced from this data, including on-time rate trends, correction rate trajectories, phase duration distributions, and predictability profiles by permit type, represents the kind of insight that should be generated and used regularly within the Department, not only in the context of an external engagement. At present, that analytical work falls primarily to the Operations Manager and Director, both of whom carry broader strategic and external-facing responsibilities that compete with the time required to produce and act on data.

The consequence of this gap is predictable. Performance data is reviewed when capacity allows, not on a consistent cycle. Council and the public lack access to regular reporting on process performance. The evidentiary basis for staffing requests and process changes develops slowly. Building Safety Plans Examination's improvement from 57.7% on-time route compliance in 2024 to 86.7% for all of 2025 and 93.8% in the period after May 2025 demonstrates what becomes possible when focused management attention is brought to bear on a specific performance challenge. These figures measure the share of individual plan review routes completed within the assigned deadline, and the trend is unambiguous. Sustaining and replicating that kind of improvement across the Department requires dedicated analytical capacity, not periodic attention.

To build that capacity, the Department should add 1.0 FTE Management Analyst to the Operations Division. The position should be responsible for maintaining and reporting on performance data, developing and tracking service-level and customer service standards, coordinating the internal IT User Group and IT consultant or staff as described in Recommendations 14 and 15 respectively, supporting continuous improvement efforts across divisions, and guiding the public communication and transparency work described in Recommendations 13 and 17. The position should report to the Operations Manager.

Recommendation 5: Add 1.0 FTE administrative position to the Operations Division.

CDD operates without dedicated administrative support for Planning, a condition that is unusual relative to peer organizations. The Administrative Coordinator position provided broad support across the Department before the incumbent moved to another City department; that position was vacant at the time of this engagement. Planning

and Code Enforcement both carry significant administrative demands, including letter preparation, public noticing, case correspondence, and records management, that are currently absorbed by technical staff. Planning staff noted during interviews that one temporary part-time position is handling much of the administrative processing associated with the planning project workflow, but that this arrangement is not a sustainable solution.

When technical staff regularly perform administrative tasks, time available for professional work is reduced and processing timelines extend. This is not a capacity issue that can be resolved through improved efficiency alone. It reflects a structural gap: the Department does not have the administrative baseline needed to support its current scope of work at the professional level expected of its technical staff.

To address this gap, the City should add 1.0 FTE administrative position to the Operations Division. The position should provide general administrative support across the Department, with a primary focus on Planning and Code Enforcement given their noticing and correspondence demands. The Operations Manager should define work prioritization protocols at the time of hire to ensure the position serves the broadest departmental need rather than defaulting by proximity to one division. This position should report to the Operations Manager.

Recommendation 6: Reorganize and move Development Services Representatives, Engineers, and Neighborhood Services Representatives to align with technical specialties.

Development Services Representatives, Private Engineering Reviewers, and Neighborhood Services Representatives currently report to the Operations Manager. In practice, DSRs and Private Engineering Review staff typically do most of their day-to-day work in close coordination with the Chief Building Official and the Building division, while NSRs work primarily alongside Planning in the context of code enforcement and zoning violations. The Operations Manager, who arrived in August 2024 and has been simultaneously absorbing vacant positions and managing a wide span of control, described this arrangement as limiting his ability to focus the Operations Division on department-wide process improvement, IT coordination, and the kind of strategic work the role was designed to support.

A review of peer communities found that this reporting arrangement is atypical. Across the five benchmark cities reviewed as part of this engagement, permit technicians and development services representatives report to either the Building Official, a Planning division, or a dedicated permit center manager. Code enforcement staff similarly report to a Planning or Community Development manager in most peer communities, not to an operations generalist. The current structure in Prescott means that technically specialized staff receive supervisory oversight from a function that is not positioned to provide the day-to-day technical guidance those roles require.

To bring the Department's structure into alignment with both peer practice and technical coordination, the City should relocate Development Services Representatives under the Chief Building Official, where they are already functionally aligned. Once the Engineering Review Supervisor position is filled, this team should report to the Director as originally planned. Neighborhood Services Representatives should be relocated under the Planning Manager, given the direct relationship between code enforcement activity and planning and zoning functions. With these reporting changes in place, the Operations Division can refocus on department-wide projects, IT coordination, data analysis, and continuous improvement, supported by the Management Analyst and administrative support positions described in Recommendations 4 and 5. This is a reporting change only and does not involve changes to compensation or position responsibilities.

Table 9: Peer Reporting for DSRs and NSRs

Benchmark City	Development Services Representatives (DSRs), e.g. Permit Technicians	Neighborhood Services Representatives (NSRs), e.g. Code Enforcement Officers
Prescott, AZ	3.0 DSRs under CDD-Operations Manager	2.0 NSRs under CDD-Operations Manager
Carson City, NV	Permit Center within CDD, reports to Director	Code Division within CDD, reports to Code Enforcement Manager
Coeur d'Alene, ID	3.0 Permit Technician in CDD-Building	2.5 Code Enforcement Officer - Police
Grants Pass, OR	1.0 Planning Technician in CDD-Planning	2.0 Property Specialist in Police Department
Lake Havasu, AZ	2.0 Permit Technicians report to Lead in Development Services	2.0 under Development Services - Code Enforcement Manager
Prescott Valley, AZ	3.0 Planning Technicians	2.0 Codes Specialist in Neighborhood Services Code Compliance Division under 1.0 Codes Supervisor

Should all of these recommendations be implemented, the resulting new Department organization chart is as shown in Figure 14 below. Positions in blue are proposed new positions and those in green reflect moves within the organizational structure.

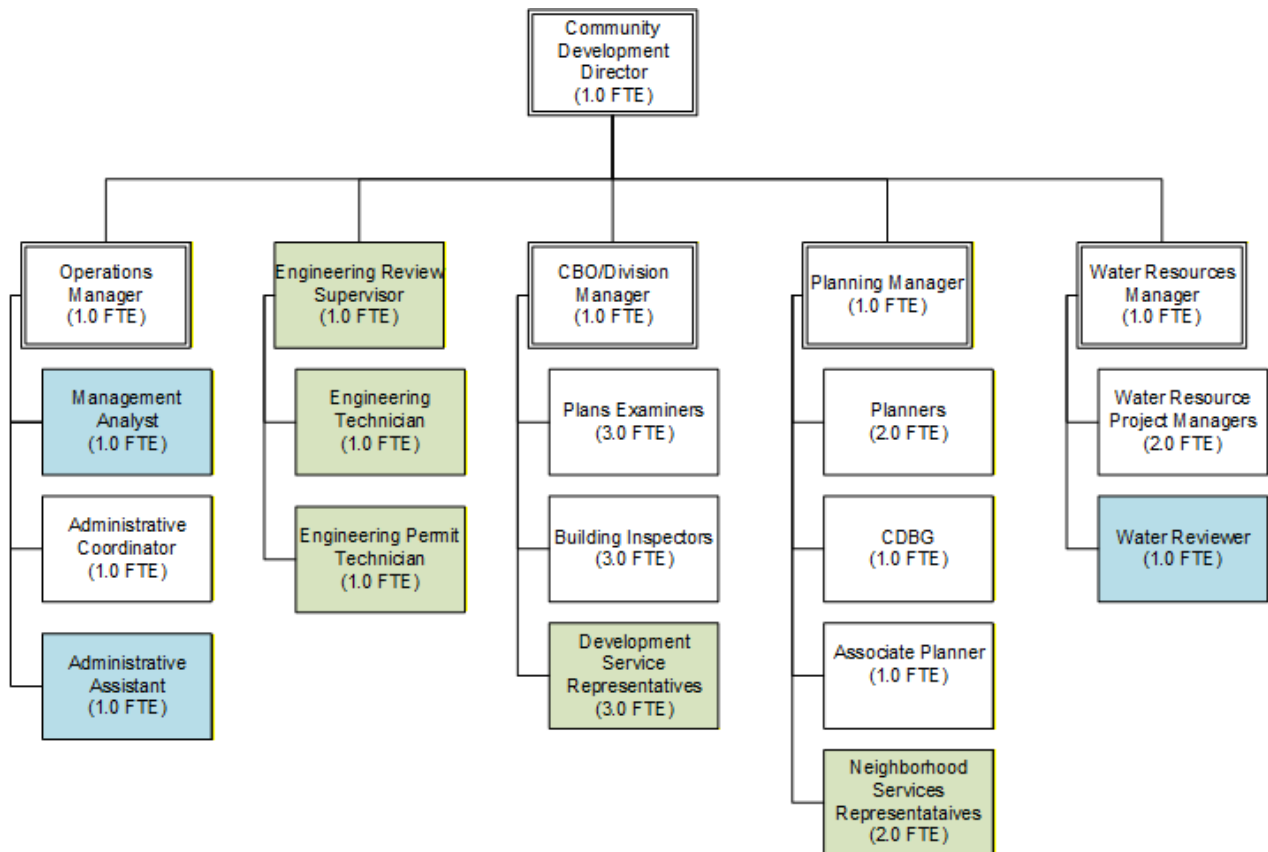


Figure 14: Proposed New CDD Organization Chart

Process Improvements

This section includes recommendations related to issues that impact operational processing and service delivery.

Recommendation 7: Formalize Water Resources participation thresholds and accountability in the pre-application conference (PAC) process.

Water Resources is currently included as a PAC reviewer, and staff consult the division when a non-standard situation is encountered. The Water Resources Division was formally reorganized into CDD in May 2025, and its integration into the broader development review workflow was still maturing at the time of this engagement. At the PAC level, the primary water-related determination is whether a Water Service Application assessment is or is not required, which represents the baseline of what can be confirmed before a full design is submitted. For projects with more complex water implications, the quality of PAC-level input depends on what the applicant has submitted and whether the right staff are engaged.

Process mapping and staff interviews identified two gaps in the current approach. First, no published threshold exists defining which project types or characteristics trigger substantive Water Resources review at the PAC stage beyond the basic WSA determination. Second, there is no formal escalation process to ensure additional Water Resources review for complex PAC projects. When design teams do not attend the PAC, or when early PAC comments are based on incomplete conceptual information, the same issues can reappear in the first round of formal review, adding correction cycles that an earlier, more structured engagement would have prevented.

To strengthen Water Resources integration at the pre-application stage, CDD should develop and publish clear thresholds defining when Water Resources is expected to attend PAC and provide input beyond the standard WSA determination. These thresholds should be project-type based and should reflect the division's current capacity. A tracking mechanism should be established so that Water Resources PAC input is logged in the permit record and accessible to all reviewers in subsequent rounds. For projects that arrive at PAC without a full design team or sufficiently developed plans, staff should have a clear protocol for recommending a second PAC rather than attempting to provide comment on incomplete information. These changes can be implemented through updated PAC SOPs and do not require system configuration work.

Recommendation 8: Add Water Resources review steps to the CentralSquare workflow to eliminate manual workarounds.

Staff and process mapping confirmed that Water Issues Subcommittee review steps are not currently integrated into CentralSquare's permit workflow. The WIS meets monthly to review larger water allocation requests, and when a project requires WIS review, staff manage that coordination through parallel tracking systems outside CentralSquare. This is not a capability gap in the system. CentralSquare has more functionality than is currently configured, and staff noted that the bandwidth to complete configuration work has not been available. The result is manual coordination that introduces handoff risk, reduces visibility for other reviewers, and consumes staff time that could otherwise support technical review.

The same dynamic applies to entitlement-track applications more broadly. For every project that reaches the entitlement stage, staff currently maintain parallel tracking outside CentralSquare because hearing steps have not been built into the workflow. Addressing this is not a question of whether the system can support it, but of dedicating the time and support to complete the configuration.

To address this gap, CDD should work with the internal IT User Group described in Recommendation 14 and the dedicated technology support described in Recommendation 15 to prioritize WIS workflow integration and entitlement-track configuration as early items in the system improvement plan. The Operations Manager should

define the configuration requirements and include them in the scope given to any IT consultant or dedicated technology staff capacity engaged through Recommendation 15.

Recommendation 9: Review and update submittal checklists by permit type to address the most common applicant errors.

Multiple rounds of plan review are among the strongest drivers of processing delay and applicant dissatisfaction in Prescott. Permit data analysis found that while approximately 75% of individual review cycles are completed within two weeks, Building permits in particular trend toward more review rounds than comparable permit types in peer communities. The corrections rate, meaning the share of issued permits that required more than one round of plan review, stood at 27.8% in 2025. While that figure represents meaningful improvement from 40.9% in 2023, it still reflects a substantial volume of projects requiring additional review cycles and contributing to customer dissatisfaction and delays. Staff survey respondents consistently identified incomplete submittals as a key driver of that dynamic, and operations staff described completeness check enforcement as inconsistent.

The completeness check process exists in the Department's workflow but has been applied unevenly. In some cases, responsibility for completeness review has migrated from Development Services Representatives to technical reviewers, with the result that individual applications have required multiple completeness rounds before formal review begins. The current fee and deposit structure does not fully recover the cost of intake review time, which reduces a financial incentive to encourage applicants to prepare more complete packages prior to submission, as is commonly done in peer communities.

To address the root causes of excessive review cycles, the City should review and update submittal checklists by permit type to provide guidance and address the most common applicant errors identified in recent review history, beginning with Building and Public Works permit types where correction rates are highest. A clear policy should be established that if a completeness check fails, the application is returned with a specific deficiency list and does not advance to technical review. Completeness review should be reinforced as a Development Services Representative responsibility, and those staff should receive targeted training to apply it consistently and be backed up in these duties by upper management and City policymakers. The fee and deposit structure should be revised to ensure that intake review time is recoverable, which is both a cost recovery improvement and an incentive to applicants to submit complete and high-quality submissions. These changes are closely connected to Recommendation 11, which addresses fee-based incentives to reduce resubmittals once an application is in formal review.

Recommendation 10: Enhance education to applicants in preparing submittals.

Applicant submittal quality is a recurring contributor to extended and repeat review cycles and is documented in both survey and permit data. Staff survey respondents identified incomplete submittals as one of the top drivers of review delay, alongside staffing constraints and multi-department coordination complexity. Applicant survey respondents identified clarity of expectations as among the most influential factors in their development review experience and described clearer upfront guidance as a high-priority improvement opportunity. Permit data analysis found that the system-wide corrections rate, meaning the share of issued permits requiring more than one review round, was 27.8% in 2025. The highest correction volumes were concentrated in Single Family Residential, Commercial, Accessory Structure, Fence, and Electrical permit types, together accounting for approximately 78% of all corrections recorded in 2025.

The Department has meaningful existing resources for applicant guidance, including the Prescott Permit Help Center and online submittal portal, but staff believe that applicants frequently do not engage with these resources before submitting. First-time and residential applicants, in particular, arrive at the counter or submit applications without a clear understanding of what is required, and the resulting back-and-forth extends timelines for those applicants and for the reviewers whose capacity is consumed in the process. Processing performance data is not currently published

publicly, which limits the Department's ability to demonstrate improvement to Council, the development community, and the public.

To improve applicant preparedness and build public transparency around Department performance, the City should develop a targeted education effort focused on the permit types and error categories that account for the largest share of corrections. Instructional videos covering submittal requirements and process expectations for the top five permit types by volume, starting with Single Family Residential and Commercial given their correction volumes, should be added to the Department's website. Performance metrics and trend data, including on-time rates by permit type and corrections rates over time, should be published alongside the existing timeline standards. Applicants should be required to submit the PAC comment letter with their formal application as confirmation of review. These investments in applicant education and public transparency are complementary to the process improvements described above, which address the same problem from the internal review side. CDD has identified bandwidth as a constraint on implementing this recommendation in the near term. Prioritizing the Management Analyst position described in Recommendation 4 would provide the capacity needed to build and maintain these resources over time.

Recommendation 11: Create financial incentives to reduce applicant resubmittals.

Despite the City's efforts to provide updated checklists and provide applicants with information required to submit a complete application, it is not uncommon for a subset of applicants to use City technical reviewers to design, rather than review, their plans. Many communities have implemented tiered fee structures that charge applicants for plan review rounds beyond a defined threshold as a way of creating a financial incentive for higher-quality first submissions. As one example, the City of Phoenix charges 20% of the site plan review fee for a third review and above and requires full resubmittal fees for projects not approvable after the second correction. The Town of Prescott Valley charges an hourly rate of \$106 for Building plan check rounds three or above. Lake Havasu City, Arizona applies a flat resubmittal fee at a similar threshold. Prescott does not currently apply additional fees for multiple resubmittal rounds beyond what is captured in deposit structures for some project types.

The absence of a fee-based consequence for excessive resubmittals reduces the incentive for applicants and their design consultants to invest in complete, code-compliant plan sets on the first attempt. Repeated resubmittals consume reviewer capacity that cannot be redirected to other applications and which may not be cost recovered, and their effect on processing timelines extends to all applicants in the queue, not just those resubmitting. The permit data analysis conducted for this engagement found that the corrections rate, while declining, remains at 27.8% system-wide in 2025, with the highest volumes concentrated in Single Family Residential, Commercial, and Accessory Structure permit types.

To create a meaningful incentive for improved submittal quality, the City should implement a tiered fee structure for plan review resubmittals that applies an additional charge beginning at the third review round for Building and, where applicable, Planning permit types. The fee amount and trigger threshold should be calibrated against local peer practices and developed in coordination with Finance. The structure should be clearly communicated to applicants at intake, at the pre-application conference, and in the Department's published guidance materials. A fee schedule amendment and potential City Council action will be required, and engagement with the local contractor and developer community before formal adoption is recommended to reduce resistance and build understanding.

Recommendation 12: Include additional project types in the PAC process and incorporate administrative policy changes to improve effectiveness.

The existing Pre-Application Conference (PAC) process is among the strongest elements of Prescott's development review environment and was described positively by staff, the Director, and Water Resources personnel during this engagement. The PAC is currently required for all new commercial and multifamily projects, is held every Thursday, is free of charge, and is supported by a consolidated comment letter distributed to the applicant one to two hours

before the meeting. All major reviewing disciplines participate, and the comment letter is valid for one year following the conference. Process mapping confirmed that the PAC consistently surfaces material review issues before an applicant commits to a full plan set.

Despite these strengths, the PAC process has identifiable gaps that limit its effectiveness in certain situations. When applicants attend without their design team, PAC comments are often not translated into the formal submission, and the same issues surface again in the first round of review. Fire staff and other reviewers noted that when the people attending are not the ones doing the technical design work, the value of the meeting is reduced for everyone. Staff also noted that the language used to describe PAC outcomes, including terms that imply conditional approval, can create applicant expectations that are not aligned with the formal review process that follows.

At the same time, the PAC's openness is one of its strengths. Property owners exploring ideas before committing to a full design benefit from early access to staff input. Adding mandatory submittal requirements at that stage would create a barrier that works against that goal.

To strengthen PAC effectiveness without reducing access, CDD should establish a clear protocol for recommending a second PAC meeting when an applicant arrives without a design team or with insufficient project development to support meaningful review. Staff should have authority to flag a project as not yet ready for formal PAC output and to schedule a follow-up without requiring a formal application. Language in PAC comment letters that imply approval should be replaced with neutral terms such as "proceed to application" or "sufficient for next step." WUI zone projects should be confirmed as subject to the existing mandatory PAC threshold where they are not already covered. Applicants should be required to submit the PAC comment letter alongside their formal application as confirmation of prior review. Water Resources and Airport should provide written input on all applicable projects, using the thresholds described under Recommendation 7. These changes can be implemented through updated SOPs and revised PAC application materials and do not require new resources.

Recommendation 13: Implement processing time service level standards for DSP processes.

Processing time service level standards are posted on the City's website as required by Arizona Revised Statutes Section 9-835, and the Department tracks review deadlines internally through CentralSquare. As established in the benchmarking analysis, these standards are not actively communicated to applicants and are not consistently used as an internal performance accountability and process improvement mechanism. The Director's stated goals of 10 working days for first submittals and five working days for resubmittals for certain permit types would place Prescott at the competitive end of the peer range and represent an appropriate near-term target. Plan review route on-time performance by functional area, drawn from the permit data analysis conducted for this engagement, tells a more differentiated story than the system-wide average suggests. These figures measure whether individual plan review routes, meaning a single reviewer's assigned review of a specific permit, were completed within the assigned deadline. They do not represent permit-level completion rates, but they are the most consistent available measure of review performance across functions.

Overall, the system-wide on-time rate across all functional areas moved from 73.7% in 2023 to 68.1% in 2024 before recovering to 79.7% for all of 2025 and 85.6% in the period after May 2025. The 2024 decline reflects the period of leadership vacancies that affected multiple divisions simultaneously. Building Safety Plans Examination shows the most improvement: 66.9% in 2023, 57.7% in 2024, 86.7% for all of 2025, and 93.8% after May 2025. Planning and Zoning follows a similar pattern, recovering from 62.7% in 2024 to 82.7% in 2025 and 91.7% after May 2025. Fire is the persistent exception. Its on-time rate was 59.1% in 2023, improved to 70.4% in 2024, and then declined to 63.7% in 2025 and 65.3% after May 2025. Fire's staffing vacancy and resulting capacity constraint are documented

elsewhere in this report and directly explain this pattern. No unified, publicly reported performance dashboard currently exists.

The gap between the improvement in system-wide performance and the underperformance in specific high-volume permit types is important context. The data suggests that the gains achieved since May 2025 are concentrated in certain permit types and divisions, while others have not yet benefited from the same improvements. Council members described being caught off guard by constituent complaints about processing delays because they had no data to reference when responding. Without regular, accessible performance reporting, the Department cannot build credibility with Council and the public that recent improvements warrant, and the internal accountability that drives continued progress is harder to sustain. Performance targets should be set at less than 100% to recognize that every permit type will reliably include a subset of statistical outliers. This should not exceed 5% of all completed permit applications.

To address the gap between internal tracking and external transparency, the City should develop and publish a performance reporting framework that tracks on-time review rates by permit type and reviewing department and reports to the City Manager and City Council on a quarterly basis. An initial on-time target of 90% is consistent with peer standards and should be communicated as a goal the Department intends to reach through continued improvement. Performance data and trend metrics should be added to the Department's public-facing website alongside the existing timeline standards. The Management Analyst position described in Recommendation 4 should build and maintain this reporting function. A basic version of the report can be produced manually using existing CentralSquare data while that position is being filled.

Technology and Data

This section includes recommendations related to the use of technology and data in supporting the Department's operations.

Recommendation 14: Establish a Technology User Group within CDD.

Staff across the Department described a range of technology issues that require workarounds and reduce operational efficiency on a daily basis. These include a field mobile application for building inspectors that cannot send inspection notifications to multiple recipients and cannot accommodate additional inspection types, requiring inspectors to use a desktop version rather than the mobile platform as intended. Front counter computers require staff to leave the counter to complete system tasks, leaving applicants standing alone at the counter. Permit intake screens do not match the actual workflow sequence. Standard monthly reports require manual data manipulation because CentralSquare's built-in reporting tools do not support the formats staff need. Planning's applicant notification letters remain a manual process despite the need for automation being raised with City IT staff. Several reports are broken with no resolution timeline in place. Staff also noted that technology issues are not consistently raised or communicated at internal Department meetings, which means problems accumulate without being flagged for decision-makers and staff may be unaware of fixes that are already in progress.

CentralSquare is a capable permit management platform with significant built-in functionality. The problems described by staff reflect an implementation gap: many of the system's features have not been configured, workflows have not been built out, and training has not kept pace with what the system can do. CDD is operating below what its own system can support, and problems accumulate without a structured mechanism for driving resolution. The permit data analysis found that manual tracking gaps contributed to inconsistent timeline reporting over the analysis period, a direct consequence of this absence.

To close this gap, CDD should establish a CDD Technology User Group that brings together representatives from each division along with City IT and, where relevant, staff from other departments that interact with CDD systems.

The User Group is not an IT-only function; it belongs to CDD and should be coordinated by the Operations Division. The group's purpose is to maintain a running log of technology issues, prioritize them by operational impact, coordinate resolution with City IT and any external support engaged through Recommendation 15, and keep technology improvements on the agenda rather than allowing them to be deferred. A four-quadrant prioritization framework should be used to identify and protect time for improvements that are necessary but not urgent — the category most often deferred in high-workload environments and the one with the greatest potential for lasting operational improvement. City IT's role is to support CDD in this effort. The Operations Manager or Director should meet quarterly with City IT to review the log and report progress back to the User Group, and staff should receive regular updates on the status of known issues.

The User Group should also include a structured training component. Many of the workarounds staff rely on reflect unfamiliarity with system capabilities rather than actual system limitations. Regular training sessions tied to the priority log would reduce workaround reliance and build the internal knowledge base needed to sustain improvements over time.

CDD should also engage directly with the CentralSquare user community. The vendor hosts an annual conference and maintains user groups that provide access to peer experience, implementation guidance, and the vendor's development priorities and upcoming capabilities. Participating in those forums would give CDD direct insight into how comparable jurisdictions have solved similar configuration challenges. The Management Analyst position described in Recommendation 4 should coordinate User Group activity and manage the priority log once that position is filled.

Recommendation 15: Dedicate external consultant staff capacity or internal City IT staff capacity to address CDD technology needs.

CentralSquare is a capable permit management system used successfully by jurisdictions of comparable size and scope. The gaps described by staff in mobile inspection support, workflow configuration, reporting, and WIS integration are not product limitations. They reflect an implementation that has not been fully optimized and a training investment that has not kept pace with the system's capabilities. The mobile application, for example, is used successfully by many municipalities nationwide; the issue in Prescott is that the configuration work has not been completed. Closing these gaps requires dedicated expertise applied to a defined scope of work, not a system replacement.

Without dedicated support focused on CDD's specific technology needs, these gaps will continue to accumulate. Completing system configuration and closing the training gap are preconditions for the Department's ability to integrate water and entitlement review into the permit workflow, automate routine administrative processes, and act consistently on performance data. Staff described spending meaningful time on workarounds in areas where configuration work has not been done, and the permit data analysis identified manual tracking gaps as a contributor to inconsistent timeline reporting over time. City IT is aware of many of these issues but must address them in the context of other citywide IT priorities, and CDD-specific configuration work has not advanced as a result.

To address these technology gaps in a structured and prioritized way, the City should pursue one of two approaches depending on budget and staffing constraints: engage an outside IT consultant on a temporary professional services basis, or hire a dedicated technology position within CDD or City IT with a specific CDD focus and time commitment. An external consultant with direct CentralSquare experience is the recommended starting point. A qualified consultant can accomplish in weeks what internal staff -- who have no dedicated time for configuration work and no vendor-specific expertise -- cannot accomplish in months, and the configuration scope is finite enough that a part-time contractor is likely more practical than a permanent hire. The engagement should begin with a structured assessment: identify specifically why the system is not functioning as needed, map the features and

functions that are available but unused, and build a prioritized business case for configuration improvements. From there, the consultant should execute the highest-priority fixes, develop training materials, and establish documentation that allows CDD staff to maintain the system going forward. At the conclusion of the initial engagement, CDD should evaluate the results and determine the appropriate path: continue with the consultant on a reduced-scope retainer, bring on a part-time staff position, or confirm that no further dedicated support is needed. Internal City IT staff may be preferable for longer-term projects and ongoing maintenance once the initial configuration work is complete.

The scope of the initial engagement should be defined by the CDD Technology User Group described in Recommendation 14 and should include, at minimum: completing outstanding workflow configuration including committee and commission hearing steps and water review integration into the permit workflow, resolving broken or incomplete reporting, addressing the mobile application setup for field inspectors, and evaluating the feasibility of integrating Water Issues Subcommittee steps. The Operations Manager should manage the contract. This item has been included by CDD as part of the FY2027 budget process

Recommendation 16: Continue moving toward data-driven management and process improvement.

The permit data provided by the Department for this engagement was more detailed and consistently organized than what Raftelis typically encounters in comparable municipal assessments. That data made it possible to identify meaningful performance patterns across multiple dimensions. At the permit level, the corrections rate, meaning the share of issued permits requiring more than one round of plan review, declined from 40.9% in 2023 to 27.8% in 2025, a meaningful improvement. The finding that the city controls approximately 65% of total permit processing time, compared to 35% held by applicants, is a particularly useful baseline for prioritizing where improvement efforts should be directed. These are the kinds of findings that should be generated and acted on inside the Department regularly, not only in the context of an external engagement such as this review.

This data infrastructure represents a genuine organizational asset, but it is not yet being used systematically to drive continuous improvement. Manual data manipulation is required for standard reports. CentralSquare's built-in reporting functionality is limited. The staff time needed to analyze trends and follow through on what they reveal is in short supply given current capacity constraints. The result is that the Department's performance data informs external assessments like this one but does not yet consistently inform internal decision-making on staffing, process design, and resource allocation.

To realize the value of this data asset, the City should use the Management Analyst position described in Recommendation 4 to build and maintain a consistent data analysis and reporting function. A standard set of reports should be generated on a defined cycle, including on-time review rates by department and permit type, correction rates, average review cycle counts, and inspection volumes per inspector. These reports should be used strategically by the Director and Operations Manager to evaluate staffing decisions, to identify which permit types need focused process attention, to inform SOP updates, and to anchor Council communications in performance evidence rather than anecdote. Investment in the IT improvements described in Recommendations 14 and 15 should be prioritized in part based on their ability to reduce the manual effort currently required to generate usable data.

Communication and Accountability

This section includes one recommendation related to improvements in communication and accountability.

Recommendation 17: Build community confidence in the Department through consistent, proactive communication and transparency.

Transparency and communication emerged as recurring themes across Council interviews, staff interviews, and the applicant survey. Council members consistently identified gaps in proactive communication as a source of frustration, citing specific instances where issues surfaced publicly before the Department had an opportunity to provide context. Applicants described uncertainty about where their projects stood and what to expect next. Staff identified a lack of regular internal communication about general performance. Taken together, these perspectives point toward a department that has the operational substance to demonstrate strong performance but has not yet built the communication infrastructure to make that performance visible and understood.

To build community confidence in the Department, CDD should continue its regular cadence for proactive public communication about development review activity and performance. A monthly or quarterly written summary distributed to Council and posted publicly should cover on-time review rates, active project volumes, emerging issues, and process improvements underway. All staff reports to Council should include a clear and balanced statement of the pros and cons of a recommended action alongside the staff recommendation itself. The Department should develop a protocol for escalating significant or high-profile issues to Council before they surface publicly, so that elected officials can respond to constituent questions from a position of knowledge rather than surprise. These practices extend beyond Council: the same performance data and process transparency that serves Council also serves the development community and the general public. This recommendation requires Director-level commitment and City Manager support to sustain.

Conclusion

The City of Prescott Community Development Department (CDD) stands at an important juncture. Following a decade defined by lean staffing models and leadership transitions, the Department has successfully entered a period of stabilization. However, to continue moving toward a proactive, high-performing service model, the Department must take the next steps to address structural and systemic challenges identified in this assessment.

The recent appointment of key leadership positions, including the Director, Chief Building Official, and Planning Manager has provided the Department with a vital opportunity to reset organizational culture and standardize expectations. While current staff demonstrate a high level of commitment to the Prescott community, they are stretched thin by a permit volume that has outpaced the core technical capacity restored since the 2008 recession. By implementing the recommended 3.0 FTE additions, specifically in water resource review and administrative support, the City will provide the necessary "breathing room" for staff to continue to move toward proactive performance management and improvement.

Process efficiency can be enhanced by prioritizing necessary IT enhancements to optimize the existing software and its use. Incomplete applications and repeat review cycles can be reduced through a combination of improved checklists, enhanced applicant education, and financial incentives.

Water resources represent a critical piece of development planning for Prescott. Integrating water resource management directly into the Pre-Application Conference (PAC), adding Water Resources review steps into the software, and ensuring sufficient Water Resources staff to handle both development review processing and long-term water planning provides a path forward.

Finally, the transition to a data-driven organization requires a fundamental shift in how the CDD interacts with technology. By empowering a dedicated IT User Group and pursuing the technological refinements outlined in this report, the Department can provide applicants with the transparency they expect, staff with the tools they need to succeed, and management the tools to continuously track and improvement performance.

The 17 recommendations provided in this report offer a roadmap for improvement which may be supplemented by additional specific recommendations from a planned upcoming implementation workshop with CDD staff. Raftelis believes that by prioritizing workforce retention, reducing multiple application review cycles, integrating water resources reviews into the process, and further investing in technological infrastructure, the City of Prescott will ensure that CDD remains a resilient, efficient, and professional partner in the City's continued development. The commitment to excellence is already present within the CDD team; these recommendations provide the structural framework necessary to realize it.

APPENDIX A:
Survey Results

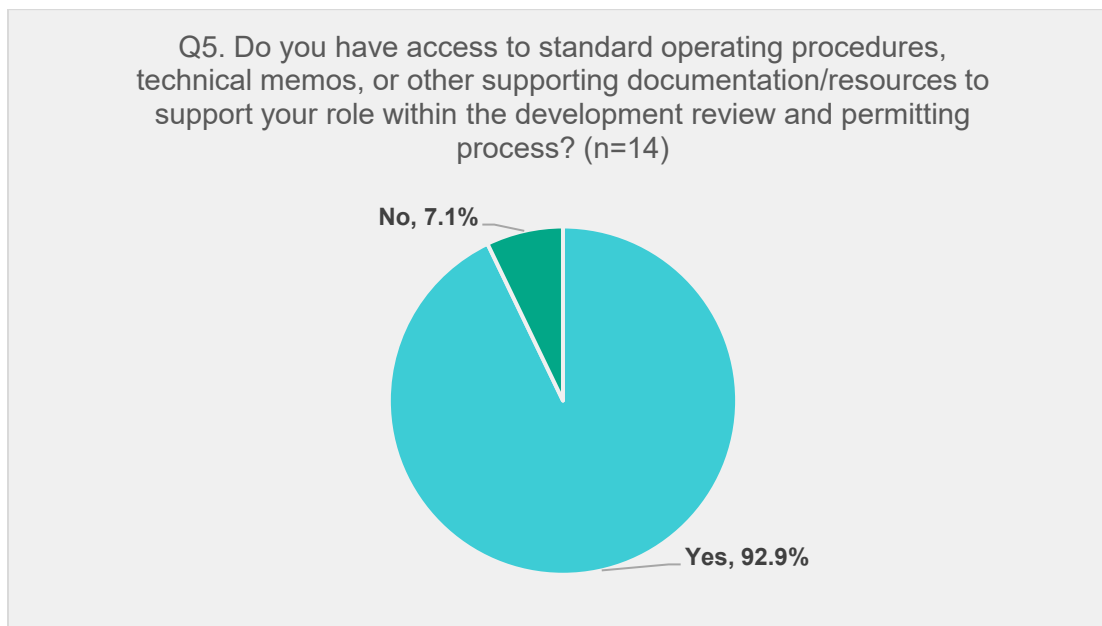
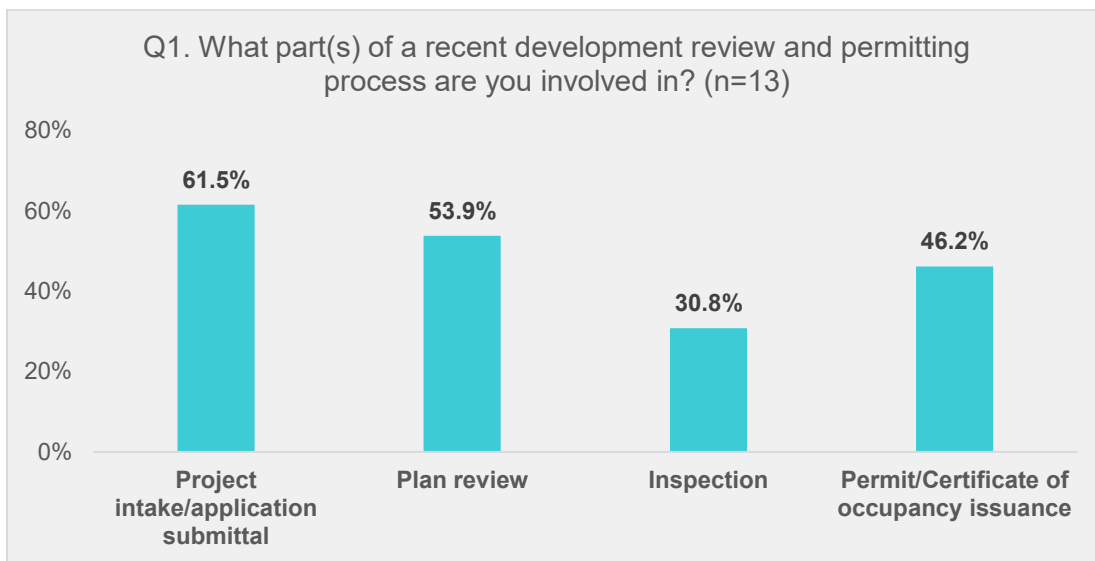
CDD Staff Survey

The City of Prescott's Community Development Department partnered with Raftelis to distribute a survey to its employees and external stakeholders. The purpose of the survey was to gain insights into respondents' views towards the Department's permitting and review processes and identify areas of improvement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF EMPLOYEE SURVEY RESULTS

The employee survey was sent to 28 Community Development Department employees with a response rate of 54%. The survey contained 22 questions which were mostly open-ended.

Analysis of Multiple-Choice/Multiple-Answer Questions



Rating Questions

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of the supporting documentation/resources mentioned in Q5 of the multiple-choice questions. Of those that responded (n=13), the average rating was **3.8** on a 5-point scale with 1 being poor quality and 5 being excellent quality.

Analysis of Open-Ended Responses

Employee survey responses indicate that development review timelines and workload pressures are primarily influenced by staffing capacity, the quality and completeness of applicant submittals, and the complexity of multi-department coordination. Staff consistently described a review environment characterized by high volumes, frequent re-submittals, and competing priorities, which collectively constrain efficiency and responsiveness.

Incomplete or inconsistent application materials emerged as a key driver of rework and extended review cycles. Respondents noted that applicants often lack a clear understanding of City requirements, resulting in repeated revisions and additional staff time. These challenges are compounded by the need for cross-disciplinary and interdepartmental coordination, where handoffs, sequencing, and interpretation of standards can introduce delays.

Staff identified opportunities to improve performance through clearer submittal expectations, stronger up-front completeness checks, and more standardized internal procedures. While procedural guidance exists, perceptions of its usefulness vary, with several respondents noting that documentation is outdated, inconsistently applied, or difficult to access. Improving the clarity, consistency, and accessibility of internal guidance was frequently cited as a near-term opportunity.

Technology and software tools were described as necessary, but imperfect, support for development review. Respondents reported reliance on manual workarounds, limited system functionality, and inefficiencies related to document management and tracking. Enhancements to system integration and usability were viewed as potential contributors to improved coordination and transparency.

Overall, the survey reflects a department managing increasing review complexity and workload with constrained resources. The responses point to clear opportunities for improvement through targeted staffing strategies, improved applicant education, streamlined and standardized procedures, and better-aligned technology tools.

Common Phrases and Recurring Language

Across responses, several phrases and concepts appeared repeatedly, reinforcing the consistency of staff perspectives:

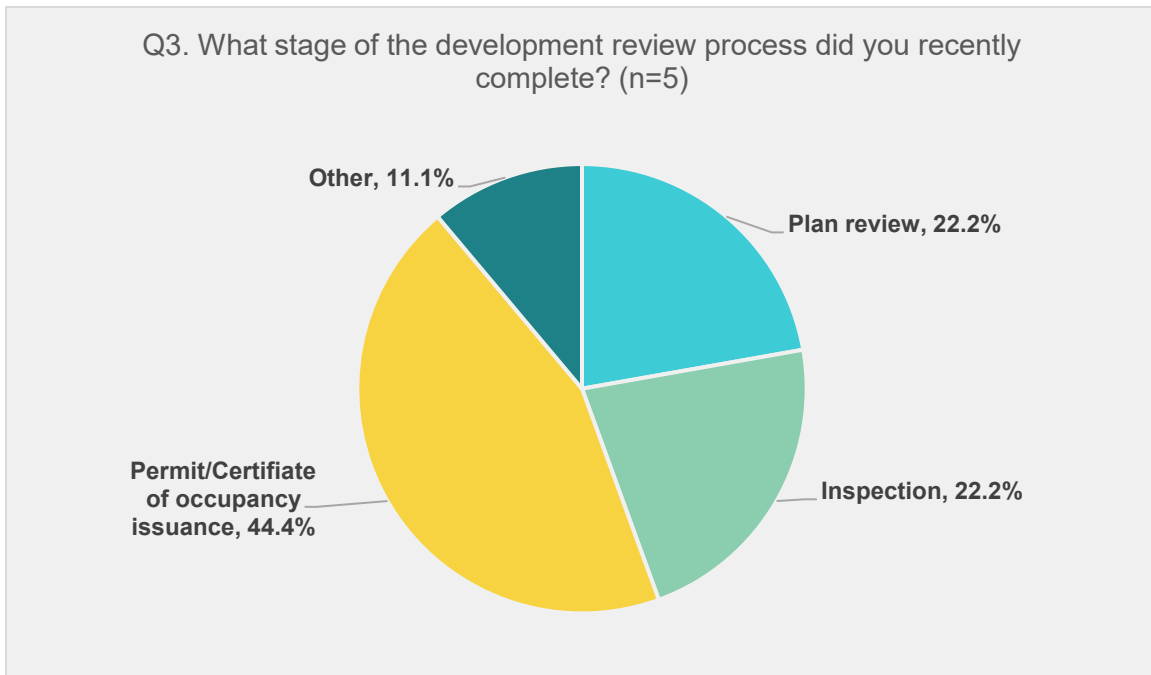
- “Incomplete submittals”/“missing information”
- “Re-reviews”/“multiple resubmittals”
- “Staffing constraints”/“limited capacity”
- “Workload volume”/“time constraints”
- “Coordination between departments”
- “Consistency in review”/“standardization”
- “Clearer expectations” (for applicants and internally)
- “Up-front completeness”
- “Process improvements”
- “System limitations”/“manual workarounds”

The frequency of these phrases underscores that challenges are systemic rather than isolated, and that staff broadly align around similar drivers of inefficiency and similar pathways for improvement.

Stakeholder Survey

The employee survey was sent to 38 Community Development stakeholders provided by the Department, including applicants and developers. Despite repeated efforts to solicit input, just five (5) responses were received, a response rate of 20%. Because of the low response rate, the following responses should *not* be interpreted as the sentiments of the majority but provide insight into stakeholder perceptions. The survey contained 15 questions which were mostly open-ended.

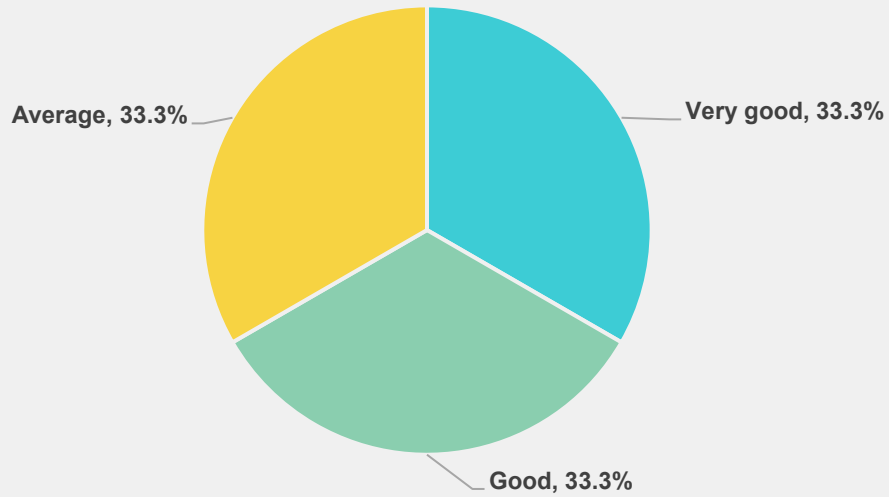
ANALYSIS OF MULTIPLE-CHOICE/MULTIPLE-ANSWER QUESTIONS



The following possible answer choices were included, but not selected:

- Pre-application (0.0%)
- Project intake/application submittal (0.0%)

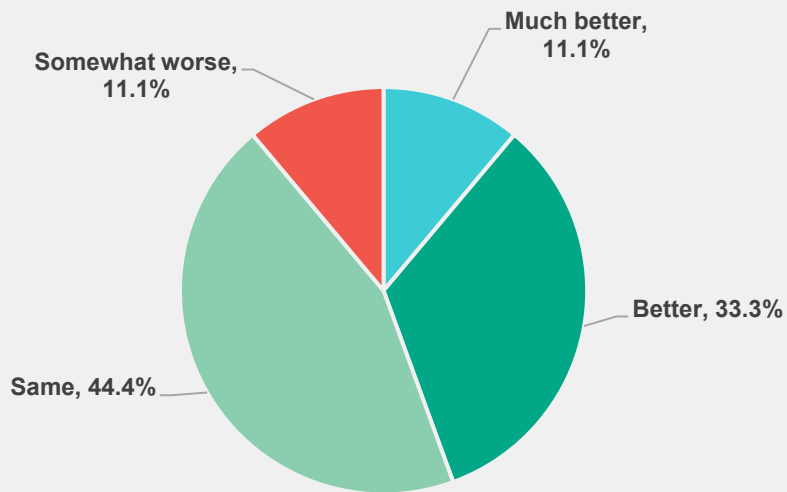
Q5. How would you rate your overall experience as a customer of the Prescott, AZ development review process?



The following possible answer choices were included, but not selected:

- Bad (0.0%)
- Very bad (0.0%)

Q7. If you have previously been through the development review process for another project in Prescott, how did this experience compare to your previous experiences?



The following possible answer choices were included, but not selected:

- Much worse (0.0%)

Analysis of Responses

Stakeholder survey responses suggest that the development review experience is shaped largely by how the review process is structured and coordinated, as well as by how clearly expectations are communicated. Feedback reflects consistent perspectives across respondents, with attention focused on process-related factors rather than individual performance.

Respondents commonly distinguished between interactions with staff and the functioning of the overall review process. City staff were generally described as professional and knowledgeable, while concerns were more frequently associated with review timelines, coordination among reviewing disciplines, and the sequence in which comments are provided. These factors were cited as influencing both the duration and predictability of the review process.

Clarity and consistency of requirements emerged as recurring considerations. Stakeholders noted that expectations are not always fully understood at the outset of the process and that interpretations can vary across reviews. When expectations are not clearly established early, respondents indicated that additional revisions and review cycles may be required, affecting project schedules.

Several responses also referenced the cumulative effect of multiple review cycles, particularly when new or revised comments are introduced later in the process. These experiences were described as contributing to uncertainty and rework, reinforcing the importance of coordinated and comprehensive reviews.

Overall, the stakeholder survey results point toward opportunities to improve the development review experience through clearer up-front communication, improved coordination across reviews, and more consistent application of standards. The feedback reflects a shared interest in a review process that is predictable, transparent, and well-coordinated.

Common Phrases and Recurring Language

Stakeholder responses repeatedly used similar phrasing and concepts, underscoring shared concerns across the development community:

- “Multiple reviews”/“too many review cycles”
- “Changing comments”/“new comments in later reviews”
- “Inconsistent interpretation”
- “Lack of clarity up front”
- “Unclear expectations”
- “Delays in review”/“long timelines”
- “Coordination between departments”
- “Conflicting comments”
- “Predictability”
- “Clearer guidance”/“better checklists”

The consistency of these phrases suggests that stakeholder concerns are systemic rather than project-specific and align closely with internal staff observations regarding workload, coordination, and process clarity.

Crosswalk of Survey Results

AREAS OF STRONG ALIGNMENT

Both employees and stakeholders consistently identified process-related issues, rather than individual performance, as the primary drivers of inefficiency in the development review process.

Incomplete submittals and re-reviews

Employees cited incomplete or low-quality applications as a major source of rework and time pressure. Stakeholders similarly acknowledged multiple review cycles and repeated revisions, though they more frequently framed these issues as a lack of clarity in initial expectations. Together, the responses suggest a shared recognition that stronger up-front guidance and completeness screening could reduce re-submittals.

Multi-department coordination challenges

Both groups emphasized that cross-departmental coordination affects timelines and predictability. Employees noted sequencing challenges and competing priorities across divisions, while stakeholders highlighted conflicting or late-raising comments. This alignment indicates an opportunity to improve consolidated review practices and internal coordination protocols.

Consistency and standardization

Employees pointed to inconsistent procedures and uneven application of internal guidance, while stakeholders focused on inconsistent interpretation of standards. Viewed together, the surveys suggest that greater procedural and interpretive consistency would benefit both internal efficiency and applicant experience.

DIFFERENCES IN PERSPECTIVE

While the underlying issues are similar, employees and stakeholders experience and articulate them differently.

Staffing and capacity

Employees frequently identified staffing constraints, workload volume, and time pressure as core challenges. Stakeholders rarely referenced staffing directly, instead focusing on outcomes such as delays and unpredictability. This contrast highlights that capacity limitations are largely invisible externally but may affect service delivery.

Technology and systems

Employees discussed system limitations, manual workarounds, and inefficiencies in tracking and document management. Stakeholders focused less on internal systems and more on communication and responsiveness. This suggests that technological improvements may primarily benefit internal efficiency, with indirect benefits to stakeholders.

Communication framing

Employees emphasized balancing customer service with technical review responsibilities, while stakeholders focused on the clarity, timing, and completeness of feedback. Both perspectives point toward a need for clearer, more consolidated communication, but from different vantage points.

REINFORCING THEMES ACROSS BOTH SURVEYS

Several themes emerged repeatedly across both employee and stakeholder responses, reinforcing their significance:

Upfront clarity is critical

Both groups emphasized the importance of clear expectations at the outset of the review process, including submittal requirements, timelines, and review standards.

Predictability matters as much as speed

Stakeholders prioritized predictable outcomes and timelines, while employees emphasized manageable workloads and fewer re-reviews. These priorities converge around the value of structured, standardized processes.

Process improvements offer the greatest leverage

Neither group focused heavily on individual performance issues. Instead, both surveys point toward procedural, coordination, and systems improvements as the most effective ways to enhance outcomes.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

Taken together, the surveys indicate that meaningful improvements to the development review process will likely come from:

- Strengthening up-front application completeness checks and guidance
- Improving cross-department coordination and consolidated review practices
- Enhancing consistency and standardization in procedures and interpretations
- Aligning staffing and technology resources with workload demands
- Clarifying communication protocols and expectations for applicants and staff

The strong alignment between internal and external perspectives provides a clear foundation for implementing targeted process, staffing, and technology improvements.

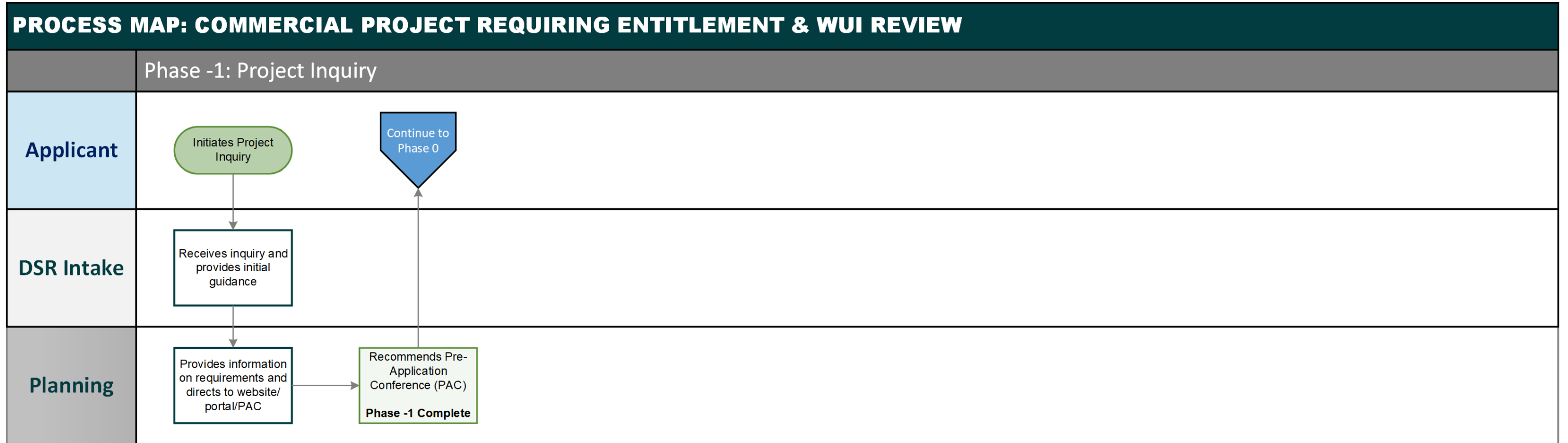
APPENDIX B:

Process Maps

The following process maps cover three project types, each organized by phase. Because the phases follow a similar sequence of steps across project types, the project team will provide supplemental notes for each step to CDD staff following the implementation workshop.

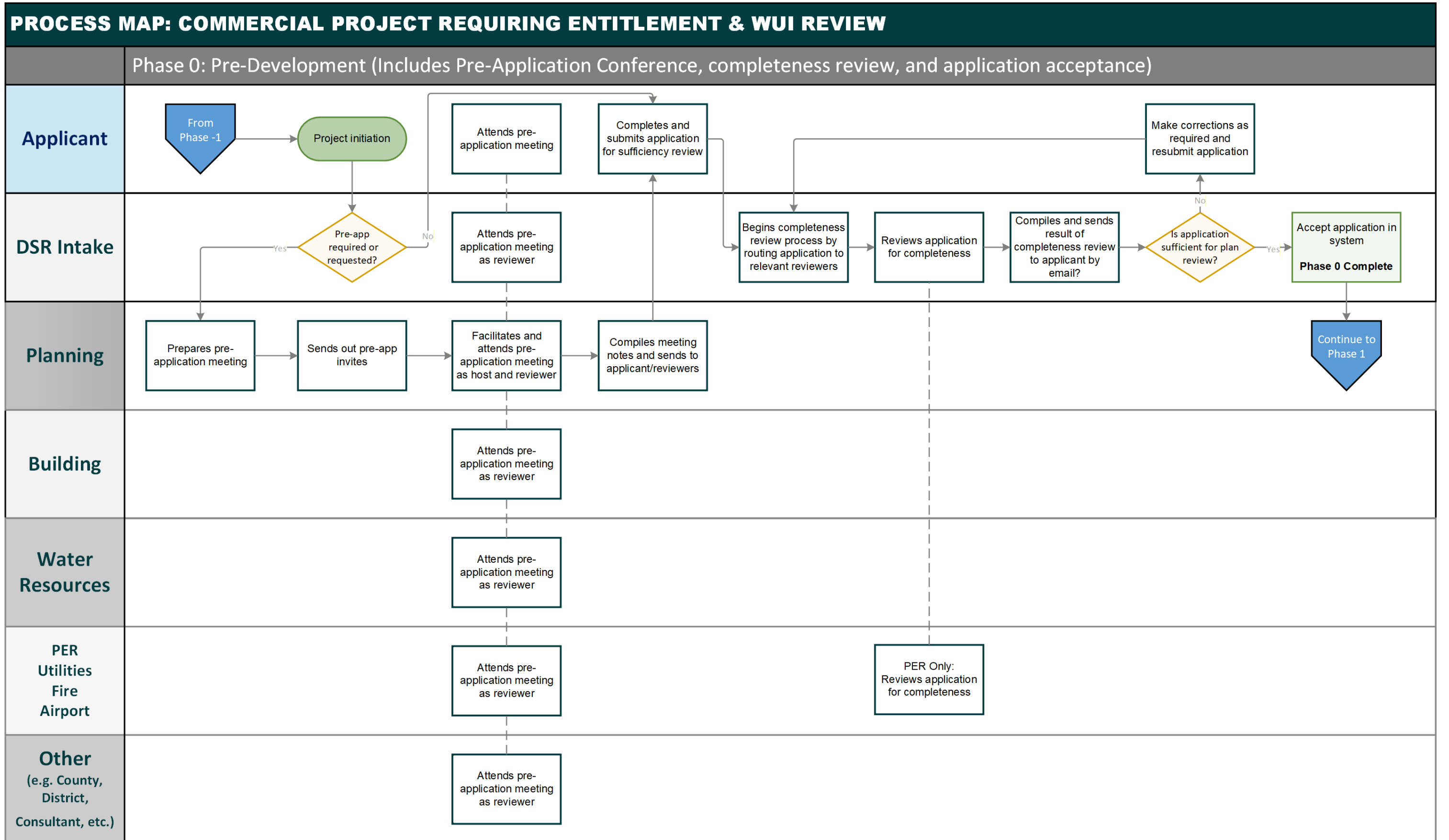
Process Map: Commercial Project Requirement Entitlement and WUI Review

City of Prescott, Arizona



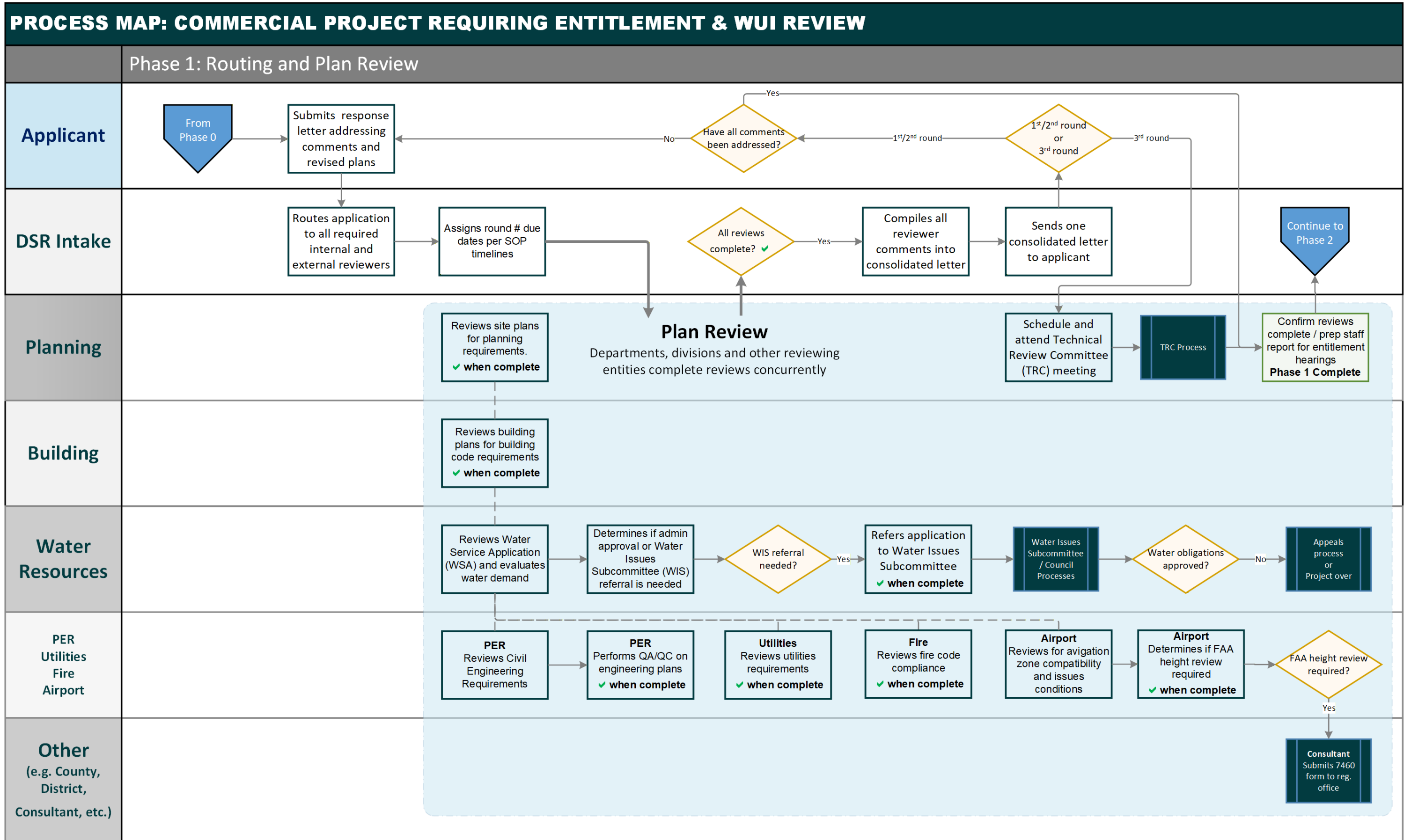
Phase -1: Project Inquiry

	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Initiates project inquiry	2		Start/End	Applicant	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Receives inquiry and provides initial guidance	3		Process	Operations	Operations/Planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Provides information on requirements and directs to website, portal, or PAC	4		Process	Planning	Planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Recommends Pre-Application Conference (PAC)			Off-page Reference	Planning	Planning



Phase 0: Pre-Development

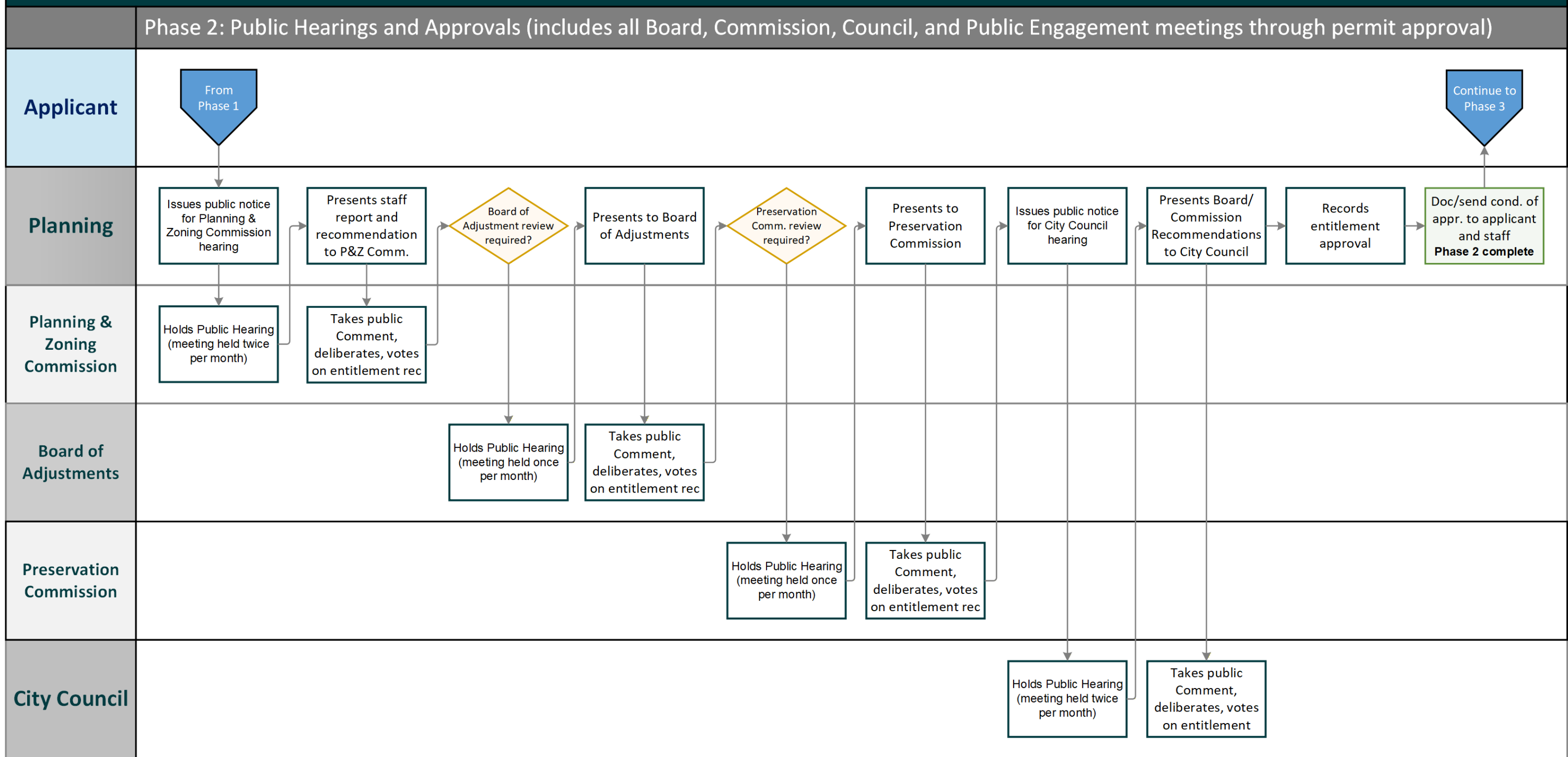
	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Submits one-page pre-application form with sketch/site plan, floor plan, and narrative one week prior to PAC meeting	2		Start/End	Applicant	Applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Receives application, performs completeness check, sets PAC agenda, and distributes materials to all review disciplines	3		Process	Planning	Planner
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Pre-review application and prepare written comments for PAC	4		Process	Planning	Planners, Plans Examiners, Water Resource staff, Fire Inspector/Plan Reviewer, Private Engineering Reviewer, Airport Capital Projects Manager Multiple disciplines involved in pre-review
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Compile comments and perform QA/QC review	5		Process	Operations	Operations Manager, Planning Manager, CD Director, CBO, Water Resource Manager Management review of consolidated comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Sends comment letter to applicant one hour before PAC meeting (held every Thursday at 2:00 PM via Teams)	6		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Attend Pre-Application Conference (PAC); discuss comments, questions, and requirements	7		Process	Applicant	Applicant, Planners, Plans Examiners, Water Resource staff, Fire, Private Engineering Review, Airport PAC held with all review disciplines
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Sends follow-up notes and any revised/additional comments to applicant after PAC (comment letter valid for one year)	8		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned)
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Submits formal entitlement application and building permit application with full plan set via online portal; entitlement fees collected up front	9		Process	Applicant	Applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Performs sufficiency/completeness review of submitted application and plan set (3-5 business days)	10		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Reviews for completeness	11, 12	No, Yes	Decision	Operations	Dev Services Rep Completeness check decision point
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Notifies applicant via email with deficiency list	8		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep Returns to resubmission if incomplete
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Accepts application and routes to review (clock starts upon fee payment)	→Ph1		Off-page Reference	Operations	Dev Services Rep Application accepted and moves to Phase 1



Phase 1: Routing and Plan Review

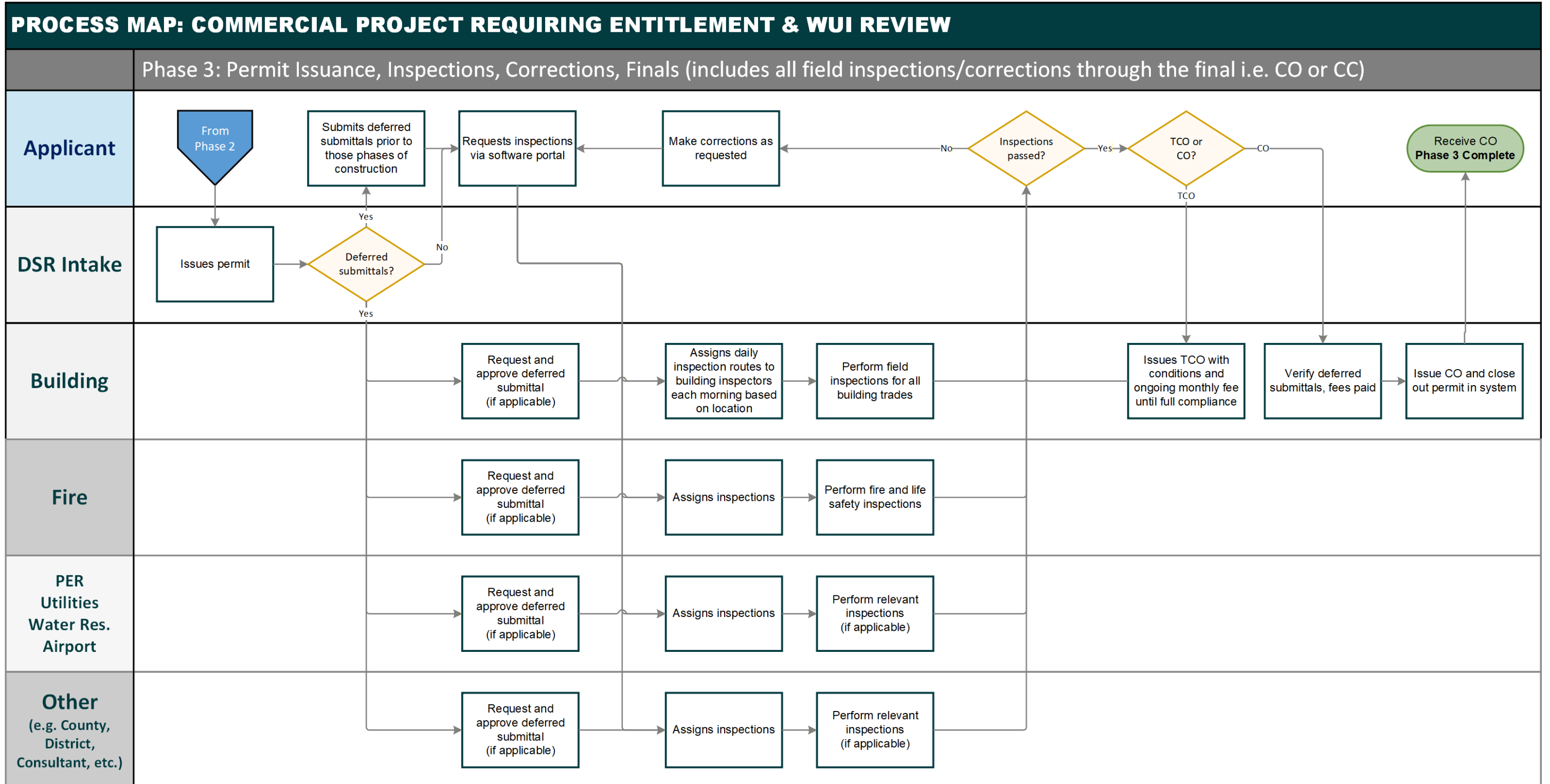
	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Routes application to all required internal and external reviewers and assigns first-round due dates per SOP timelines	2		Start/End	Operations	Dev Services Rep
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Reviews for zoning compliance, land use, site plan standards, parking, landscaping, signage, and entitlement criteria	12		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned)
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Reviews building plans for building code compliance (structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, energy, accessibility)	12		Process	Building	Plans Examiner (assigned)
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Reviews for fire code compliance, fire access, fire sprinkler/alarm requirements, and WUI code compliance (materials, defensible space, vegetation management)	12		Process	Fire	Fire Inspector/Plan Reviewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Reviews civil engineering compliance including grading, drainage, stormwater, utilities, streets, and floodplain requirements; performs QA/QC on engineering plans	12		Process	Private Engineering Review	Private Engineering Reviewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Reviews Water Service Application (WSA) and evaluates water demand; determines if admin approval or Water Issues Subcommittee (WIS) referral is needed	7		Process	Water Resources	Water Resource Manager
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Determines if WIS referral needed	12, 8	No, Yes	Decision	Water Resources	Water Resource Manager Water demand threshold decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Refers application to Water Issues Subcommittee (3 Council members) for recommendation (meets monthly)	12		Process	Water Resources	Water Resource Manager WIS: Mayor, Mayor Pro-Tem, Council Member
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Reviews for aviation zone compatibility (height, density, location); issues conditions for crane notification, height restrictions, or aviation easement as needed	10		Process	Airport Review	Airport Capital Projects Manager
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Determines if FAA height review required	12, 11	No, Yes	Decision	Airport Review	Airport Capital Projects Manager FAA 7460 form decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Submits 7460 form to FAA regional office (45-60 day review)	12		Process	Applicant	Applicant submits to FAA and provides responses to City FAA external review
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Compiles all reviewer comments into consolidated review/comment letter and sends to applicant	13		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep, Planner (assigned)
<input type="checkbox"/>	13	Submits comment response letter addressing every comment and resubmits revised plans	14		Process	Applicant	Applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	14	Routes resubmittal back to same reviewers for second-round review (shorter timeline per SOP)	15		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep
<input type="checkbox"/>	15	Complete second-round review and provide updated comments or approval	16		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned), Plans Examiner (assigned), Water Resource Manager, Fire, Private Engineering Review, Airport (as needed) All reviewers provide updated comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	16	Determine if third round required	18, 17	No, Yes	Decision	Planning	Reviewers Additional review decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	17	Schedule and attend Technical Review Committee (TRC) meeting with applicant to resolve outstanding comments	18		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned), Fire Division Chief, Private Engineering Reviewer, all pending reviewers TRC meeting for complex issues
<input type="checkbox"/>	18	Continue additional review rounds as needed until all disciplines approve or recommend approval with conditions	19		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned), Plans Examiner (assigned), Water Resource Manager, Fire, Private Engineering Review, Airport (as applicable) Iterative review cycle
<input type="checkbox"/>	19	Confirms all technical reviews are complete and prepares staff report for entitlement hearing(s)			Off-page Reference	Planning	Planner (assigned), Planning Manager Moves to Phase 2

PROCESS MAP: COMMERCIAL PROJECT REQUIRING ENTITLEMENT & WUI REVIEW



Phase 2: Public Hearings and Approvals

	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Issues public notice for Planning & Zoning Commission hearing (mailed notice to neighbors, posted notice, published notice per code requirements)	2		Start/End	Planning	Planner (assigned)
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Presents staff report and recommendation to Planning & Zoning Commission (meets twice per month)	3		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned), Planning Manager P&Z Commissioners review
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Holds public hearing, takes public comment, deliberates, and votes on entitlement (approve, approve with conditions, or deny)	4		Process	Other (e.g., County, District, Consultant)	Planning & Zoning Commission, Applicant (may present), Planner (staff support)
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Determines if Board of Adjustment review required	6, 5	No, Yes	Decision	Planning	Planning Variance, CUP, or appeal decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Presents staff report to Board of Adjustment and hearing held (meets once per month)	6		Process	Planning	Planner (staff support) Board of Adjustment Members review
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Determines if Prescott Preservation Commission review required	8, 7	No, Yes	Decision	Planning	Planning Historic area review decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Presents to Prescott Preservation Commission and hearing held (meets once per month)	8		Process	Planning	Planner (staff support) Prescott Preservation Commission review
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Issues public notice for City Council hearing	9		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned)
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Presents staff report and P&Z recommendation to City Council (meets twice per month)	10		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned), Planning Manager, CD Director City Council review
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Holds public hearing, takes public comment, deliberates, and votes on entitlement (approve, approve with conditions, or deny)	11		Process	Other (e.g., County, District, Consultant)	City Council Members, Mayor, Applicant (may present), Planner (staff support)
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Records entitlement approval: documents and transmits conditions of approval to applicant and all review staff			Off-page Reference	Planning	Planner (assigned), City Clerk Moves to Phase 3

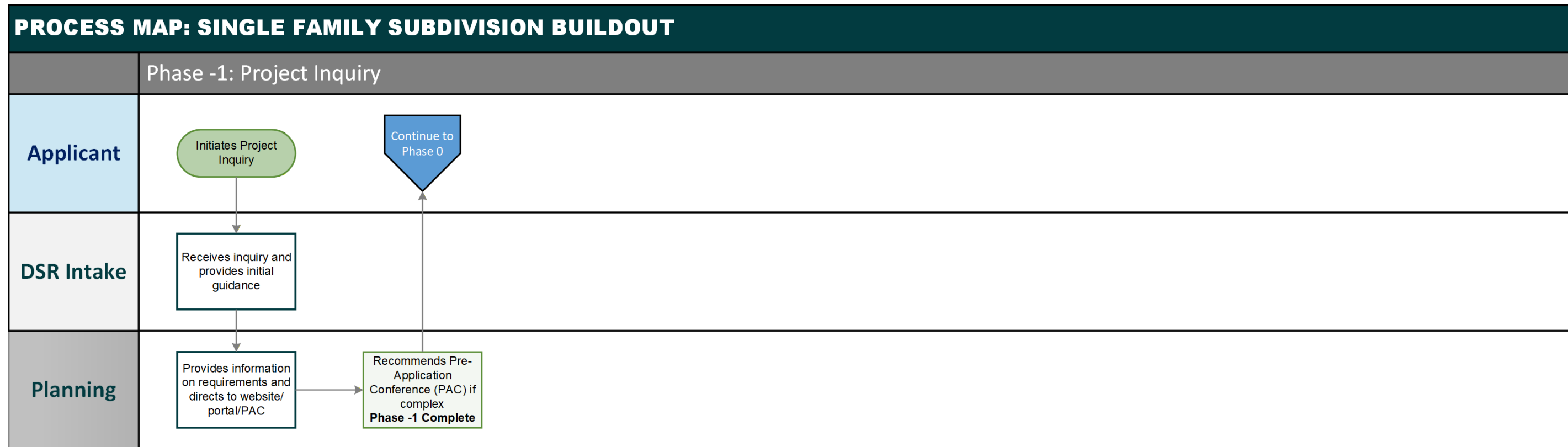


Phase 3: Permit Issuance, Inspections, Corrections, and Finals

	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Issues building permit upon entitlement approval and completion of all plan review approvals; stamps plans and issues permit	2		Start/End	Operations	Dev Services Rep / Engineering Permit Technician Plans stamped and permit issued
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Submits deferred submittals (e.g., commercial fire sprinkler and fire alarm plans) prior to those phases of construction	3		Process	Applicant	Applicant/Contractor
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Reviews and approves deferred fire protection plans (sprinkler/alarm) upon submission	4		Process	Fire	Fire Inspector/Plan Reviewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Requests inspections via software portal (next-day inspection scheduling)	5		Process	Applicant	Contractor
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Assigns daily inspection routes to building inspectors each morning based on location	6		Process	Building	Lead Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Perform field inspections for all building trades (structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, etc.); generalized inspectors — no specialization; corrections noted in system	7		Process	Building	Building Inspectors, Plans Examiners (cross-trained for inspections)
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Perform fire and life safety inspections (sprinkler, alarm, suppression, egress); also inspect for WUI compliance	8		Process	Fire	Fire Inspector/Plan Reviewer, Building Inspectors (WUI cross-trained) CD building inspectors being cross-trained by Fire to inspect for WUI code
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Performs pre- and post-vegetation management inspection prior to final for WUI compliance	9		Process	Fire	Fire Inspector/Plan Reviewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Performs civil inspection for larger projects; City does structural inspections in-house	10		Process	Other (e.g., County, District, Consultant)	Third-Party Inspector (larger projects), City Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Identify and communicate inspection corrections to contractor	11		Process	Building	Building Inspectors, Fire Inspectors
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Makes corrections and requests re-inspection	12		Process	Applicant	Contractor
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Determine if all deficiencies resolved	13, 10	Yes, No	Decision	Building	Building Inspectors, Fire Inspectors Correction cycle decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	13	Determines if project ready for partial occupancy	15, 14	No, Yes	Decision	Building	CBO TCO decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	14	Issues Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO) with conditions and ongoing monthly fee until full compliance (~50/50 for commercial projects)	15		Process	Building	CBO
<input type="checkbox"/>	15	Complete all final inspections by all disciplines (building is last before CO); verify all deferred submittals; confirm all fees paid	16		Process	Building	Building Inspectors, Water Resource staff (as needed), Fire Inspectors
<input type="checkbox"/>	16	Manually processes Certificate of Occupancy (CO); issues CO to applicant; closes out permit in system	17		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep All COs hand-processed
<input type="checkbox"/>	17	Receives CO			Start/End	Applicant	Applicant Process complete

Process Map: Single Family Subdivision Buildout

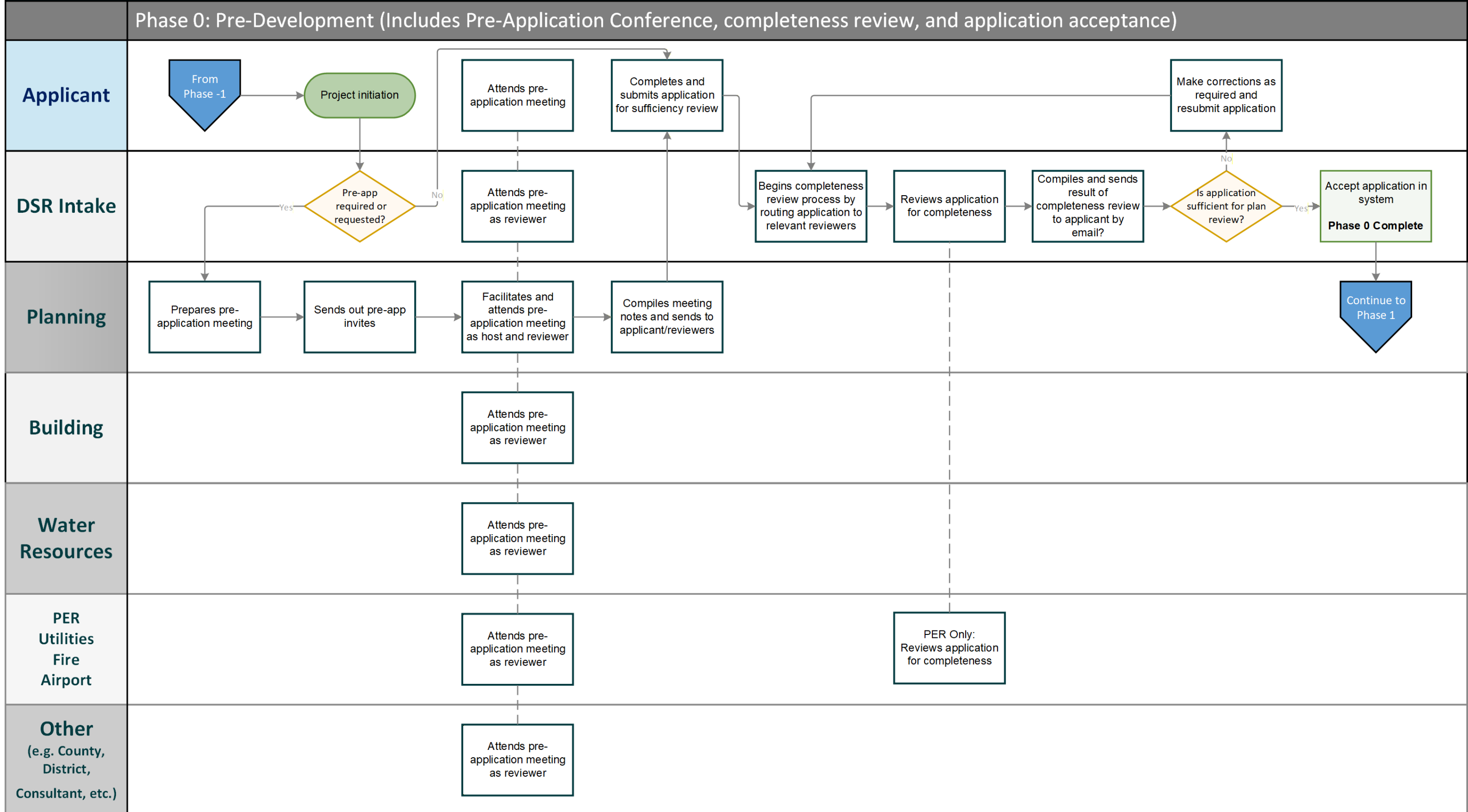
City of Prescott, Arizona



Phase -1: Project Inquiry

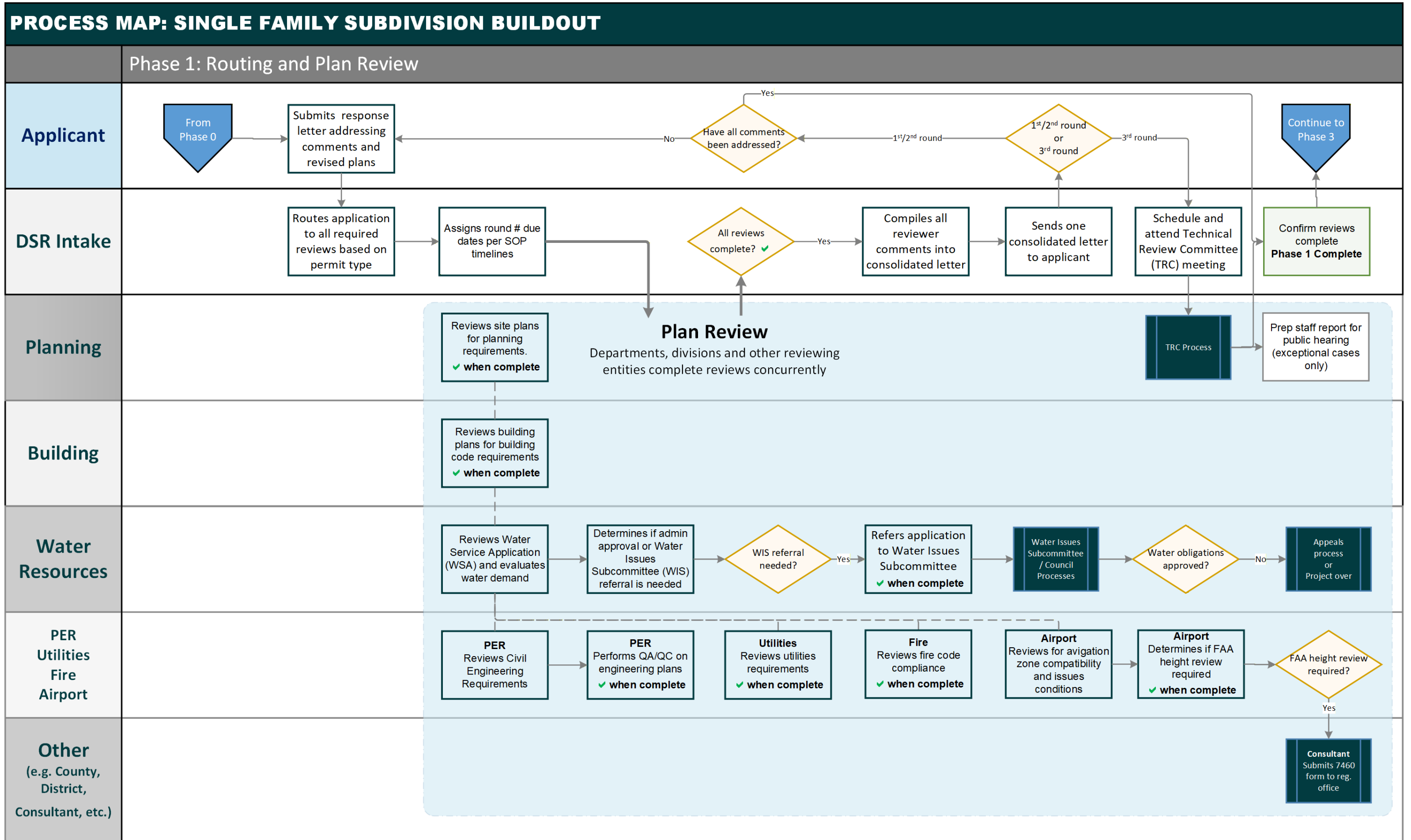
	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Initiates project inquiry for subdivision-related permit (grading, ROW, utilities, fence, home building, repairs)	2		Start/End	Applicant	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Receives inquiry and provides initial guidance	3		Process	Operations	Operations/Planning/Building
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Determines if Pre-Application Conference (PAC) required	4, →Ph0	No, Yes	Decision	Operations	Staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Directs applicant to submit permit application directly	→Ph0		Off-page Reference	Operations	Staff For simpler permits that do not require PAC

PROCESS MAP: SINGLE FAMILY SUBDIVISION BUILDOUT



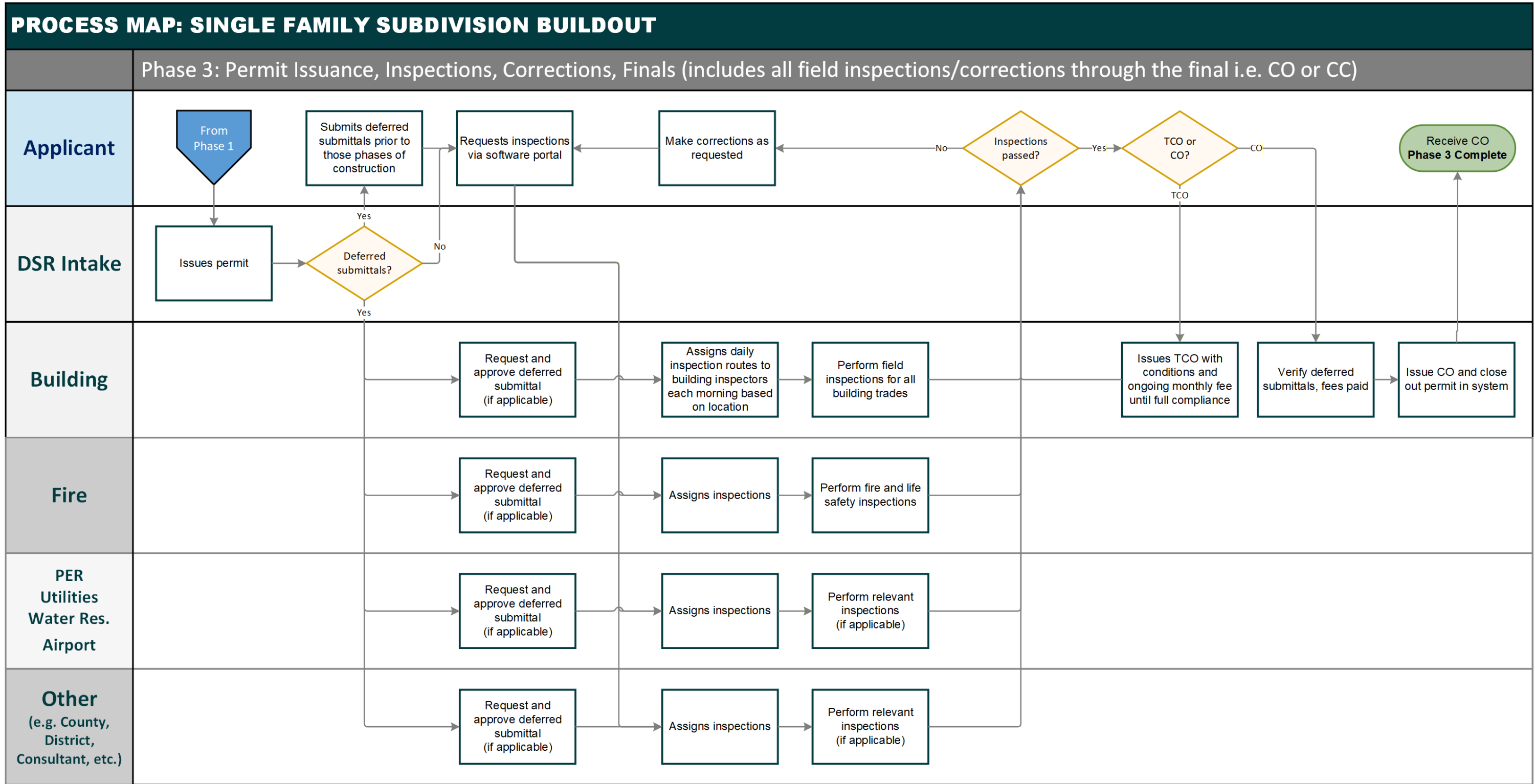
Phase 0: Pre-Development

	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Submits permit application(s) via online portal for applicable permit type(s)	2		Start/End	Applicant	Applicant (Developer/Homeowner/Contractor)
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Performs sufficiency/completeness review of submitted application and supporting documents (3-5 business days)	3		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Reviews for completeness	4, 5	No, Yes	Decision	Operations	Dev Services Rep Completeness check decision point
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Notifies applicant via email with deficiency list	1		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep Returns to resubmission if incomplete
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Accepts application, collects fees, and routes to review (clock starts upon fee payment)	→Ph1		Off-page Reference	Operations	Dev Services Rep Application accepted and moves to Phase 1



Phase 1: Routing and Plan Review

	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Routes application to required reviewers based on permit type; assigns first-round due dates per SOP timelines	2		Start/End	Operations	Dev Services Rep
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Determines permit type	3, 5, 7, 10, 13, 20		Decision	Operations	System Routes to appropriate review track: Grading, ROW, Utility, Fence, SF Home, or OTC
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	GRADING PERMIT TRACK — Reviews grading plans	23		Process	Private Engineering Review	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Water Resources: Reviews grading permit for water/sewer infrastructure impacts (if applicable)	23		Process	Water Resources	Water Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	ROW PERMIT TRACK — Reviews ROW permit application	23		Process	Private Engineering Review	Private Engineering Reviewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Reviews if ROW work involves utilities (if applicable)	23		Process	Water Resources	Water Resources/Utility Provider
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	UTILITY CONNECTION PERMIT TRACK — Reviews Water Service Application (WSA) for connection capacity, line sizing, and related requirements	23		Process	Water Resources	Water Resource Manager
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Reviews sewer capacity and connection standards (if applicable)	23		Process	Private Engineering Review	
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Reviews plumbing plans if utility connection is part of building permit (if applicable)	23		Process	Building	Plans Examiner
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	FENCE PERMIT TRACK — Reviews fence permit	11		Process	Building	Reviewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Determines if in historic district	23, 12	No, Yes	Decision	Planning	Planner Historic district review decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Reviews fence permit for historic district compliance	23		Process	Planning	Planner
<input type="checkbox"/>	13	SINGLE FAMILY HOME PERMIT TRACK — Reviews building plans for code compliance (structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, energy, accessibility) — 15 working days for first round per State mandate; model home plans are 5-day one-touch review	14		Process	Building	Plans Examiner (SF residential)
<input type="checkbox"/>	14	Reviews for fire access and hydrant spacing; residential sprinklers required if: >500 ft from hydrant, >5,000 sqft, or >2 stories. Deferred submittals NOT allowed for residential	15		Process	Fire	Fire Inspector/Plan Reviewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	15	Determines if home is in WUI area	17, 16	No, Yes	Decision	Fire	Fire Inspector/Plan Reviewer WUI area check
<input type="checkbox"/>	16	Reviews for WUI code compliance (materials, defensible space, vegetation management)	17		Process	Fire	Fire Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	17	Determines if home is in Airport influence zone	19, 18	No, Yes	Decision	Planning and Airport	Planning and Airport Airport influence zone check
<input type="checkbox"/>	18	Reviews for height and aviation compliance	19		Process	Airport	Airport Capital Projects Manager
<input type="checkbox"/>	19	Confirms Water Service Application (WSA) is complete and approved for new home	23		Process	Water Resources	Water Resource staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	20	OTC (OVER-THE-COUNTER) REPAIR PERMIT TRACK — Reviews OTC repair permit application	21		Process	Building	Reviewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	21	Determines if significant work requiring full plan submittal	23, 22	No, Yes	Decision	Building	Reviewer OTC complexity decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	22	Reviews full plan submittal for code compliance	23		Process	Building	Plans Examiner
<input type="checkbox"/>	23	Compiles all reviewer comments into consolidated review/comment letter and sends to applicant	24		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep
<input type="checkbox"/>	24	Submits comment response letter addressing every comment and resubmits revised plans (if required)	25		Process	Applicant	Applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	25	Routes resubmittal back to same reviewers for second-round review (shorter timeline per SOP)	26		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep
<input type="checkbox"/>	26	Complete additional review rounds as needed until all disciplines approve	27		Process	Building	Plans Examiner (assigned), Fire, Private Engineering Review, Airport (as applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	27	Determines if public hearing required	→Ph2-admin, 28	No, Yes	Decision	Planning	Staff Most subdivision buildout permits do NOT require public hearings
<input type="checkbox"/>	28	Prepares for public hearing (exception cases only)	→Ph2-hearing		Off-page Reference	Planning	Planning Moves to Phase 2 if hearing required (Refer to Phase 2 of Restaurant with TI in Historic District)

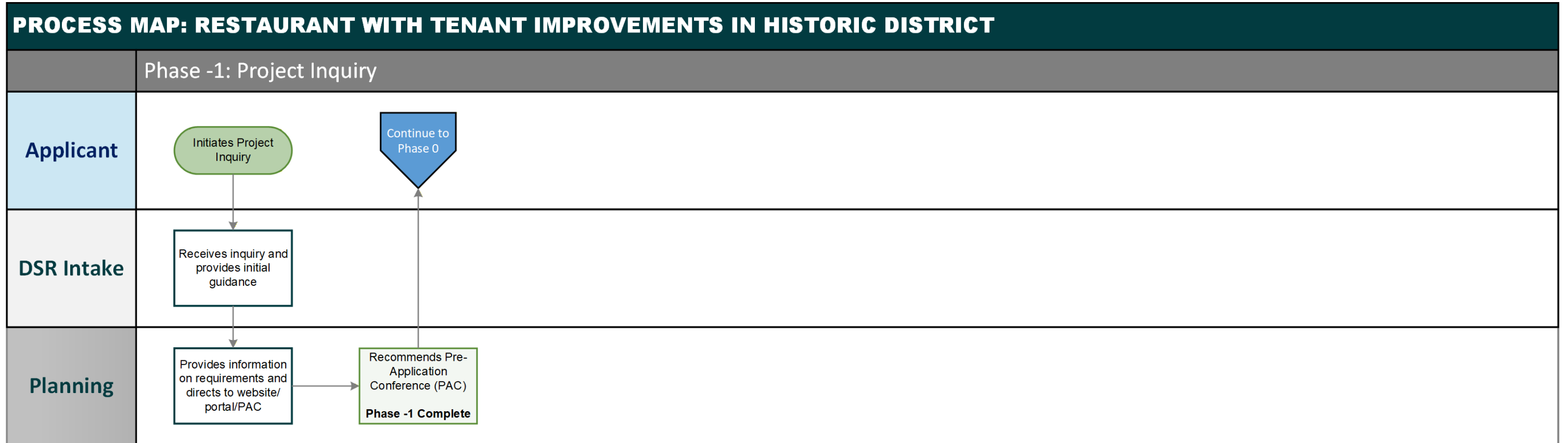


Phase 3: Permit Issuance, Inspections, Corrections, and Finals

	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Determines permit type for issuance	2, 6, 10, 14, 18, 27		Start/End	Operations	System Routes to appropriate issuance track
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	GRADING PERMIT TRACK — Issues grading permit	3		Process	Operations	Staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Performs grading inspections	4		Process	Public Works	Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Determines if corrections needed	31, 5	No, Yes	Decision	Public Works	Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Makes corrections and requests re-inspection	3		Process	Applicant	Contractor
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	ROW PERMIT TRACK — Issues ROW permit	7		Process	Private Engineering Review	Engineering Permit Tech
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Performs ROW inspections	8		Process	Public Works	Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Determines if corrections needed	31, 9	No, Yes	Decision	Public Works	Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Makes corrections and requests re-inspection	7		Process	Applicant	Contractor
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	UTILITY CONNECTION PERMIT TRACK — Issues utility connection permit	11		Process	Private Engineering Review	Engineering Permit Tech
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Performs water service and sewer connection inspection	12		Process	Public Works	Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Determines if corrections needed	31, 13	No, Yes	Decision	Public Works	Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	13	Makes corrections and requests re-inspection	11		Process	Applicant	Contractor
<input type="checkbox"/>	14	FENCE PERMIT TRACK — Issues fence permit	15		Process	Operations	Staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	15	Inspects fence	16		Process	Building	Building Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	16	Determines if corrections needed	31, 17	No, Yes	Decision	Building	Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	17	Makes corrections and requests re-inspection	15		Process	Applicant	Contractor
<input type="checkbox"/>	18	SINGLE FAMILY HOME PERMIT TRACK — Issues building permit upon completion of all plan review approvals; stamps plans and issues permit	19		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep / Engineering Permit Technician
<input type="checkbox"/>	19	Requests inspections via software portal (next-day inspection scheduling)	20		Process	Applicant	Contractor
<input type="checkbox"/>	20	Assigns daily inspection routes to building inspectors each morning based on location	21		Process	Building	Lead Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	21	Perform field inspections for all building trades (structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, insulation, energy); generalized inspectors — no specialization; corrections noted in system	22		Process	Building	Building Inspectors, Plans Examiners (cross-trained)
<input type="checkbox"/>	22	Performs fire and life safety inspection (smoke alarms, egress, address numbers); if in WUI area, inspects for WUI compliance. CD building inspectors being cross-trained for WUI	23		Process	Fire	Fire Inspector, Building Inspector (WUI if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	23	Performs field inspection of water meter installation/backflow prevention (if applicable)	24		Process	Public Works	Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	24	Determine if corrections needed	26, 25	No, Yes	Decision	Building	Building Inspectors, Fire Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	25	Makes corrections and requests re-inspection	21		Process	Applicant	Contractor
<input type="checkbox"/>	26	Complete all final inspections by all disciplines (building is last before CO); confirm all fees paid	31		Process	Building	Building Inspectors, Public Works, Fire Inspector NOTE: TCOs are NOT typical for single family residential; full completion required before CO
<input type="checkbox"/>	27	OTC REPAIR PERMIT TRACK — Issues OTC repair permit	28		Process	Operations	Staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	28	Performs inspection for OTC repair (if required)	29		Process	Building	Building Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	29	Determines if corrections needed	31, 30	No, Yes	Decision	Building	Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	30	Makes corrections and requests re-inspection	28		Process	Applicant	Contractor
<input type="checkbox"/>	31	Manually processes Certificate of Occupancy (CO) or permit close-out; issues to homeowner/applicant; closes permit in system	32		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep All COs hand-processed
<input type="checkbox"/>	32	Receives CO or final permit close-out			Start/End	Applicant	Homeowner/Applicant Process complete

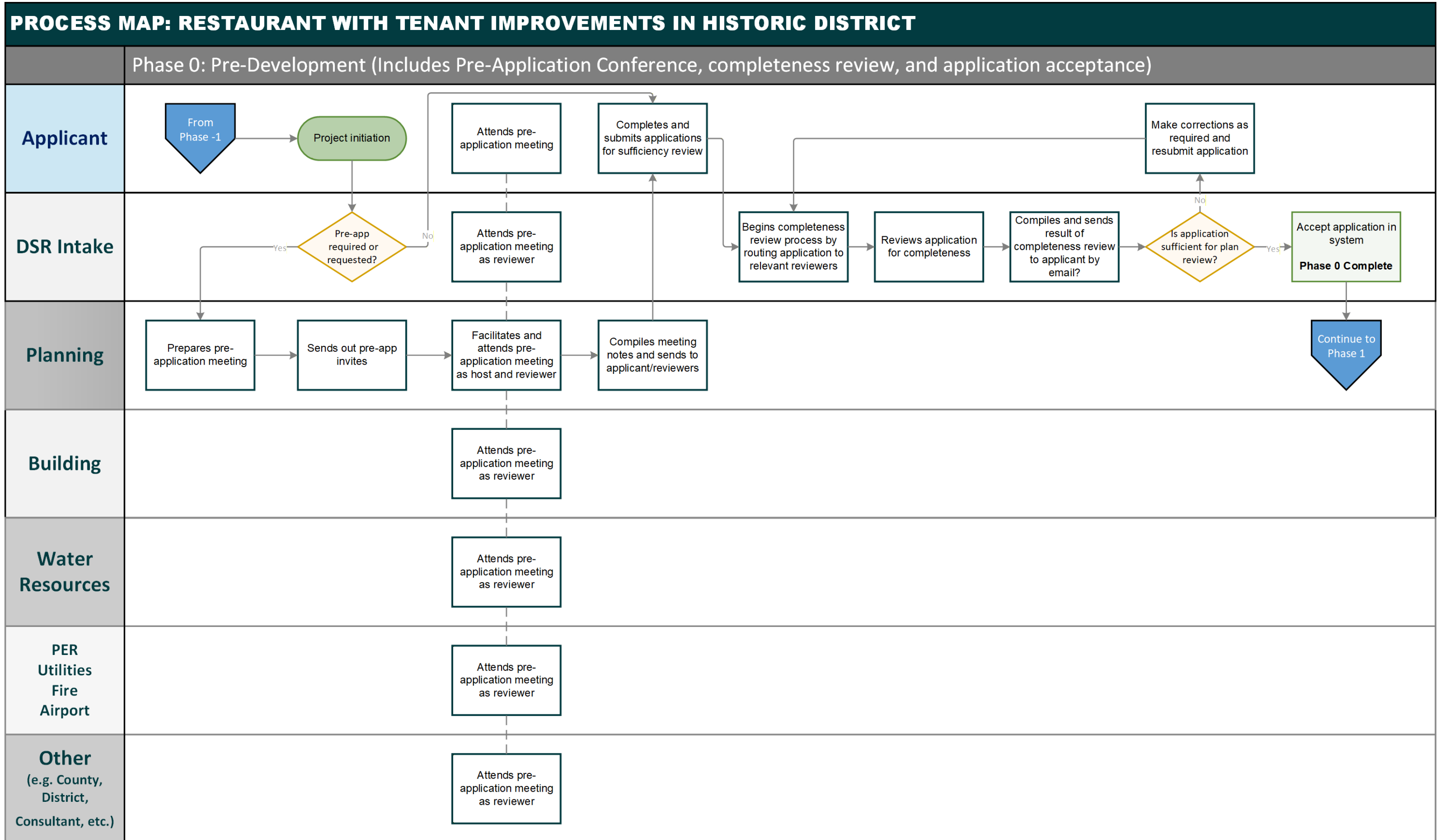
Process Map: Restaurant with Tenant Improvements in Historic District

City of Prescott, Arizona



Phase -1: Project Inquiry

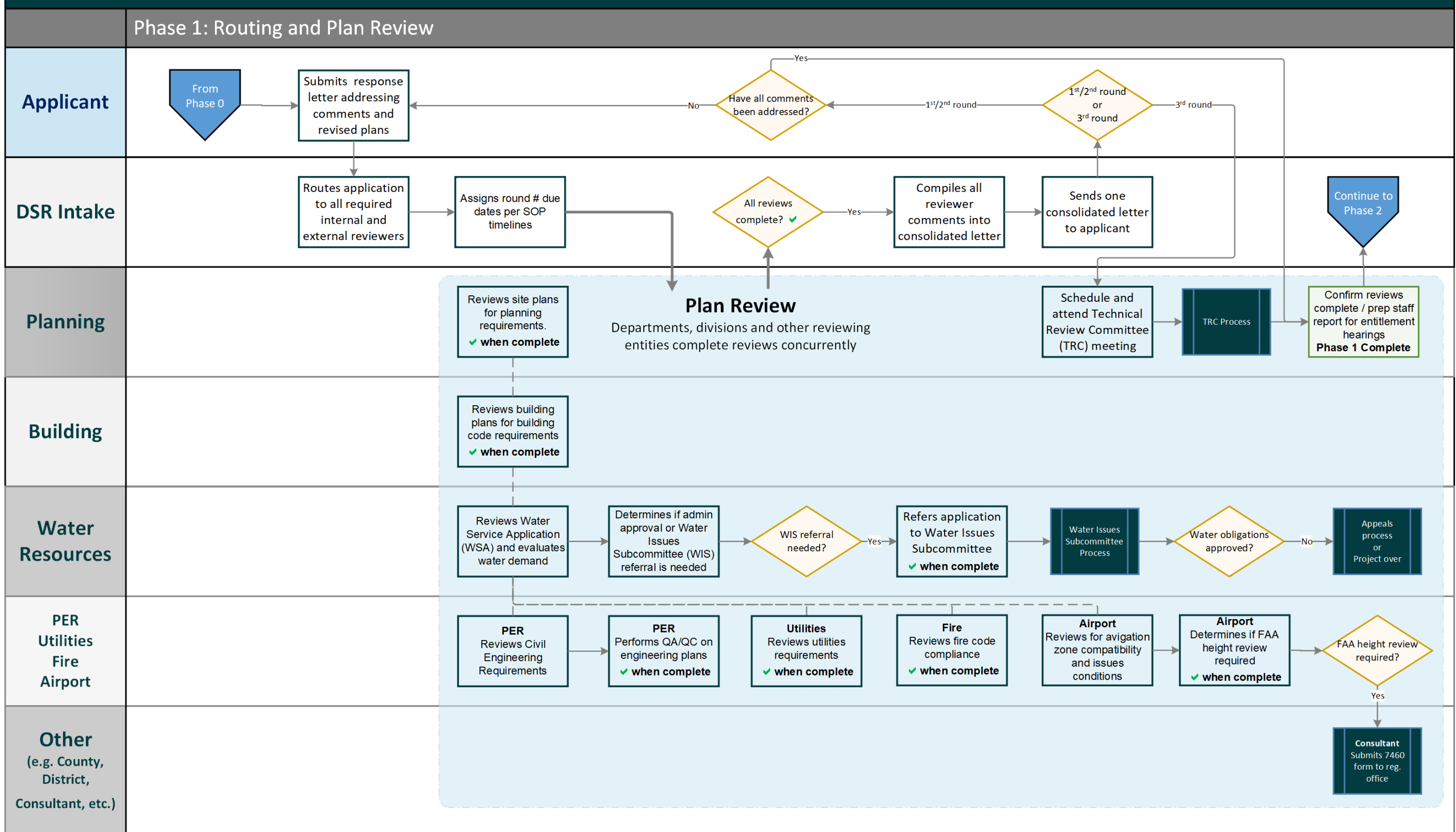
	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Initiates restaurant/TI inquiry in historic district	2		Start/End	Applicant	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Receives inquiry and provides guidance on historic district requirements, change-of-use permits, and restaurant-specific needs (grease trap, hood suppression)	3		Process	Operations	Operations/Planning/Building
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Directs applicant to Pre-Application Conference (PAC)	→Ph0		Off-page Reference	Planning	Staff PAC is required for all commercial including change of use



Phase 0: Pre-Development

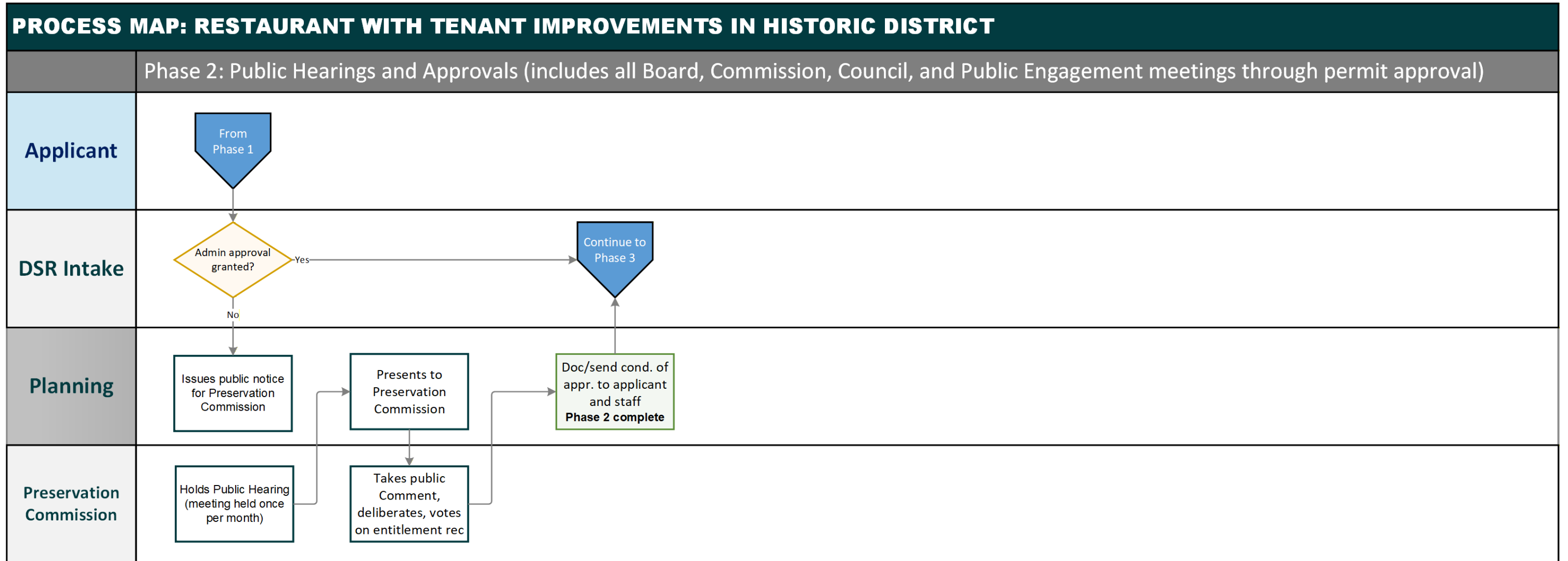
	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Submits one-page pre-application form with floor plan, scope of work narrative, and exterior elevation photos (if exterior work proposed) one week prior to PAC meeting	2		Start/End	Applicant	Applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Receives application, performs completeness check, sets PAC agenda, and distributes materials to all review disciplines (flags historic district location and restaurant use)	3		Process	Planning	Planner (commercial)
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Pre-review application and prepare written comments for PAC; restaurant-specific items flagged (grease trap, hood suppression, increased water demand, County Health)	4		Process	Planning	Planners, Plans Examiners (commercial), Water Resource staff, Fire Inspector, Yavapai County Health Department Multiple disciplines involved in pre-review
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Compile comments and perform QA/QC review	5		Process	Operations	Operations Manager, Planning Manager, CD Director, CBO Management review of consolidated comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Sends comment letter to applicant one hour before PAC meeting (held every Thursday at 2:00 PM via Teams)	6		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Attend Pre-Application Conference (PAC); discuss comments, questions, and historic review requirements confirmed (exterior mods require Preservation Commission)	7		Process	Applicant	Applicant, Planners, Plans Examiners, Fire Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Sends follow-up notes and any revised/additional comments to applicant after PAC (comment letter valid for one year)	8		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned)
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Submits formal building permit application for tenant improvement and change-of-use with full plan set via online portal; fees collected up front	9		Process	Applicant	Applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Submits Water Service Application (WSA) for increased water demand from restaurant use; likely admin-approved for TI on existing connection unless significant increase	10		Process	Applicant	Applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Performs sufficiency/completeness review of submitted application and plan set (3-5 business days)	11		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Reviews for completeness	12, 13	No, Yes	Decision	Operations	Dev Services Rep Completeness check decision point
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Notifies applicant via email with deficiency list	8		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep Returns to resubmission if incomplete
<input type="checkbox"/>	13	Accepts application and routes to review (clock starts upon fee payment)	→Ph1		Off-page Reference	Operations	Dev Services Rep Application accepted and moves to Phase 1

PROCESS MAP: RESTAURANT WITH TENANT IMPROVEMENTS IN HISTORIC DISTRICT



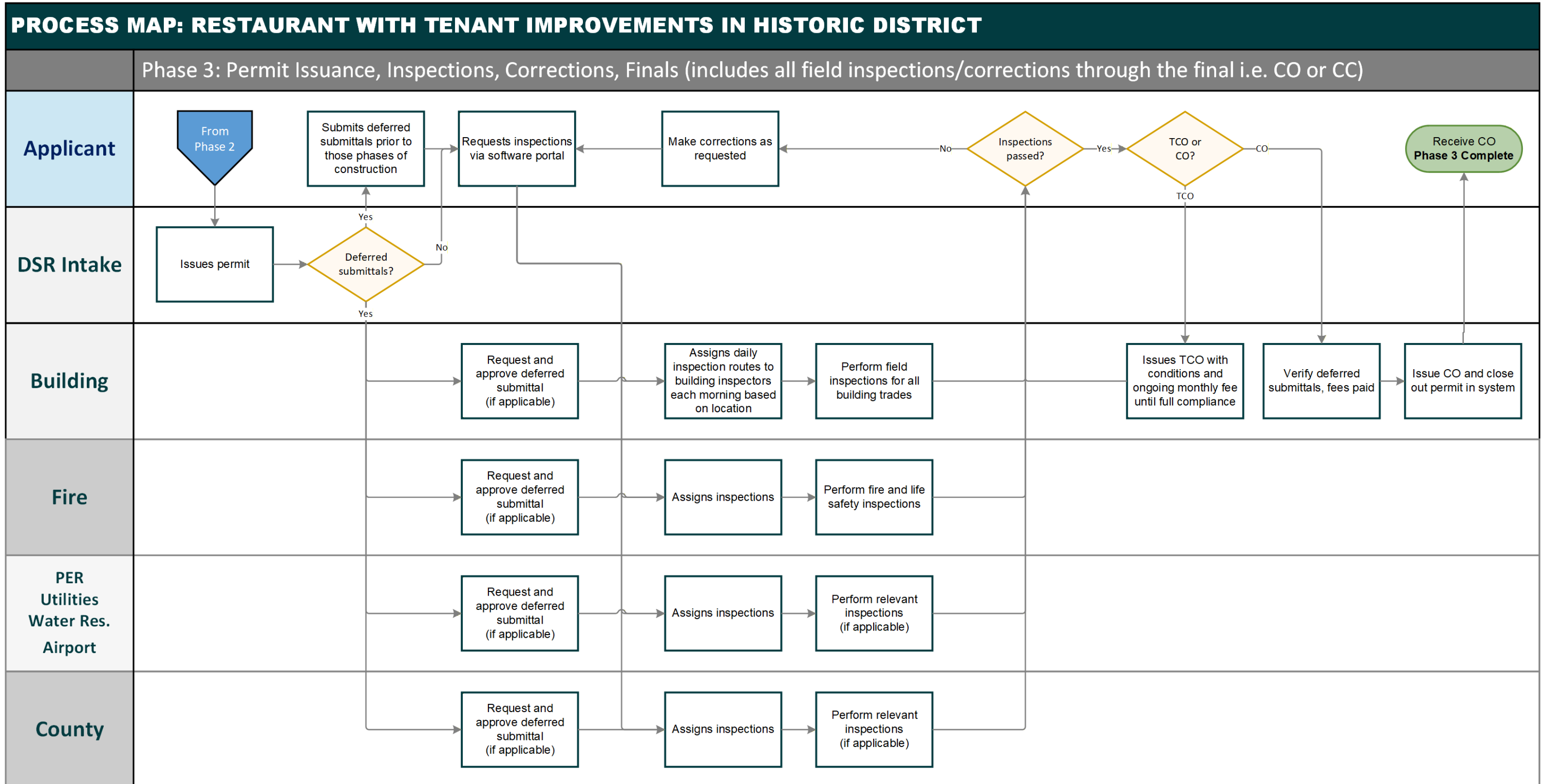
Phase 1: Routing and Plan Review

v	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Routes application to all required internal and external reviewers and assigns first-round due dates per SOP timelines	2		Start/End	Operations	Dev Services Rep
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Reviews for change-of-use compliance, parking requirements, historic district standards, and compatibility with existing building and neighborhood character	9		Process	Planning	Planner (commercial)
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Reviews building plans for building code compliance (structural modifications, commercial kitchen systems, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, energy, accessibility, egress)	9		Process	Building	Plans Examiner (commercial)
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Reviews for fire code compliance, fire access, commercial kitchen hood suppression system, and fire sprinkler/alarm requirements (deferred submittals allowed for commercial)	9		Process	Fire	Fire Inspector/Plan Reviewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Reviews Water Service Application (WSA) for increased water demand from restaurant use; likely admin-approved for TI on existing connection	9		Process	Water Resources	Water Resource Manager
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Reviews commercial kitchen plans for food service code compliance (County health department referenced for restaurants)	9		Process	Other (e.g., County, District, Consultant)	Yavapai County Health Department
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Determines if exterior modifications proposed	9, 8	No, Yes	Decision	Planning	Planner (assigned) Exterior modification decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Prepares Prescott Preservation Commission application and schedules hearing	9		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned)
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Compiles all reviewer comments into consolidated review/comment letter and sends to applicant	10		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep, Planner (assigned)
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Submits comment response letter addressing every comment and resubmits revised plans	11		Process	Applicant	Applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Routes resubmittal back to same reviewers for second-round review (shorter timeline per SOP)	12		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Complete second-round review and provide updated comments or approval	13		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned), Plans Examiner (assigned), Water Resource Manager, Fire Inspector, County Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	13	Continue additional review rounds as needed until all disciplines approve or recommend approval with conditions	14		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned), Plans Examiner (assigned), Fire Inspector, County Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	14	Determines if exterior modifications proposed	→Ph2-admin, 15	No, Yes	Decision	Planning	Planner (assigned), Planning Manager Exterior modification final check
<input type="checkbox"/>	15	Confirms all technical reviews are complete and finalizes staff report for Prescott Preservation Commission hearing	→Ph2-hearing		Off-page Reference	Planning	Planner (assigned), Planning Manager Moves to Phase 2



Phase 2: Public Hearings and Approvals

	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Administrative approval granted; proceeds to permit issuance	→Ph3		Off-page Reference	Operations	Administrative NOTE: Interior-only tenant improvements do NOT require public hearings and proceed directly to Phase 3 upon plan approval
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Issues public notice for Prescott Preservation Commission hearing (mailed notice to neighbors, posted notice per historic preservation ordinance)	3		Start/End	Planning	Planner (assigned)
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Presents staff report and recommendation to Prescott Preservation Commission (meets once per month)	4		Process	Planning	Planner (assigned), Planning Manager
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Holds public hearing, takes public comment, deliberates, and votes on exterior modifications (approve, approve with conditions, or deny based on historic compatibility)	5		Process	Other (e.g., County, District, Consultant)	Prescott Preservation Commission, Applicant (may present), Planner (staff support) Preservation Commissioners vote
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Documents conditions of approval and transmits to applicant and all review staff; if denied, applicant may revise and resubmit or appeal	→Ph3		Off-page Reference	Planning	Planner (assigned) Moves to Phase 3



Phase 3: Permit Issuance, Inspections, Corrections, and Finals

	Step ID	Process Step Description	Next Step ID	Yes/No	Shape Type	Function	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Issues building permit upon completion of all plan review approvals (and Preservation Commission approval if required); stamps plans and issues permit	2		Start/End	Operations	Dev Services Rep / Engineering Permit Technician
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Submits deferred submittals (e.g., commercial fire sprinkler, fire alarm, and hood suppression plans) prior to those phases of construction	3		Process	Applicant	Applicant/Contractor
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Reviews and approves deferred fire protection plans (sprinkler/alarm/hood suppression) upon submission	4		Process	Fire	Fire Inspector/Plan Reviewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Requests inspections via software portal (next-day inspection scheduling)	5		Process	Applicant	Contractor
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Assigns daily inspection routes to building inspectors each morning based on location	6		Process	Building	Lead Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Perform field inspections for all building trades (structural modifications, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, commercial kitchen systems); corrections noted in system	7		Process	Building	Building Inspectors, Plans Examiners (cross-trained)
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Performs fire and life safety inspections (sprinkler, alarm, hood suppression, egress, emergency lighting); Fire uses TI inspections to baseline existing building fire systems	8		Process	Fire	Fire Inspector/Plan Reviewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Performs final inspection of commercial kitchen (County health department for food service)	9		Process	Other (e.g., County, District, Consultant)	Yavapai County Health Inspector
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Determine if corrections needed	11, 10	No, Yes	Decision	Building	Building Inspectors, Fire Inspector, County Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Makes corrections and requests re-inspection	6		Process	Applicant	Contractor
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Continue correction and re-inspection cycle until all deficiencies are resolved across all disciplines	12		Process	Building	Building Inspectors, Fire Inspector, County Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Determines if project ready for partial occupancy	14, 13	No, Yes	Decision	Building	CBO TCO decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	13	Issues Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO) with conditions and ongoing monthly fee until full compliance (TCO option available for commercial ~50/50)	14		Process	Building	CBO
<input type="checkbox"/>	14	Complete all final inspections by all disciplines (building is last before CO); verify all deferred submittals; receive County Health sign-off; confirm all fees paid	15		Process	Building	Building Inspectors, Water Resource staff (confirms WSA), Fire Inspectors, County Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	15	Manually processes Certificate of Occupancy (CO); issues CO to applicant; restaurant approved for operation; closes permit in system	16		Process	Operations	Dev Services Rep All COs hand-processed
<input type="checkbox"/>	16	Receives CO			Start/End	Applicant	Applicant Process complete



City of Prescott

Operational Analysis of the
Community Development Department

City Council Study Session

May 12, 2026

Our Team



JONATHAN INGRAM
Vice President



REBEKKA HOSKEN
Senior Manager



SUSAN HEALY KEENE, AICP
Senior Advisor



Agenda

1. Project Overview and Methods
2. Recommendations
3. Next Steps
4. Q&A

Project Overview

Project Goal

Per City RFP:

“Provide specific recommendations regarding customer-focused operational and technological enhancements for the City to consider...”

Project Steps and Timeline

TASK	TIMELINE
Project Kick-Off	November 2025
Onsite Interviews with CDD Staff	December 2025
Remote Interviews with Mayor/Council and Stakeholders	January 2026
Initial Analysis	January 2026
Budget Impacts Presentation to CDD	January 21, 2026
Process Mapping	February 2026
Write Draft Report	March-April 2026
Transmit Draft Report to City	April 2026
Present Draft Report to City Council for Input	May 12, 2026
Transmit Final Report to City	May 22, 2026
Implementation Workshop with CDD staff	TBD – June
Present Implementation Action Plan to City Staff	TBD - July

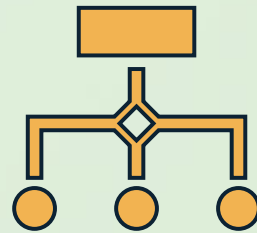
Project Inputs

- Document review
- Staff Interviews and Survey
- Mayor and Council Interviews
- Stakeholder Survey
- Peer Benchmarking
- Process Mapping
- Data Analysis

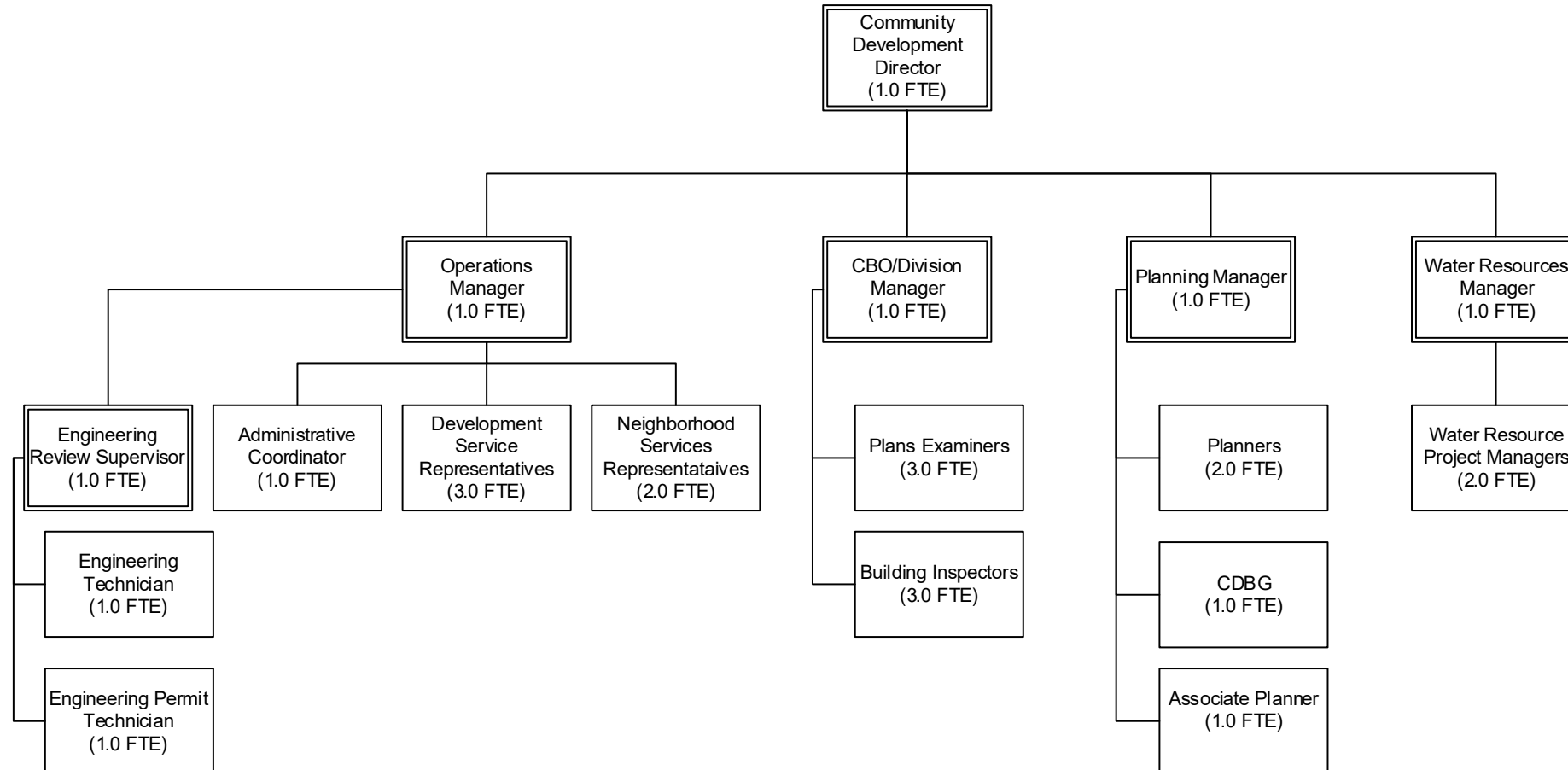
Recommendations

- Staffing and Structure
- Process Improvements
- Technology and Data
- Communication and Accountability

Recommendations: Staffing and Structure



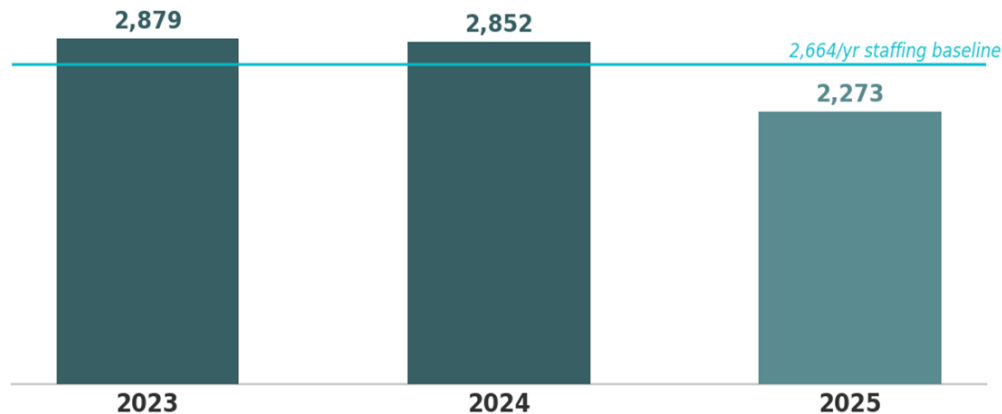
Existing CDD Structure



The permit system is managing relatively stable demand today, but volume is likely to increase over the coming decade

Permit Application Volume, 2023-2025

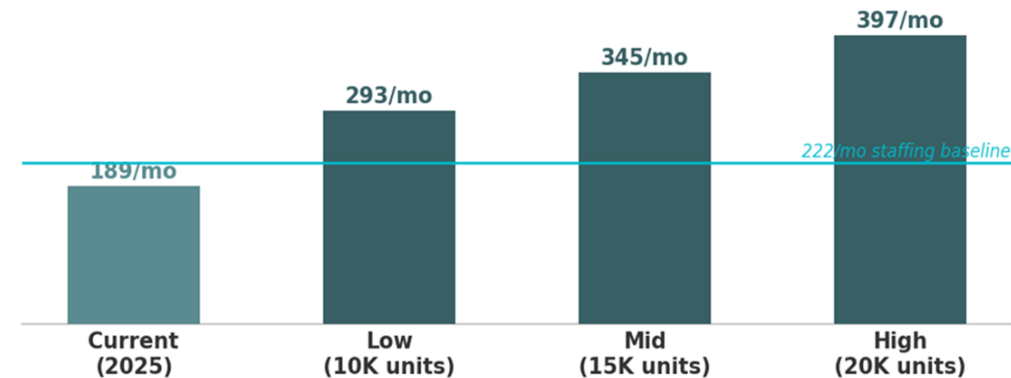
Total applications by calendar year | Staffing baseline: 2,664 permits/year



Projected Monthly Permit Volume by Growth Scenario

Based on entitled housing pipeline (10K-20K units) | Staffing baseline: 222 permits/month

Growth scenarios assume 12-year absorption period, 2026-2037



Permit applications held steady near 2,850 per year in 2023 and 2024 before dipping to 2,273 in 2025. But the 10,000 to 20,000 housing units already approved through development agreements are expected to push monthly volume well above today's staffing baseline over the next decade.

Recommendation 1:

Address vacancies and retention in Community Development

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 15% vacancy rate during review
- Multi-year turnover in key roles
- Compensation and housing cited as drivers
- One-Year training curve for technical hires

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Partner with HR to improve retention
- Eliminate vacancy-related delays
- Preserve institutional knowledge

Recommendation 2: Build opportunities for employee succession

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Imminent retirement risks for key roles
- Limited internal promotion paths
- Lack of embedded succession planning

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Create clear career ladders (e.g., Technician to Manager)
- Improve retention
- Reduce external recruitment needs

Recommendation 3: Add 1.0 FTE to the Water Resources Division

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Water management is critical to future growth
- Permit processing diverts staff from long-term planning
- Complex development agreements require oversight

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Dedicated permit review capacity
- Focus long-term resource planning
- Staff redundancy for leave or illness

Recommendation 4: Add 1.0 FTE Management Analyst to Operations Division

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Limited capacity for data analysis
- Performance improves when data is reviewed
- Current reviews are inconsistent

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Consistent performance reporting
- Development of customer service standards
- Improved public transparency

Recommendation 5:

Add 1.0 FTE administrative position to the Operations Division

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Unusual lack of administrative support compared to peers
- Technical staff perform inefficient administrative tasks

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Targeted support for Planning and Code Enforcement
- Frees up existing technical capacity
- Faster reviews

Recommendation 6:

Reorganize and move Development Services Representatives, Engineers, and Neighborhood Services Representatives to align with technical specialties

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

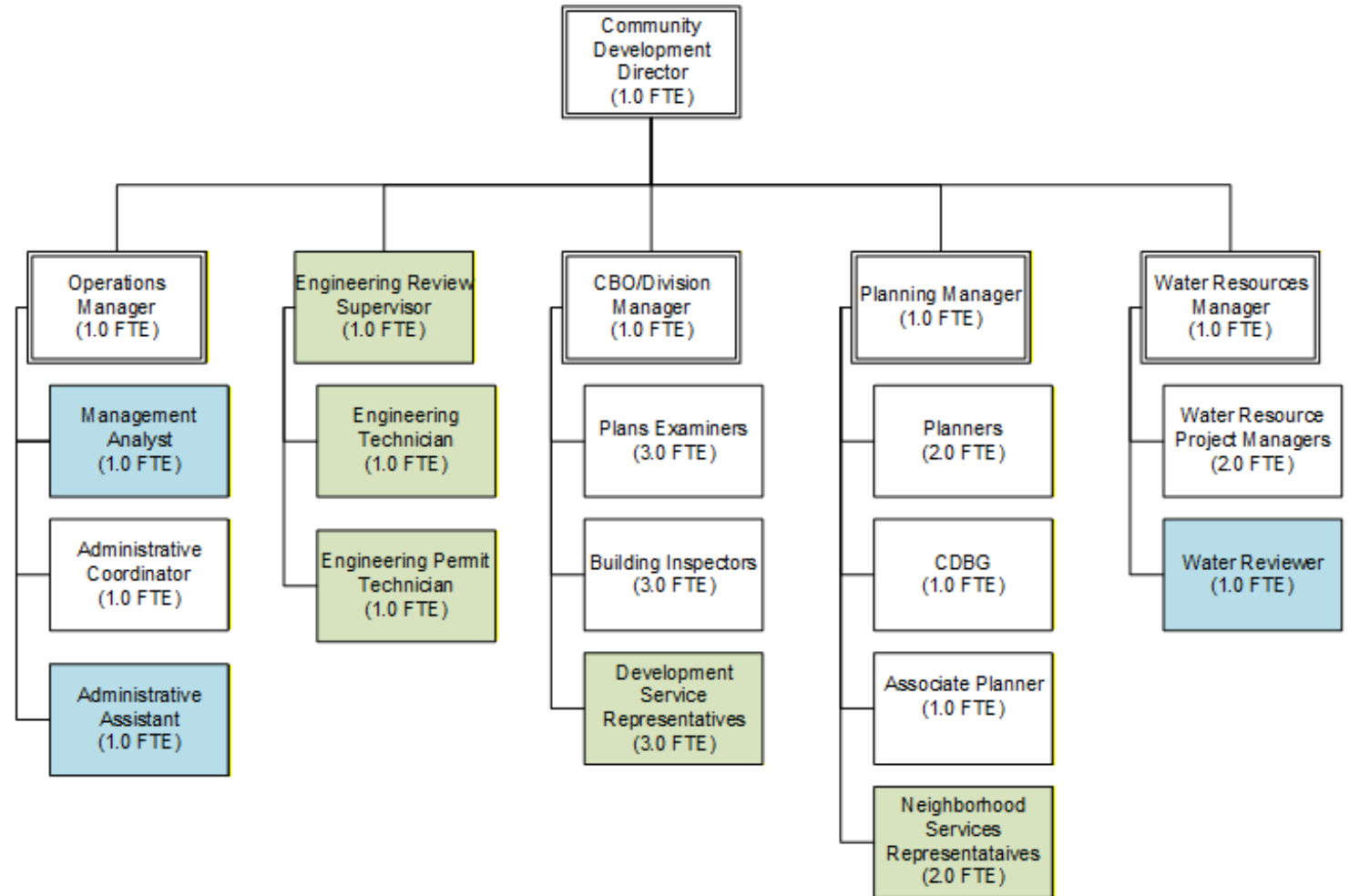
- Unusual structure compared to peers
- Engineering is temporary based upon vacancy
- Work aligns better with technical divisions

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

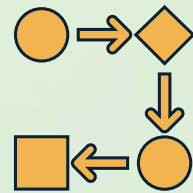
- Align DSRs with Building
- Align Engineering with Director (when supervisor position filled)
- Align Code Enforcement with Planning

Proposed New Structure

- Blue positions are recommended additions/new positions
- Green shows reporting relationship changes



Recommendations: Process Improvements



Recommendation 7:

Formalize Water Resources participation thresholds and accountability in the pre-application conference (PAC) process

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- No formal triggers for Water Resources review
- Lack of formal escalation process for complex PAC projects

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Clear review thresholds
- Reduced resubmittals through upfront clarity

Recommendation 8:

Add Water Resources review steps to the CentralSquare workflow to eliminate manual workarounds

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Manual coordination creates handoff risks
- Staff maintain redundant, parallel tracking systems

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

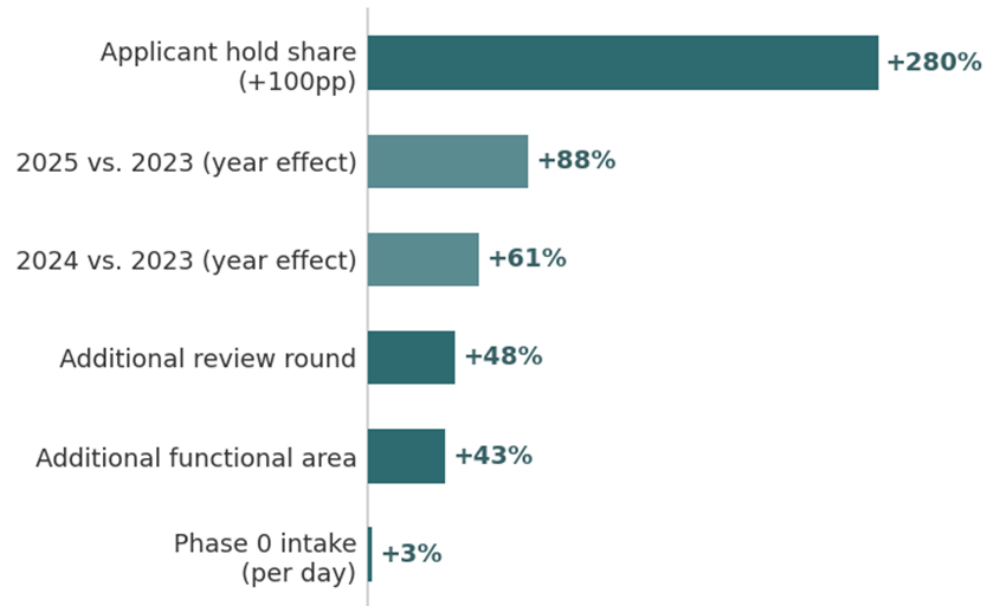
- Improves efficiency through software integration
- Eliminates manual workarounds
- Increases visibility for all reviewers and consistent knowledge of requirements

Two factors observable at intake are associated with longer permit durations and higher correction rates

A statistical model shows that most of what determines how long a permit takes is predictable from the start. Each extra round of review adds about 48% to the total time, and each extra department involved adds about 43%. Both are things the City can manage.

Duration Predictors: Effect per Unit, Regression Model

Log-transformed OLS regression | n=4,312 permits | Darker = within City control



$R^2 = 0.697$ — model explains 69.7% of permit duration variation

Recommendation 9:

Review and update submittal checklists by permit type to address the most common applicant errors

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Multiple reviews frustrate customers
- 27.8% of 2025 applications required extra rounds (down from prior years)

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Faster processing
- Higher customer satisfaction
- Empowers staff to reject incomplete applications

Recommendation 10: Enhance education to applicants in preparing submittals

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Incomplete submittals drive delays
- Applicants seek better upfront guidance
- Data identifies highest-correction permit types

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Faster reviews via targeted education
- Consistent follow-through on PAC comments

Recommendation 11:

Create financial incentives to reduce applicant resubmittals

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Initial fees may not cover multiple review cycles
- Third-round review charges are common in the industry

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Higher application quality
- Fewer resubmittals means faster review
- Full cost recovery for technical staff time

Recommendation 12:

Include additional project types in the PAC process and incorporate administrative policy changes to improve effectiveness

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- PAC is popular but often excludes design teams and results in repeated issues or misinterpreted outcomes (e.g., approvals)

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Use second PAC meetings for complex designs
- Flag projects needing second PAC before formal submittal
- Use neutral language so as not to insinuate approval

Recommendation 13:

Implement processing time service level standards for DSP processes

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Time standards are tracked internally but not actively communicated
- Time standards are not used for internal staff performance accountability
- Time standards focus on individual technical review cycles versus overall process timelines

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Published and transparent time standards build credibility with community
- Tracking of time standards provides insight into issue areas in need of process improvement
- Tracking of time standards allows managers to hold staff accountable for performance

Recommendations: Technology and Data



Recommendation 14:

Establish a Technology User Group within CDD

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- CDD staff noted a variety of technology issues requiring manual workarounds and reducing efficiency
- Staff were unaware of the status of technology issues
- Existing CentralSquare software generally meets City needs but needs some “tweaks”

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- A CDD Technology User Group would bring staff from across the Department together to identify and prioritize needed improvements to continue to improve operational efficiency
- The User Group can meet with and direct IT technical capacity on addressing needs
- The User Group can also address staff training needs and communicate status of tech issues to other staff

Recommendation 15:

Dedicate external consultant staff capacity or internal City IT staff capacity to address CDD technology needs

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Many of the identified technology gaps are minor but require focused capacity to resolve with the vendor
- City IT staff have not had the capacity to do so on a timely basis
- CentralSquare requires technical expertise and vendor knowledge to rapidly address issues

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- CDD Requires dedicated IT capacity, consultant or in-house, to optimize its technology for processing efficiency
- A skilled and knowledgeable consultant could focus on User Group priorities to improve technology rapidly in the short term

Recommendation 16:

Continue moving toward data-driven management and process improvement

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- CDD has access to thousands of operational data records from its CentralSquare system
- There is limited capacity to analyze the data to drive improvements
- Transparency and credibility for CDD are based upon data-driven metrics and visible improvements

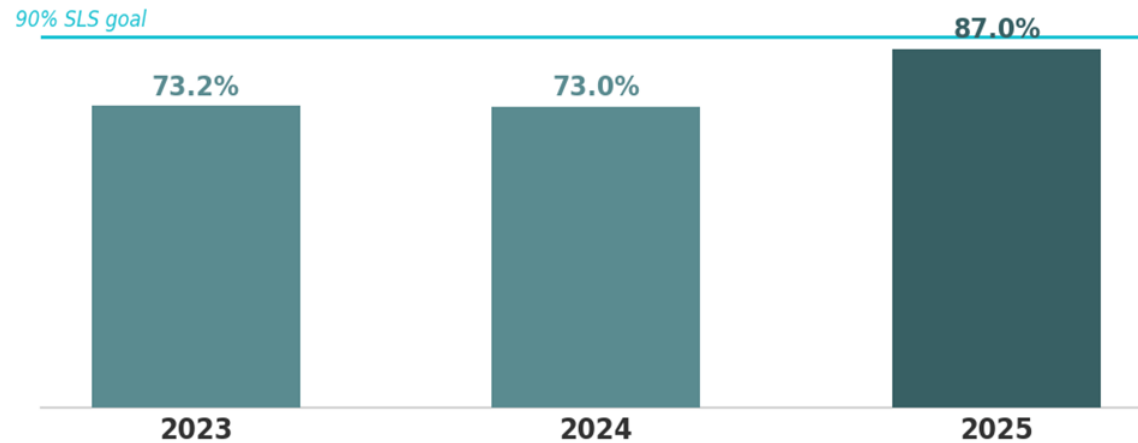
OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- A Management Analyst position can build and maintain a consistent data analysis and reporting function
- Provides answers to Council and public questions about processing times, service levels, and staffing needs

On-time performance has recovered from a 2024 decline, though it varies across permit types and remains below 90%

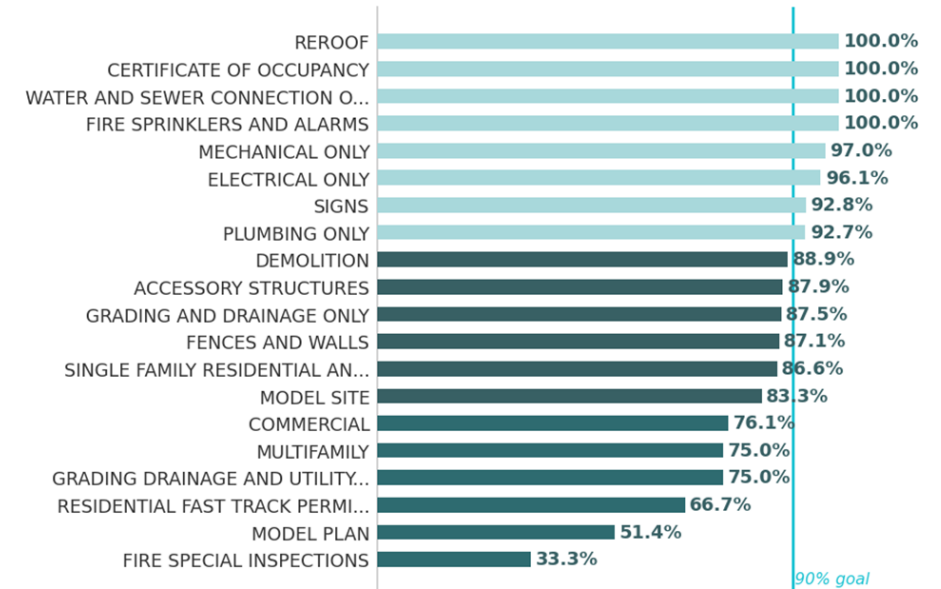
System-Wide Plan Review On-Time Rate by Year

Plan Review Routes versus Published Standards | SLS goal: 90%



Plan Review On-Time Rate by Permit Type, 2025

Plan Review Routes versus Published Standards | SLS goal: 90%



87% of permits were processed on time in 2025, up from 73% the two years before. That is real progress, but still short of the City's 90% goal, and performance varies widely by permit type

Recommendations: Communication and Accountability



Recommendation 17:

Build community confidence in the Department through consistent, proactive communication and transparency

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Interviews showed that policymakers, the public, and internal staff were frustrated by a perceived lack of communication
- Management and staff have focused on internal operations and now need to communicate their work proactively

OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Proactive performance reporting
- Quarterly summaries of process improvements, project volumes, and emerging issues
- Early escalation of high-profile issues

Next Steps

- Incorporate Mayor/Council Feedback into Report
- Deliver Final Report to City
- Conduct Staff Implementation Workshop
- Provide Detailed Implementation Action Plan

Q + A



Thank you!

Contact:

Jonathan Ingram

513.221.0500 / jingram@raftelis.com



TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA: May 12 Study Session
DATE: May 12, 2026
DEPT: City Clerk
ITEM #: 3.B
SUBJECT: Presentation & Discussion Regarding the Charter Review Committee Additional Proposed Charter Revisions for Council Consideration and Addition to the Ballot of the City's Special Election to be Held November 3, 2026.

ITEM SUMMARY

This item is for discussion of additional proposed Charter Revisions forwarded from the Charter Review Committee.

BACKGROUND

At the March 10, 2026 Voting Meeting, City Council adopted Resolution No. 2026-1977 calling for a Special Election to be held on November 3, 2026 and approved ballot language for two (2) Charter revisions as proposed by the Charter Review Committee for Article IX, Section 6 "Majority to Elect in Primary" and Article XI, Section 4 "Presiding Officer; Appointment, City Judge".

Since that time the CRC has convened four (4) additional times and has two (2) additional proposed revisions for the Council's consideration as included below:

I. Article II, Section 18 "Consideration of Petitions"

Current Language: *Any citizen may appear before the council at any regular meeting and present a written petition; such petition shall be acted upon by the council, in the regular course of business, within sixty (60) days. (Amended November 7, 2023)*

Proposed Language: *Any citizen may appear before the council at any regular meeting and present a written petition; council shall conduct at least one (1) public meeting at which they shall take public comment from the petitioner and any other person requesting to comment, and act upon such petition in the regular course of business within sixty (60) days such petition shall be acted upon by the council, in the regular course of business, within sixty (60) days*

II. Article VIII, Section 11 "Leases of City Property"

Proposes to add the following paragraph to Article VIII, Section 11: *No land, building, or part thereof owned by the city, the value of which exceeds four million dollars (\$4 million), shall be leased for a period of more than four years without the following:*

- 1) an affirmative vote by three-fourths of the city council by "ayes and nays"*
- 2) conducting one study session followed by a public comment period of no less than sixty (60) days, followed by at least one public hearing (if more than one public hearing is conducted, there shall be at least 14-days in between each) before a vote of the city council takes place, which shall begin at the time of a formal council vote to authorize a request for bids on the project; and*
- 3) a public presentation of all public comments received during the 60-day comment period to the city council by city staff*

In addition to these two proposed amendments, the Committee anticipates potentially forwarding two to three additional proposals for Council's consideration of ballot language related to: 1) Article XI - City Court, 2) Article VI, Section 17 - High Value Capital Projects Exceeding \$15 Million, and 3) Article VIII, Section 14 - Related to Establishing Certain Restrictions on Development Agreements based upon their action at the upcoming May 18 Committee Meeting.

Following discussion, staff will bring forward additional items, based on direction from Council, for approval at the June 9 Voting Meeting in order to meet the filing deadline for ballot language.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item at this time, there will be future costs for conducting a Special Election and administrative costs for updates to the City Charter.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

This item is for discussion only. No formal action will be taken.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution No. 2026-1977
2. Charter Review Committee Presentation

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-1977

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PRESCOTT, YAVAPAI COUNTY, ARIZONA, PROVIDING NOTICE OF A SPECIAL ELECTION TO BE HELD IN CONSOLIDATION WITH THE YAVAPAI COUNTY GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 3, 2026; AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY CLERK TO ENTER INTO ANY AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR SUCH ELECTIONS

RECITALS:

WHEREAS, the holding of Primary and General Elections is enabled by law and prescribed by the City of Prescott Charter; and,

WHEREAS, the Council wishes to propose amendments to the Prescott City Charter for voter approval at a Special Election; and,

ENACTMENTS:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PRESCOTT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. THAT Yavapai County will conduct a General Election on Tuesday, November 3, 2026 for various county, state and federal races.

Section 2. THAT the City of Prescott may conduct a Special Election for its purposes in consolidation with the November 3, 2026 General Election.

Section 3. THAT the City Clerk is authorized to enter into any agreements with the Yavapai County Elections Department and any necessary vendors to provide election services for the November 3, 2026 Special Election.

Section 4. THAT said elections shall be vote-by-mail balloting, and otherwise held in accordance with the provisions of applicable State Statutes, City Charter provisions, city code and Ordinances and Resolutions of the City.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Prescott this 10th day of March, 2026.



CATHEY RUSING, Mayor

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-1977

Page 2

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Sarah M. Thornhill

SARAH M. THORNHILL
City Clerk

Joseph D. Young

JOSEPH D. YOUNG
City Attorney

CERTIFICATION OF RECORDING OFFICER

STATE OF ARIZONA)
County of Yavapai) ss.

I, the undersigned Sarah M. Thornhill, being the duly appointed, qualified City Clerk of the City of Prescott, Yavapai County, Arizona, certify that the foregoing Resolution No. 2026-1977 is a true, correct and accurate copy of Resolution No. 2026-1977, passed and adopted at a Voting Meeting of the Council of the City of Prescott, Yavapai County, Arizona, held on the 10th day of March 2026, at which a quorum was present and, by a **5-2** vote, **five** voted in favor of said resolution.

Given under my hand and sealed this 16th day of March, 2026.

Seal

Sarah M. Thornhill
City Clerk



Charter Review Committee Presentation

May 12, 2026
Study Session

Article II, Section 18 – Consideration of Petitions

Proposed Language: Any citizen may appear before the council at any regular meeting and present a written petition; council shall conduct at least one (1) public meeting at which they shall take public comment from the petitioner and any other person requesting to comment, and act upon such petition in the regular course of business within sixty (60) days.

Purpose:

Clarify how Council considers citizen petitions and ensure public input

What It Does:

Retains 60-day requirement to act on petitions

Requires at least one public meeting

Ensures opportunity for petitioner and public comment

Key Considerations:

Clarifies meaning of 'act upon'

Adds public transparency

Recommended Direction:

Recommend approval as presented

Committee Recommendation:

Unanimous

Article VIII, Section 11 – Leases of City Property

Proposed Language:

Proposes to add the following paragraph to Article VIII, Section 11: No land, building, or part thereof owned by the city, the value of which exceeds four million dollars (\$4 million), shall be leased for a period of more than four years without the following:

- 1) an affirmative vote by three-fourths of the city council by “ayes and nays”
- 2) conducting one study session followed by a public comment period of no less than sixty (60) days, followed by at least one public hearing (if more than one public hearing is conducted, there shall be at least 14-days in between each) before a vote of the city council takes place, which shall begin at the time of a formal council vote to authorize a request for bids on the project; and
- 3) a public presentation of all public comments received during the 60-day comment period to the city council by city staff

Article VIII, Section 11 – Leases of City Property Cont.

Purpose:

Add enhanced review for long-term leases of high-value City property

What It Does:

Applies to property > \$4M and leases > 4 years

Requires 3/4 Council approval (supermajority)

Requires study session + 60-day public comment period

Requires at least one public hearing

Requires public comment summary before vote

Key Considerations:

Higher threshold for long-term commitments

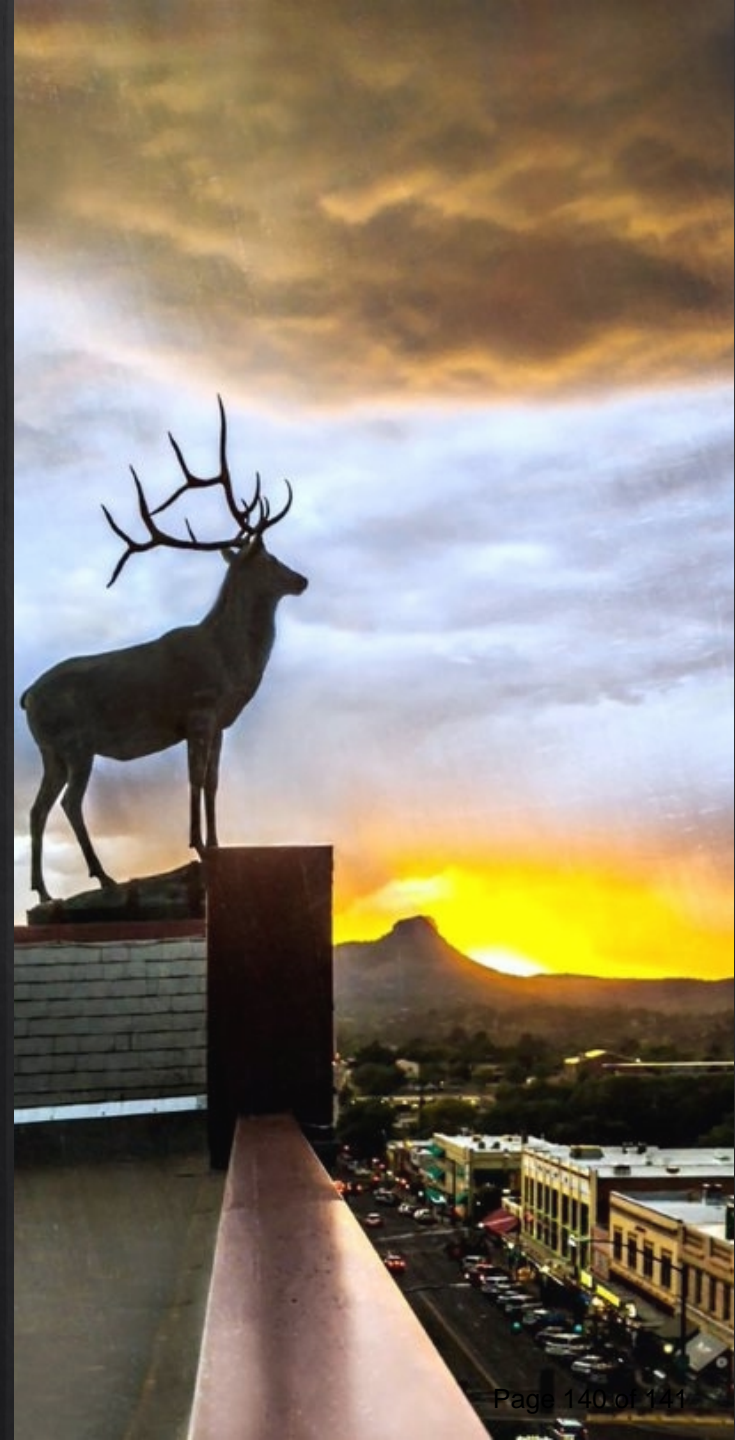
Structured public engagement

Recommended Direction:

Recommend approval as presented

Committee Recommendation:

3–0



Additional Charter Amendments Under Consideration

Article XI – City Court

- ✦ Modernize Charter Language
- ✦ Clarify Judicial Independence & Structure
- ✦ Update Appointment & Operational Provisions

Article VI, Section 17 – High Value Capital Projects:

- ✦ Enhanced Review for Major Capital Projects
- ✦ Public Engagement for Major Capital Projects
- ✦ Committee Discussion is Ongoing

Article VIII, Section 14 – Development Agreements:

- ✦ Scope & Structure of Development Agreements
- ✦ Adjacent Property & Term Considerations
- ✦ Evaluation of Appropriate Charter Placement

Committee Status:

- ✦ All Above Items Pending May 18th Meeting Review & Discussion