



# INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

## **Building Standards Audit: Phase 1**

**October 2021**

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#### **CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY**

While the department has made significant progress on several initiatives over the past number of years, opportunities were identified to improve management oversight and ensure risks related to the business administration, permits issuance and other zoning services processes are efficiently and effectively mitigated. The following opportunities were identified:

- Improve oversight over processes including Request for Information, Conditional Permit Application, Sign Permit and the Zoning By-law Review Committee.
- Improve overall governance and oversight of the department.
- Leverage advances in technology to improve business processes and controls.
- Establish and monitor Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure department performance.

Oversight is an important element of the City's overall governance framework. There are increased operational, legal, financial, health and safety, and reputational risks to the City when they are absent or focused on activities that are not crucial to meeting the City's organizational objectives. Improving oversight over the Request for Information process, Conditional Permit Applications, Sign Permit Application processes and the Zoning By-law Review Committee will help mitigate these risks.

Good Governance Policies are a newly introduced program that aims to ensure that the services provided by staff are aligned with the City's Service Excellence Strategic Plan, Building Standards Business Plan and procedures. However, they had yet to be fully implemented in all business units at the time of the audit. Certain policies and procedures have not been recently reviewed and updated. No review cycle has been established for policies and procedures. Fully implementing the Good Governance Policies and establishing a review cycle for policies and procedures will help ensure service quality, integrity and consistency. The City's upcoming new Comprehensive Zoning By-law will also require enhanced supervisory review of zoning files.

While the Building Standards department (BSD) has been committed to providing building services to the Vaughan community through digital means, paper-based and manual processes still exist for many processes. Opportunities were identified to leverage advances in technology to improve overall process efficiency, service quality and availability.

KPIs help organizations understand how well they are performing in direct relation to their strategic goals and objectives and therefore help to monitor the execution of strategy. They should clearly demonstrate the cause and effect relationship between departmental processes and outcomes to the results the City wants to achieve from the strategic plan. It helps all levels of the organization see the impact of their work on performance and trace that impact all the way up to organizational performance. Performance measures are so vital in an organization and are frequently overlooked. There are well recognized frameworks in the industry to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal programs and services. Currently BSD primarily monitors the service levels, mandated by the Ontario Building Code (OBC) for different type of

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permit categories, and those set by the department for other services and programs. However, BSD does not perform benchmarking against other municipalities or industry average. There is no process to track or monitor certain service level targets. This is partially due to existence of paper-based processes and lack of capability to collect and track relevant data. Developing appropriate KPIs and benchmarking against best practices and industry frameworks will help management assess the City's service levels in comparison with peers and identify opportunities to further improve effectiveness and efficiency.

During the audit, management has already taken steps to improve the processes. Internal Audit will follow up on the status of outstanding management action plans related to this audit and will report the status to a future Audit Committee meeting.

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#### **BACKGROUND**

The mission of the Building Standards Department (BSD) is to ensure the safe and lawful use of lands and buildings through the administration of the Building Code Act (BCA), enforcement of the Ontario Building Code (OBC) regulations, Zoning By-law (ZBL) requirements, as well as applicable laws. BSD enforces OBC regulations including health and life safety standards, building by-law requirements, and zoning regulations. The Chief Building Official (CBO) represents the City at the Building Code Commission (BCC) and liaises with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH). BSD realizes this mission through four core business units: Zoning Services, Customer Services and Administration, Technical Services and Inspection Services.

Zoning Services is responsible for the interpretation and administration of the City of Vaughan's Zoning By-law. The division provides written and verbal confirmation of zoning to the public, internal and external agencies, and compliance letters and consents to the transfer of land. The Zoning Services manager also oversees Customer Services and Administration, which is responsible for General Administration, including monetary requirements, public inquiries, sign permits, public education and facilitating inter-departmental interface with other departments. Zoning and Technical Services administer the Building Permit issuance process, ensuring construction activity is in compliance with OBC and ZBL requirements and associated standards, within the legislated turnaround times. These business units facilitate city development through pre-permit consultations, inter-departmental coordination for complex, high profile and corporate projects through conditional permits, partial approvals and alternative solutions.

#### **OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE**

Based on the variety and depth of the programs and activities that Building Standards is responsible for, we will be conducting this audit in phases. We will start by reviewing the Business Administration, Permit Issuance and other Zoning Services related processes (Phase 1), followed by the Inspection and Compliance processes (Phase 2).

The objective of Phase 1 is to evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal controls, processes and procedures in place to mitigate the business risks associated with the management and administration of the Business Administration, Permit Issuance and other Zoning Services related processes.

The audit approach included a review of the strategic goals, objectives and oversight of the business unit, review of relevant programs, legislation, policies and procedures, use of technology, and interviews with staff and management.

The audit scope included department related activities that occurred in January 2019 to November 2020.

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#### DETAILED REPORT

##### **1. *Improve the Ownership Verification Process for Request for Information Applications***

The Building Standards Department (BSD) processes “Request for Information” applications. This allows individuals the ability to apply to access information held by the department such as surveys, permit application plans and drawings, past building permit inspection notes, past building permit application forms and orders to comply, etc. Usually, the applicant has a piece of land or an existing house/building and wishes to obtain the survey that outlines the property boundaries and the size of a lot, or other historical property information. Such personal information of the owners is protected by the Municipal Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Residential information can only be requested by the direct, current owners of the properties, or the agent authorized by the owners.

Pursuant to the by-laws and regulation, BSD has established Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to guide the related processes. The current policy requires proof of ownership or a letter from the owner giving the requestor permission to access the plans for a property.

Our review of this process identified the following:

- Proof of ownership was not attached to the application forms and maintained in AMANDA as requested by the procedural manual. There is no documentation retained on how ownership was verified by staff.
- When the applicant is a representative or management company under authorization of the owner, an authorization letter signed by the owner was provided and maintained. However, no ownership proof of the signing party was provided. Ownership was not established or verified.
- Most application forms were not signed and dated as requested by the procedural manual.

Per discussion with management, oversight gaps that pre-existed, and resulted from the rapid changes in processes and ownership due to the current pandemic are cited as the primary reasons for these issues. Staff were assumed to be following procedures, however, no follow up or reinforcement of procedures were followed through with staff. Recently BSD introduced the Good Governance Policies (GGP) which provides guidance for staff and periodic follow-ups. However, GGPs are not fully implemented yet. Effort is being made to remind staff of procedures through different avenues.

The City’s Access and Privacy Officer has provided several best practices for ownership verification implemented by other municipalities:

- Verify ownership using the property tax assessment roll.
- When a party authorized by the owner is the applicant, a written consent of the owner and a copy of a document that only the owner would have possession of, such as purchase of sale, tax bill, etc., should be required.

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- When the link between the requester and the property is murky, staff can contact the owners and see if they have authorized a specific individual/agent to act on their behalf. Failing that, the request can be directed through the Freedom of Information (FOI) process.

If ownership information is not verified, the most significant risk is that privacy of the property owner may be compromised. Without improved oversight and monitoring over the “Request of Information” application process, the process may pose privacy, legal, and reputational risks to the City.

#### **Recommendations**

We recommend that management improve the ownership verification process for Request for Information Applications by incorporating best practices as recommended to management by the City’s Access and Privacy Officer.

#### **Management Action Plan**

The BSD agrees with the recommendations and is presently working with the Financial Services, Property Tax & Assessment Manager to obtain access to property assessment rolls, which are updated regularly. The process of verifying ownership information against the property assessment rolls will commence once staff are registered on the system and access to the required information is granted.

Where the applicant is not the owner, an owner’s authorization form must be completed and submitted along with supporting documentation such as a utility bill, for example. The department is finalizing the owner’s authorization form and required supporting documentation for implementation in 2021.

The department will also consult with staff in the Office of the City Clerk to develop a Standard Operating Procedure to deal with scenarios where the submitted owner’s information is questionable. The implementation date for the new procedures is Q3 2022.

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### ***2. Improve the Conditional Permit Application Process***

Conditional permits (CP) may be granted where applicants can demonstrate compliance or agreement with Subsections 8(3) to 8(8) of the Building Code Act, 1992, the Building Code Division C, Part 1, Article 1.3.1.5 and Clause 3.3(3) of the City's Building By-Law. Applicants are required to state the reasons why they believe that unreasonable delays in construction would occur if a conditional permit is not granted.

Pursuant to the by-laws and regulation, BSD has established an SOP to guide the related process. The SOP requires that a formal application form and checklists be completed for these applications. A list of factors is to be considered to establish whether an unreasonable delay will be caused if a CP is not issued.

Our review of this process identified departures from the procedures. Communications with applicants are generally made in the forms of e-mails and phone calls. Records of communications are not maintained in AMANDA. Decisions and approvals are made verbally. Internal Audit was also made aware that no formal application forms or checklists were being completed.

Management stated that the CP procedures were relatively new, and BSD has yet to fully implement them. As a result, there is no documentation to support the application, evaluation and approval process. In addition, management has no mechanism to exercise oversight. It also negatively affects efficiency if not all documentation is maintained in one central repository.

Since the commencement of the audit, management has taken steps to implement the CP procedures.

### **Recommendations**

We recommend that management fully implement the CP procedures to formalize and standardize the application, evaluation and approval process.

### **Management Action Plan**

The BSD agrees with the recommendations and has fully implemented the CP procedures. However, for minor administrative changes to an issued CP, such as an extension to the expiration date for example, a modified CP process can be followed. The department also added the administration of the conditional permits process to the responsibilities and duties of the newly created position of Development Expeditor in March of 2021.

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#### **3. *Improve the Sign Permit Application Process***

Signs are regulated by the Building Code Regulation (OBC), Division B, Part 3, Section 3.15. Erection of all signs, except interior signs, portable signs and those exempted require a building permit. The City's Sign By-law 140-2018 regulates signs for controlling community appearance, safety, and the impact upon areas identified for their historical or architectural significance.

A sign variance is required when the proposed signage does not meet the requirements of the Sign By-law. According to the Sign By-law, the power and authority to grant or refuse a sign variance application is delegated to the Director of Building Standards, and in his absence, the Director of By-law and Compliance, Licensing and Permit Services (BCLPS).

Pursuant to the by-laws and regulation, BSD has established SOPs to guide the related processes.

Our review of this process identified the following:

- The Sign Variance Committee is the mechanism to review all sign variance applications as authorized by the Sign By-law. The Director of Building Standards bases the decisions on the recommendations from the Committee. For one of the sample applications reviewed, the back-up Sign Variance Committee recommendation was not located. Management confirmed that when the Notice of Sign Variance Decisions are prepared, the Application Expeditors copy the recommendations right onto the Notice of Decision that the Director of Building Standards signs. However, the Sign Variance Committee recommendations are currently not scanned and maintained in AMANDA. Without properly maintaining documents in AMANDA, it may lead to missing records. There may be inconsistencies between the Notice of Decisions and the Sign Variance Committee recommendations, which may lead to disputes and reputational damage.
- The Sign By-law requires applicants for mobile sign permits to submit supporting documentation including plans, scale drawings, approval of authorities having jurisdiction, and written authorization from the owner of the commercial or industrial premises to which the mobile sign relates. Internal Audit noted that these documents were not requested to support mobile sign permit applications, which is inconsistent with the requirements of the Sign By-law. The City's BCLPS Department manages and enforces the Sign By-law. Internal Audit confirmed with BCLPS that the Sign By-law's intent is to request supporting documentation to verify the compliance with the requirements. There is a need for BSD to ensure applicants submit all documentation to comply with the Sign By-law. With the inconsistency between practices and the Sign By-law with regards to mobile sign permits the City may fail to examine the signs' compliance with the requirements of the Sign By-law. This may constitute a non-compliance with the Sign By-law and pose health and safety risks to residents and reputational risks to the City.



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#### **Recommendations**

We recommend that management:

- Maintain all Sign Variance Committee recommendations within AMANDA to support the sign variance decisions.
- Ensure that mobile sign permit applicants submit all documentation as required per the Sign By-law.
- Continue to improve communication and collaboration with BCLPS in terms of interpretation and application of the Sign By-law.

#### **Management Action Plan**

The BSD agrees with the recommendations and has implemented the following actions:

##### **Sign Variance Committee**

The administration of sign variance applications was transferred from the Office of the City Clerk to the BSD in January of 2021. Since that time, sign variance documentation has been stored within the AMANDA data base. On October 24, 2017 Council enacted By-law 136-2017, a by-law to amended Sign Variance Committee By-law 286-91 and delegate authority respecting minor variances to the Director of Building Standards, and alternatively the Director of By-law and Compliance, to make determinations for sign variance applications. Prior to that, the sign variance committee reported their recommendation(s) to the Committee of the Whole. These past applications form part of the public record and can be viewed in the Office of the City Clerk. For sign variance applications prior to January 2021 and after October 24, 2017, the BSD will develop an action plan and resource needs to upload sign variance application documents to the AMANDA database. This action plan will be completed in Q1 2022.

##### **Mobile Sign Permits:**

The City of Vaughan Online Services Portal for mobile signs will be updated to require that a site plan with dimensions and property lines and other site information be submitted for mobile signs. Mobile sign applications will also be required to include drawings of the proposed sign. The BSD will be making changes to the Online Services Portal by the end of 2021. The Online Services Portal will also be updated to capture owner's information and staff will use the property assessment rolls to verify ownership information once staff have the necessary access to the assessment roll information.

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#### **4. *Improve Overall Governance and Oversight***

Good Governance Policies (GGP) are a newly introduced program that aims to establish oversight to ensure BSD services are aligned with the City's Service Excellence Strategic Plan, Building Standards Business Plan and procedures. Per discussion with management, detailed review and approval of every application is impractical due to the nature of the business. Under the GGP, supervisors will conduct random periodic reviews of work completed by their staff. The review focuses on ensuring that work is completed to the applicable standard.

Our review of the governance and oversight processes identified the following opportunities for improvement:

- The Good Governance Policies have been implemented in the Building Permit Administration and Building Standards Administration groups within the Zoning Services business unit. However, at the time of the audit, they had yet to be fully implemented in Zoning Services, Inspection Services and Technical Services.
- Review cycles have not been established for policies and procedures. In the Technical Services business unit, all policies and procedures are dated back to the late 1990's and early 2000's. Management acknowledged that some of them are outdated and need to be reviewed and updated.
- Oversight over many key processes, as discussed earlier in the report.
- The City is approaching the adoption of a new city-wide Comprehensive Zoning By-law. The By-law replaces city-wide Zoning By-law 1-88. The new by-law is meant to conform to and implement the City's 2010 Official Plan in order to streamline that policy framework. It will bring about significant changes, new concepts and definitions, and therefore new challenges, risks and opportunities. This will also give rise to the need for increased supervisory review of zoning files.

The development and use of SOPs are an integral part of a successful quality system, as it provides individuals with the information to perform a job properly and facilitates consistent implementation in the quality and integrity of the end-result. The Good Governance Policies and the reviews prescribed by them are intended by BSD management to be important and effective controls to ensure service quality and consistency. Without complete implementation of the policies, there is a risk that the services provided by staff may not be aligned with the City of Vaughan Service Excellence Strategic Plan, Building Standards Business Plan and Procedures.

#### **Recommendations**

We recommend that management:

- Implement and record periodic reviews of policies and procedures. Opportunities exist to improve the effectiveness of management oversight to ensure policies and standard

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operating procedures are consistent with the related by-laws, reflect current business needs and reviewed periodically to assess their effectiveness and relevancy.

- Ensure the timely and fulsome implementation of the Good Governance Policies by all business units.
- Increase supervisory reviews of zoning files when the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law comes into effect.

#### **Management Action Plan**

The BSD management agrees with the recommendations, with work to address them well underway.

#### **Review of SOPs**

An SOP working group has been established to review existing SOPs and guidelines. The working group's first task was the development of a cloud-based solution to house the departments SOPs. The solution, or Procedures Library Portal was completed on August 9, 2021. The SOP working group has begun uploading select SOPs to the portal and will be recommending a date to officially launch the solution and allow staff access to it. The solution allows for easy upload and version tracking of SOPs by administrators. It also includes permission controls, and automated notifications so that staff are aware when an SOP has been added or modified. The solution will be easily accessed by staff using their assigned corporate cell phone, computer, or even personal devices since it is a Cloud-based solution. Staff can easily browse through available SOPs or use the built-in search functions. Commencing in January 2022, on a semi-annual basis, Management will prioritize which SOPs require updating and will set completion timeframes based on importance of the content.

#### **Good Governance Program**

The good governance program has been implemented by all business units. BSD Managers will be meeting quarterly with their Supervisors to check that the GG program is being implemented and to obtain relevant updates.

#### **New Zoning By-law**

The zoning management team is currently in the process of developing training programs focused on the interpretation and delivery of the anticipated new comprehensive Zoning by-law. This includes the development of new zoning review checklists, standardization of correspondence memos and responses, and updating of the Good Governance Program for the Section. The Zoning Supervisor provides guidance and oversight through regular ZIMS meetings. (ZIMS – Zoning Interpretation and Mentoring Sessions that are scheduled for 1hr every Monday, Wednesday and Friday).

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#### ***5. Leverage Advances in Technology to Improve Business Processes and Controls***

The City of Vaughan municipal offices were closed to the public in response to COVID-19. During these unprecedented times, the BSD has committed to providing building services to the community through digital means, via the Online Permitting Portal, and the Stratawise Online Servicing Portal. AMANDA is the major information system utilized by BSD.

During the audit, the following opportunities were identified:

- Paper-based and manual processes still exist in areas such as Building Permit checklists, fee calculations and other zoning services. The calculation of building permit and plumbing fees is a complicated process involving multiple variables. It is currently a manual process that lacks supporting documentation. There is also no integration with the AMANDA system. BSD relies on the permit expeditors assigned to the application to make sure the fees are correctly calculated, applied and collected. There was no independent review for the completeness and accuracy of the calculation. Without proper oversight and integration with AMANDA, a manual process could be cumbersome, inefficient and error prone. Proving greater oversight over the fee calculation and collection process will minimize financial and reputational risks to the City.
- Some users having access to the BSD AMANDA folders have either never accessed the information or had not accessed it in over a year. Some of those users are no longer with BSD or the City. User access rights do not necessarily align with their duties and responsibilities. AMANDA access to BSD folders are added, removed or modified over time based on business needs, staff changes and process changes. Other departments request access to BSD AMANDA folders via the Office of Chief Information Officer (OCIO) not BSD. There is no process to check other department's access to BSD folders. Lack of formal and regular access review has been cited as the reason for these issues. If an access control process is not implemented based on a "need-to-know" basis, users may have access to information not commonly needed to carry out their responsibilities. Access of inactive or terminated users may be misused to amend records without authorization or business needs.

Leveraging advances in technology to further improve process and controls will help enhance overall efficiency, service quality and availability. Transitioning manual processes and paper-based documentation to digital platforms is an opportunity to enhance overall process and workflow efficiency.

Since the commencement of the audit, management has taken steps to improve the paper-based and access control processes.

#### **Recommendations**

We recommend that management:

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- Continue enhancing processes and improving efficiency leveraging advances in technology to transition manual processes and paper-based documentation to a digital platform.
- Continue to work with OCIO to integrate fee calculations with AMANDA.
- Collaborate with OCIO and implement a process to effect changes to access levels, including which positions (e.g. supervisors, CBO, etc.) have the authority to approve/deny permission requests.
- Establish an access level for BSD and other department users based on business needs and use.
- Periodically review and amend all existing permissions.

#### **Management Action Plan**

The BSD management agrees with the recommendations, with work to address them well underway.

#### **Leverage Technology**

Continuous improvement of paper-based processes and application types continues to be a priority for the BSD. In response to COVID-19, 12 BSD services, including all building permit types, have been digitized using the AMANDA Permitting Portal. Additionally, 5 Zoning Services were digitized using the Stratawise Services Portal. On September 20, 2021 the BSD also digitized the Request for Information service, one of the last remaining paper-based services, using the AMANDA Permitting Portal. Remaining paper-based forms and documents will be digitized and updated by Q1 2022.

Further digitization to improve manual processes, such as the Conditional Permit Agreement process or the Application to Construct or Demolish Standard Application form will be completed in 2021.

#### **Fee Calculation Integration**

The BSD is set to commence a new project in 2022, with OCIO to investigating the feasibility of integrating fee calculations within AMANDA. As an interim measure, new excel fee calculation templates, with formulas, were created for permit expeditors to complete to determine permit fees. Once completed, the document is saved as a PDF and uploaded to the AMANDA permit folders where applicants can see how the permit fee was determined.

#### **AMANDA Permissions**

The BSD has been in discussions with OCIO regarding access level permissions to department folders. The BSD will determine which positions will have the authority to approve/deny permission requests and a process will be created in cooperation with OCIO to implement the appropriate permission. A business request was submitted to OCIO to create this new process in 2022 with a requested target implementation date of end of Q2 2022.

#### **6. *Establish and Monitor Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to Measure Department Performance***

KPIs help organizations understand how well they are performing in direct relation to their strategic goals and objectives and therefore help to monitor the execution of strategy. They should clearly demonstrate the cause and effect relationship between departmental processes and outcomes to the results the City wants to achieve from the strategic plan. It helps all levels of the organization see the impact of their work on performance and trace that impact all the way up to organizational performance. This ensures everyone is working together to execute strategy and achieve high performance.

The BSD Business Plan reports on the accomplishment of key strategic priorities. Currently BSD primarily monitors the service levels, mandated by the OBC for different type of permit categories, and those set by the department for other services and programs. However, BSD does not perform benchmarking against other municipalities or industry average. The following were also noted:

- No data is readily available to monitor and measure against the set service level targets for development files in Zoning Services. Service levels targets have not been set for all zoning services.
- A process is not in place to track and monitor the first response time for Alternative Solutions.
- Certain permanent sign permit applications were processed outside of the OBC mandated time frame. In some cases, the delay was not a true deficiency. This can be caused by the applicant not picking up the information within the time period, or they were not eligible because there was an issue with their applications, such as existence of deficiency, needing to pay additional fees, waiting for non-Building Standards approvals or a Sign Variance were required. However, for a small percentage of them, the review process took longer than expected. There is a need for BSD to track and monitor this data to determine when there is a true deficiency to ensure compliance with the OBC.

There are well recognized frameworks, such as the Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada (MBNCanada), which publishes an annual Performance Measurement Report, including data for Building Standards. The information from this report can be used by BSD to measure and compare the efficiency and effectiveness of the City's programs and services. Other municipalities have used this data to support Council decisions, set policy, evaluate programs, support budget recommendations, identify trends, and develop data dashboards. The City was accepted in the MBNCanada report in late 2020. The City is in the process of benchmarking against the MBN measures.

Lack of information and process are cited as the primary reason for the absence of KPI tracking and performance benchmarking. Per discussion with management, other than the regulatory requirements by the OBC, service levels are arbitrary targets intended to provide general guidance to staff. Management has yet to implement processes and tools to track or monitor these services levels. Currently there is no process in AMANDA to track the first

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response time for Alternative Solutions. Other zoning service files are currently paper-based and not processed within AMANDA, and therefore, there is no readily available data for service level monitoring.

In the absence of performance benchmarking against the industry average, management may not be able to assess service levels in comparison with its peers and may miss the opportunities to further improve effectiveness and efficiency. Not meeting performance target and service levels may lead to sub-optimal customer experience. Non-compliance with the OBC requirements may result in disputes and could cause reputational damage to the City.

#### **Recommendations**

We recommend that management:

- Develop quantifiable KPI's/service levels using a risk-based approach, that reflect the critical success factors of the department and compare the City's results against appropriate benchmarks.
- Continue to develop dashboards and other mechanisms to gather relevant data to track and monitor service levels.
- Perform regular review of performance data against the set performance target and service levels. Take corrective and follow-up measures if needed.

#### **Management Action Plan**

The BSD management agrees with the recommendations, with work to address them well underway.

#### **KPI's**

The CBO is a member of the Large Municipalities Chief Building Officials group (LMCBO). The LMCBO promotes the exchange of ideas, information, knowledge, practices, and experiences – with the goal of standardized policy, code and administrative application and interpretations (Code Advisory Committees) and alternative solutions. Supervisory and Senior Technical staff of the BSD are assigned to the various Code Advisory Committees of the LMCBO that deal with technical matters, create SOPs and share best practices to achieve code compliance.

As part of the City's three-year phase in approach, the BSD has been placed in the year one grouping of City departments whose performance data will begin to be publicly reported beginning in 2024 by the Municipal Benchmarking Network of Canada (MBNC). On August 10, 2021 BSD staff participated in the Building Permits & Inspections expert panel meeting and provided input on variance performance measures. The BSD will endeavor to use the MBNC performance indicators that are relevant to its operations to help inform on future changes or enhancements. However, the primary focus of the BSD will be to meet its legislative responsibilities under the BCA, financial viability, market competitiveness, and



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uniformity with LMCBO practices. The secondary focus will be to measure and compare the efficiency and effectiveness of its business units against the available data published by the MBNC.

#### **Dashboards**

A Zoning dashboard is currently being developed and set to go live by the end of 2021. This dashboard provides analytics for Request for Zoning Comments applications and turnaround times specific to the Zoning Examiners review processes. Additionally, the AMANDA based Zoning process and the paper-based process are being reviewed for enhancement and digitization as needed to further improve the data accuracy in the Zoning dashboard.

Alternative solutions are currently being tracked using the Folder description. The BSD is working to implement a new AMANDA folder subtype or info Field for Alternative Solutions to differentiate between application types and accurately track timelines. It should be noted that Alternative solution permit applications are incomplete applications and not subject to legislated time frames. Many alternative solutions are for a component or portion of a building and in most cases do not delay the overall construction of the building.

The BSD is working on 2 other dashboards with OCIO to provide analytics for building permits, processes, and attempt entries. Alternative solutions and fixed sign permit applications will be included in these dashboards for analytics and service level monitoring. The full AMANDA integration will likely be in 2023. However, we can implement an interim solution in Q1 2022.

Once all dashboards are complete and operational, managers will review service level performance on a quarterly basis with their supervisors. The Director will review service level performance on a monthly basis with the managers.



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#### ***7. Improve Records Management for the Zoning By-law Review Committee***

The Zoning By-law Review Committee (ZBRC) is a cross-departmental, multi-disciplinary team responsible for examining, evaluating and addressing functional issues that exist with the interpretation, administration, and enforcement of the City of Vaughan's current Zoning By-law. The ZBRC is the key venue for BSD to work with business partners within the City.

Our review of the ZBRC activities identified the following opportunities for improvement:

- The ZBRC Terms of Reference are in draft, and in the process of being reviewed and finalized.
- No meeting discussion minutes were made for ZBRC meetings, and the Committee Share-point site has not been updated since 2018.

Management indicated that the mandate and Terms of Reference of ZBRC are being reviewed and finalized, because its focus is shifting from providing comments to the draft new Comprehensive By-law to managing and administering the new Zoning By-law. The lack of meeting minutes and website updates are results of oversight.

Without properly maintaining ZBRC records such as minutes and other documents, there is no documentation to support the ZBRC conclusions and keep track of development of ZBRC business.

#### **Recommendations**

We recommend that management:

- Review and finalize ZBRC mandate and Terms of Reference and implement plans to manage and administer the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law.
- Improve record maintenance of ZBRC minutes and other documents to properly document and track ZBRC activities.

#### **Management Action Plan**

The BSD agrees with the recommendations. In October 2021, the terms of reference for the Zoning By-law Review Team (ZBRT) – formerly ZBRC, a team of the Director of Building Standards, was draft approved by the Director. The final draft of the terms of reference has now been circulated to the Director of Development Planning, Director of Policy Planning & Special Programs and the Director of By-law and Compliance, Licensing and Permit Services for comments. Records maintenance will be improved by ensuring that minutes of meetings are properly recorded, and all supporting documents and minutes of meetings are uploaded to the ZBRT SharePoint Site. The terms of reference will be finalized in Q1 2022.