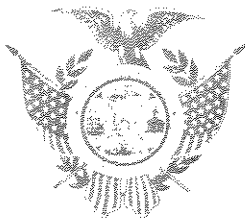


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JAMES A. BOHL, JR.

Alderman, 5th District

May 2, 2012

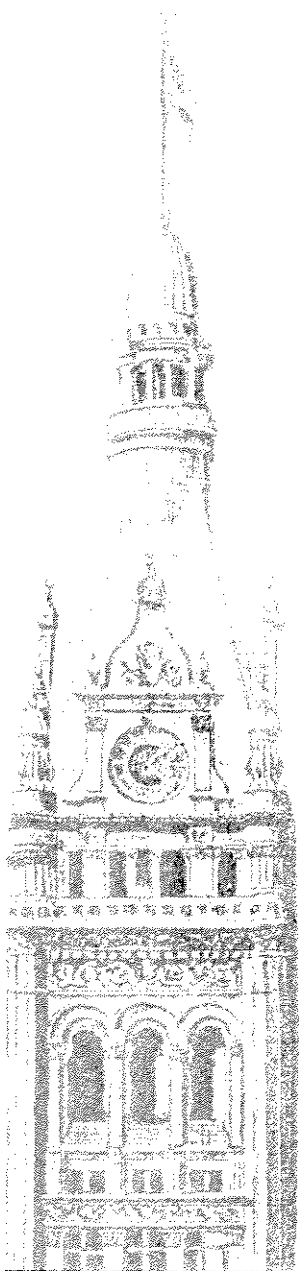
Rocky Marcoux, Commissioner
Department of City Development
809 N. Broadway, 2nd Floor
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Commissioner Marcoux:

At today's Common Council meeting, I introduced File Number 120049, a communication from the Department of City Development relating to the plan review process. This file has been referred to the Common Council's Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee.

In responding to this communication request, I would like DCD to address the following issues:

1. The size and organizational structure of the plan review staff, including management of the plan review section and typical number of vacant positions.
2. Overview of the plan review process, specifically from the customer's perspective (i.e., number of plan examiners a customer typically meets with, number of visits to the Development Center an applicant can expect to make, the role of the permit applicant in "shepherding" the application/plans through the review process and the amount of time that typically elapses from the first time the customer walks in the door until final plan approval/permit issuance).
3. Statistical data relating to the plan review process, including such information as the number of plan reviews conducted monthly and annually, recent trends in the number of plan reviews performed (last 3-5 years), and trends in the average amount of time needed to obtain plan approval and, ultimately, a building permit.
4. The roles of other City departments in the plan review process.
5. How DCD's plan review process has changed/evolved over the past several years (specifically, since introduction of the Development Center about 12 years ago).



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6. Whether the City's plan-review and permit-issuance functions now work as originally envisioned by proponents of the Development Center concept at the time the Development Center was created from parts of the Department of City Development and the former Department of Building Inspection over a decade ago.
7. Comments DCD has received from the public (namely, permit applicants) about the City's plan review process and how it compares to plan review procedures in other municipalities.
8. Any changes or improvements to the plan review process currently being implemented or planned for the near future.

The Public Policy Forum's recent report on Milwaukee-area economic development activities, *Assembling the Parts*, notes that the recently-adopted *Citywide Policy Plan*, while it discusses broad economic development objectives, fails to set forth "implementation methods or performance measures in specific detail". It seems to me that a thorough examination and fine-tuning of the plan review process -- a process that is critical to bringing economic development projects to timely fruition -- would be essential to developing a specific, strategic economic development plan for Milwaukee. Therefore, your communication should also focus on the link between the plan review process and the City's economic development activities.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing your responses and to working with you and all of DCD to stimulate additional economic development throughout the city.

Sincerely,



James A. Bohl, Jr.
Alderman, 5th District
Chair, Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee