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INFORMATION:

Permitting and Inspection Process Referral

Staff Resource: Ann Wall, City Manager's Office, 704-336-3187, awall@charlottenc.gov

Over the last several weeks, staff from the City Manager's Office have been working with the staffs of the City and the Mecklenburg County to improve the development review process. The team is working to identify improvement in the agencies' respective systems and to create a more seamless process for our customers.

- The City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County are committed to ensuring a customer friendly permitting and inspection process.
- Each organization will identify issues and problems and implement improvements while facilitating customer navigation through the entire process.
- The review will focus on areas including customer service process and standards, communications with customers, and appropriate resources including technology and staff.
- Overall, the organizations will create a customer focused culture.

Specifically, the City will complete the following:

A. An independent assessment of the development review, approval and inspection processes conducted by an outside firm to identify issues, concerns and opportunities for improvement.

- City and County staffs have prepared a joint request for qualifications for reviews of the city and county permitting and inspections processes.
 - The RFQ was released on March 17, 2014.
 - The City and County will jointly review the submittals and select a consultant.
- Staff will complete the selection and contracts with the consultant June 1.
- Project Timeline: Anticipate completion of review by late Fall 2014.

B. An analysis of our respective systems to streamline and improve efficiency and work together to facilitate coordination between the systems creating seamless customer navigation.

- The City Manager will appoint a task team of key staff members involved in the development review process and the team will be chaired by David Weekly of E&PM and Laura Harmon of Planning.
- The task team will be charged with reviewing the city development process to identify what works well, problem areas, and possible solutions. This group will also work with the consultant tasked to perform the independent assessment.
- The task team will work with County staff to identify touch points in the coordination of the systems and identify opportunities to improve customer service experience between the systems.

- The task team will work to implement solutions.
- Project Timeline: Ongoing.

C. Collection of baseline data and identification of best practices in other communities.

- The task team will review current information on customer service data.
- City staff is preparing to send out the biennial Land Development Customer Service Survey which will provide customer feedback on process and possible improvements.
- As part of independent assessment, the consultant will be asked to provide best practices in other communities.
- Project Timeline: Anticipate completion by Fall 2014.

D. Working with key stakeholders to convene small groups to hear customer concerns and experiences.

- The City, in collaboration with the County, will conduct focus groups of customers to understand their experiences and concerns with the development process.
- The groups will be organized based on customer type. The plan calls for several focus group sessions to ensure broad representation from the development community (e.g., small-, medium-, and large-size businesses, the multi-family industry and homeowners).
- Focus groups will provide broad feedback on process as well as review and recommendations on specific topics.
- An outside facilitator will be used to conduct the focus groups, gather data and provide a report to city and county staffs.
- Staff is reviewing the focus group facilitator proposal.
- Project Timeline: Focus group selection process finalized within the next 30 – 60 days; Anticipate completion by Fall 2014.

E. With development partners, identify common goals and standards for customer focused services.

- The task team will share information from consultant analysis of process and best practices from peer agencies.
- City task team will develop customer service standards for the development review process for review and concurrence by partners; and will develop a plan for training and implementation of new standards.
- Project Timeline: TBD.

F. Development of a system to monitor the development review process and make continuous improvements to meet changing customer needs and demands.

- City Task Team will be charged with developing a system to monitor development review process and make necessary changes.
- Project Timeline: TBD.

The City continues to improve its development review process using comments/suggestions from the biennale Development Services Customer Satisfaction Survey as well as customer

suggestions.

Recent improvements include:

- Established the *Development Services Technical Advisory Committee* to serve an advisory role and provide input on technical and procedural issues in regards to development in Charlotte. The committee includes representatives from the City and the development Industry, including developers, designers and contractors.
- Customer Service Policy: City staff reviewed, updated, and developed a Development Services Customer Service Policy.
- Leverage Accela Automation: City staff continually seeks to leverage its software to maximize its benefits. Current initiatives include:
 - Expanding electronic plan review to include subdivision plans and plats; and
 - Incorporating the Rezoning process into Accela work flows.

In looking ahead, City staff sees opportunity for continued improvement including work on the following:

- Zoning Ordinance Assessment: Planning is leading this effort in reviewing and updating the City's zoning ordinance.
- Enhance the Development Services Web Portal: Enhancements to the overall layout and organization of the web portal are constantly being made to maintain ease of use. Some future initiatives envisioned are to add step-by-step guides for the Subdivision and Rezoning processes, similar to the current Commercial Plan Process webpage. Because the web portal is built under the CharMeck.org site as opposed to just the City's website Charlottenc.gov, it is possible that it could be expanded to include more County functions as needed.
- City/County Application Tool for small and new businesses: Explore software systems which will guide customers through the requirements of the development review process. For example, Open Counter was developed as a Code for America Project. Open Counter is a software product that may be particularly helpful to business owners, particularly small business owners and out of town owners as they seek to do business in Charlotte.

Staff will continue to update Council on progress to improve the development review process. County staff is also keeping their board apprised as well. Attached below is an update recently sent by County staff to the Board of Commissioners.

ATTACHED: [LUESA update](#)

April 11 – Charlotte Knights Opening Day Festival Traffic Update

Staff Resource: Joe Yanicak, CDOT, 704-336-5531, jyanicak@charlottenc.gov

The new BB&T Ballpark will open on Friday, April 11 with the Charlotte Knights first game at 7:05 p.m. Prior to the game, a festival will be held beginning at noon. Street and lane closures

include Mint Street, Third Street, and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in the vicinity of Knights Stadium. During the festival, commuters should expect significantly heavier traffic and congestion, especially during the evening rush hour.

Information regarding street closures and event details will be communicated to Uptown businesses and residents through CDOT's Street Use Notice publication and to media through a press release.

April 12 – Novant Healthcare Criterium, Knights Home Game, and Bobcats Home Game Traffic Update

Staff Resource: David Christopher, CDOT, 704-336-3889, dchristopher@charlottenc.gov

The annual Novant Healthcare Criterium will be held on Saturday, April 12 from 5 p.m. - 9 p.m. The course uses Tryon Street, Third Street, East Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Sixth Street, Seventh Street, Church Street and North College Street. Periodic closures of these streets will begin at 9:00 am to midnight.

In addition to the Criterium, the Charlotte Knights will play at 7:05 p.m. at BB&T Ballpark. Also, the Charlotte Bobcats will play at 7:00 p.m. at Time Warner Cable Arena. Information regarding street closures and event details will be communicated to Uptown businesses and residents through CDOT's Street Use Notice publication and to media through a press release.

Fall Cankerworms Starting to Hatch

Staff Resource: Don McSween, E&PM, 704-336-5752, dmcsween@charlottenc.gov

The first Fall Cankerworm caterpillars have been spotted in Charlotte. Cankerworms are the most destructive pest threatening Charlotte's tree canopy. Infestation can strip a tree of its spring foliage, weakening the tree and making it susceptible to disease. When Cankerworms start to hatch, some will string down on a silk thread, be caught up by the wind, and float to other surrounding trees and plants. This is called "ballooning." The Cankerworm caterpillars start feeding on the new foliage that has just started to emerge on the trees. They primarily feed on Willow Oak; however, they can feed on more than 50 other plants. After they are finished feeding, they will drop to the ground, and burrow in it to form a cocoon.

The City of Charlotte monitors the Cankerworm population every year to see if the caterpillar feeding is affecting the health of the tree canopy. At this time, the City will *not* conduct an aerial spray.

If a homeowner is concerned about small trees and shrubs in their yard, they can buy the proper sprayer and insecticide at their garden center or hardware store and spray these plants. Be sure to follow the directions carefully. If they are concerned about the health of larger trees, they can hire an arborist to treat their trees.

Prescription Drug Rebidding Process

Staff Resource: Cheryl Brown, Human Resources, 704-336-5703, cbrown@charlottenc.gov

The City currently contracts with CVS Caremark for pharmacy benefit administration. The program is self-insured and is funded in the overall health insurance budget. The current contract with CVS Caremark will expire 6/30/2014. The City's benefits consultant, Willis, recently completed a rebidding process for this plan.

The prescription drug plan is a separate and distinct program and is not part of any of the medical options. All prescription drug claims are administered by CVS Caremark. Employees/retirees who elect medical coverage are automatically covered by the prescription drug program. Employees receive a CVS Caremark prescription drug card and pay a copay when they have a prescription filled. CVS Caremark administers a number of provisions to ensure appropriate drug utilization and to assist the City in aggressively managing overall prescription drug costs.

The FY14 budget provided the City Manager or his designee the authority to renegotiate or rebid the current contract, select a vendor, and execute the contract and future contract amendments with the selected vendor upon completion of the bid process.

As a result of the rebidding process, CVS Caremark was selected to continue as the pharmacy benefit administrator effective 7/1/2014. Continuing to contract with CVS Caremark results in no member disruption related to having prescriptions filled. Additionally, CVS Caremark continues to offer innovative strategies to control rising prescription drug costs.

CVS Caremark offered the most competitive transparent contract. Estimated three year savings as a result of the rebidding process and contracting with CVS Caremark are \$4,154,000.