

Building Standards Audit – Phase 1

Audit Committee – November 22, 2021



Today's Presentation

- Audit Objective
- Scope and Methodology
- Audit Conclusion
- Issues, Observations & Recommendations
- Management Action Plans
- Next Steps
- Questions

Audit Objective

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.

Audit Scope & Methodology

Based on the variety and depth of the programs and activities that Building Standards is responsible, we will be conducting this project in phases. We will start by reviewing the Business Administration and Permit and Issuance Related Processes (Phase 1), followed by the Inspection and Compliance Processes (Phase 2).

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

Audit Conclusion

Building Standards has made significant progress on several initiatives over the past number of years:

- The Building Standards team has been committed to providing services to the Vaughan community through online portals.
- Good Governance Policies (GGP) are a newly introduced to establish overview to ensure that the services provided by staff are aligned with the City of Vaughan Service Excellence Strategic Plan, Building Standards Business Plan and Procedures.
- BSD staff maintain required qualifications and designations.

Audit Conclusion (Cont'd)

Further improvements will be required to ensure risks related to the business administration, permits issuance and other zoning services processes are mitigated. These opportunities are identified:

- Improve oversight over certain key processes
- Improve overall governance and oversight
- Leverage advances in technology to improve business processes and controls
- Establish and Monitor KPIs

Issues & Observations

1. Improve oversight over certain key processes
 - Request for Information – Ownership Verification
 - Conditional Permits
 - Sign Permits
 - Records Management for the Zoning By-law Review Committee

Issues & Observations

2. Improve overall governance and oversight of the department

- Good Governance Policies had not been fully implemented in all business units at time of the audit.
- Policies and procedures have not been recently reviewed and updated.
- No review cycle has been established for policies and procedures.
- The City's upcoming new Comprehensive Zoning By-law will also give rise to the need for increased supervisory review of zoning files.

Issues & Observations

3. Leveraging advances in technology to improve business processes and controls.
 - Paper-based and manual processes still exist in certain areas. The calculation of building permit and plumbing fees is currently a manual process that lacks supporting documentation. There is also no integration with the AMANDA system.
 - Process has yet to be implemented to manage access control to BSD AMANDA folders.

Issues & Observations

4. Establishing and Monitoring KPIs to measure department performance

- 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 OBC for different type of permit categories and set by the department for other services and programs, however, does not perform benchmarking against other municipalities or industry average.
- There is no process to track or monitor certain service level targets, partially due to existence of paper-based processes and lack of capability to collect and track relevant data.

Management Action Plans

Oversight of Key Processes

1. Enhanced ownership verification for Request for Information Applications.
2. Implementation of Conditional Building Permit Procedures.
3. Improvements to the Sign Variance Process and Mobile Sign Applications.
4. SharePoint for ZBRT records.

Management Action Plans

Governance & Oversight

1. Implementation of the Good Governance Program.
2. Regular review of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
3. Zoning By-law 1-21 staff training.

Management Action Plans

Leveraging Technology

1. Digital transformation & AMANDA integration of fee calculations.
2. Access level permissions.

Management Action Plans

Performance Monitoring

1. Standardization and alignment with the Large Municipalities Chief Building Officials group (LMCBO).
2. Municipal Benchmarking Network of Canada (MBNC).
3. Specialized dashboards to monitor service levels.

Next Steps

- Action plans have been developed
- Implementation is underway or completed
- Internal Audit will follow up and report on the status of these action plans



Questions?





Thank You

