



*Development Services Department  
Strategic Action Plan  
November 2018*

# *Mission and Operational Profile*

*The Mission of the Development Services Department is to administer the building and development codes, and facilitate development of the City.*

*The Development Services Department is responsible for development and permitting activities in the City of Corpus Christi and bringing together all facets of the development process including platting, zoning, building permits, and public improvements associated with land development. The Department offers a One-Stop service center and provides early assistance meetings to guide customers in the development process.*



# Department Summary

## Current Department Strategies

Enhance outreach efforts

Implement new permitting and inspections software, including on-line permitting and inspection request options, and on-line fee payment

Have quicker turnaround on inspection results and commercial and residential plan review

Improve public infrastructure plan review

Improve plan acceptance procedures

Implement Unified Development Code, which consolidates zoning, platting and other codes

Provide over-the-counter business at front counter

*The Development Services Department coordinates development throughout Corpus Christi and its extraterritorial jurisdiction. The department has 63 staff members who deliver services related to building permits, land development, and community resiliency. In partnership with other city departments, activities are centralized in a One Stop Shop where technical assistance is offered through Early Assistance consultation, and development related permitting services are provided.*

*Development Services assists with rezoning, platting, plan review, public infrastructure improvements, building permits and inspections. Additional services offered by the department are vendor permits, backflow compliance and floodplain management.*

*Technological improvements have enhanced service delivery. In 2015, a new software platform, Infor Public Sector, was implemented and continues to provide automated services including online project and inspections status. Upgrades scheduled for completion in April, 2019, will provide on-line application submittal and payment.*

*The Unified Development Code was updated in 2011 and in the future will be available on a new software platform, EnCode. In 2018, an evaluation of the UDC was initiated to provide recommended revisions with content that is easily read, to address best management practices and development processes, and to review zoning provisions. Also, a cost of services study was initiated to better understand and evaluate the level of service currently funded through development fees.*

# *Development Services Functions*



## Building Permitting

- Building Permits
- Certificates of Occupancy
- Commercial and Residential Plan Review
- Contractor Registration
- Inspections
- Sign Permits
- Support Construction Advisory Boards



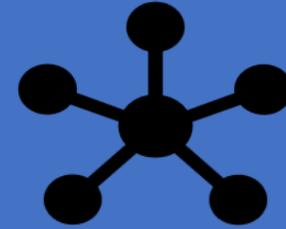
## Land Development

- Developer Participation and Trust Fund Agreements
- Geographic Information Systems
- Historic Preservation
- Platting
- Public Improvement Plans
- Support Airport Zoning Commission, Landmark Commission, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Adjustment
- Street, Alley and Easement Closures
- Variances/Appeals/Special Use Exceptions
- Zoning



## Community Resiliency

- Community Rating System
- Flood Plain Evaluation
- Beach Front Construction Certificates
- Dune Protection Permits
- Hazard Mitigation Public Information Program
- Support Flood Hazard Mitigation Information Committee



## One Stop

- Early Assistance Meetings
- Liquor Licenses
- Outside City Limits Water Contracts
- Pipeline Licenses
- Project Management
- Preconstruction Meetings
- Right-of-way Licenses
- Streetscape Zone Agreements
- Utility Taps
- Vacant Building Demolition Review
- Vendor Permits

***What We Do***

# *Baseline Information*

	<b>FY 2017-2018</b>	<b>FY 2016-2017</b>	<b>FY 2015-2016</b>	<b>FY 2014-2015</b>
Full-time employees	63	63	63	63
Total expenditures (in million \$)	\$5.60	\$5.90	\$7.50	\$5.80
Total revenues (in million \$)	\$7.83	\$6.90	\$7.30	\$7.00
Valuation of new single-family residential permits issued (\$ in millions)	\$166	\$163	\$192	\$202
Valuation of commercial construction building permits issued (\$ in millions)	\$293	\$382	\$379	\$386
Final acres platted	918	370	713	1,453
Total permits issued - annual	18,749	13,878	17,591	16,131
Total new residential single-family plans approved - annual	952	897	1,112	1,177
Total commercial construction plans approved - annual	654	604	959	1,153
Total inspections performed - annual	31,290	34,926	37,446	38,644

# Strategic Action Plan Process



## Department Assessment

- Review of Operations
- Review of City Codes
- Internal Audits

## Input

- City Officials
- Stakeholder Focus Groups
- General Public

## Mission & Strategic Actions

- Review Mission and Update Strategic Actions

## Strategic Action Plan

- Core Emphasis
- Strategic Actions
- Timeline

## Indicators

- Review and Update Performance Indicators

# Stakeholder Focus Groups

## Stakeholder Focus Group Participants

American Institute of Architects,  
Corpus Christi

American Society of Civil Engineers,  
Corpus Christi Branch

Associated Builders and Contractors,  
Inc., Texas Coastal Bend Chapter

Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries

Coastal Bend Homebuilders Association

Coastal Bend Restaurant Association

Consulting Engineers Council of Texas

Corpus Christi Black Chamber of Commerce

Designers

Downtown Management District

Flour Bluff Business Association

Gulf Coast Growth Ventures

North Beach Community Association

South Texas Associated General  
Contractors

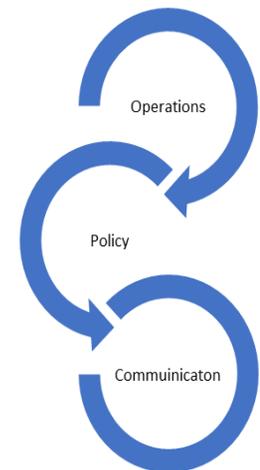
U.S. Navy Air Station

United Corpus Christi Area Chamber  
of Commerce

*In May, 2018, a series of Stakeholder Focus Groups representing a range of diverse interests such as builders, business associations, engineers, architects, planners, trades, designers, restaurants, community associations, military, and environmental advocacy, were conducted by the Leadership Institute in coordination with the Department of Development Services. The following questions were asked at each focus group session:*

- 1) Tell me about the positive or satisfactory experiences you have had with the Development Services Department.*
- 2) Tell me about the disappointments you have had with the Development Services Department.*
- 3) Based on your experience can you list three changes that would improve the operations of the department and explain why?*
- 4) Based on your experience, can you list three policy changes that would improve development in Corpus Christi and explain why?*
- 5) How can the Development Services Department improve communications with its community partners?*
- 6) Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with Development Services? Are there any other recommendations or suggestions you would like to make?*

*The Focus Group dialogue has provided an assessment of improvements that are warranted to enhance service delivery. Based on this input, the strategic action plan provides a blueprint to improve business services and address policy issues. The strategic action plan consists of four areas of emphasis: customer service, proficiency, innovation and communication. Under each area of emphasis, core themes and strategic actions are identified to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department's business functions.*



# Strategic Action Plan

	Customer Service
<b>On-line Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-line services by April 1, 2019:</li> <li>• Permitting and payment</li> <li>• Plans submission</li> <li>• Inspections scheduling</li> <li>• Contractors search</li> <li>• Customer alert system</li> </ul>
<b>Customer First</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff to implement pro-active, solution oriented attitude</li> <li>• Implement Customer Services First Program by January 1, 2019</li> </ul>
<b>Technical Assistance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold 40 early assistance meetings per month by October 1, 2019</li> <li>• Hold 10 pre-construction meetings per month by October 1, 2019</li> <li>• All relevant departments to attend these technical assistance meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Performance Efficiencies and Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outsource public improvement plan reviews to ensure timeliness of review as warranted</li> <li>• Reduce plat review times to 45 days (minus engineer response time)</li> <li>• Commercial building permit reviews processed within 14 days</li> <li>• Residential building permit reviews processed within 2 days</li> <li>• Reduce the number of new residential plan reviews that are revisions to 20% or less</li> <li>• Reduce the number of commercial plan reviews that are revisions to 35% or less</li> </ul>

# Strategic Action Plan

	Proficiency
<b>Staffing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation of job descriptions to ensure position requires essential competencies and experience</li> <li>• Complete cost of services study by June, 2019 to ensure fees support essential staff components</li> <li>• Retain qualified staff by reviewing position descriptions regularly to ensure compensation is competitive</li> </ul>
<b>Community Learning Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designer workshops</li> <li>• Community outreach at City Hall at the Mall and other events</li> <li>• Customized subject matter brochures and presentations</li> <li>• Web site enhancements to ensure information is easily accessible</li> <li>• Work with industry to create new training sessions</li> </ul>
<b>Staff Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff certifications by International Code Council, American Institute of Certified Planners, and other relevant professional organizations</li> <li>• In-house and other training opportunities for staff</li> <li>• Internal administrative procedures developed for every facet of organization</li> </ul>
<b>Unified Development Code</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish rule interpretations to augment uniform application and interpretation of codes</li> <li>• UDC evaluation by July, 2019</li> <li>• Targeted amendments - 2019-2020</li> <li>• Annual UDC review process beginning 2021</li> <li>• Public release of EnCode software platform for user-friendly on-line publication of UDC</li> </ul>

# Strategic Action Plan

	<b>Innovation</b>
<b>Permitting and Inspections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore self-certification or third-party options for single-family residential construction</li> <li>• Offer expedited residential plan review for single family construction based on previously approved models</li> </ul>
<b>Continuous Improvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process mapping of internal functions to assess areas for potential efficiencies and improvement</li> <li>• Reduction in response times</li> <li>• Streamline paperwork</li> <li>• Establish backup procedure for scheduling inspections, etc., if INFOR is down</li> </ul>
<b>Geographic Information Systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure most accurate and relevant data is incorporated into City's mapping program and kept up to date</li> <li>• Ensure As-Built plans are received by City for mapping prior to plat recordation or prior to release of financial security if improvements were deferred</li> <li>• Integration of GIS applications in Infor system</li> </ul>
<b>Infor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land development module implementation by 2020</li> <li>• Registration module implementation by 2020</li> </ul>
<b>Municipal Code</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate ability for administrative approval of development requirements to facilitate permit issuance including out of city limits water contracts and easement closures</li> </ul>

# Strategic Action Plan

	<b>Communication</b>
<b>Stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify stakeholder groups to provide messaging to broadcast initiatives</li> <li>• Keep stakeholders informed through letters, press releases, and other forms of written and oral communication</li> <li>• Notify stakeholders of proposed amendments to the UDC via stakeholders email listing</li> <li>• Consider publication of information/notices in languages other than English</li> <li>• Attend stakeholder meetings to discuss department programs</li> </ul>
<b>Web Site</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep staff listing and organization chart up to date</li> <li>• Post proposed code amendments in advance of public hearings</li> <li>• Post Master Plans links on one page</li> <li>• Provide customer feedback link</li> <li>• Enhance fee calculator functions</li> </ul>
<b>Forms Depot</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to make forms available on web site in a centralized location</li> </ul>
<b>Code Interpretations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish code interpretations for consistency of application</li> <li>• Revise/amend codes and cross-reference as necessary to address conflicting or redundant provisions between codes</li> </ul>