



*“The starting point for improvement is to recognize the need.”*

Masaaki Imai

## **Development Process Improvement**

**Economic Development Committee Briefing**

**Top-line Overview Draft**

**October 6, 2010**

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**On June 16<sup>th</sup>, Mayor Cieslewicz charged the City’s Economic Development Committee (EDC) and staff with making recommendations regarding the review and approval of real estate development projects in the City.**

**As with any process, the one used in seeing a development through City land use approvals should be routinely reviewed and improved. The Mayor has established several goals for this initiative, calling for a process that is:**

- **Efficient**
- **Predictable & uniform**
- **Maintains existing high standards**

*Memo to stakeholders  
June 30, 2010*





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### Inputs from:

- **Neighborhood Associations**
- **Neighborhood Planning Councils**
- **Neighborhood Business Associations**
- **Business & Trade Associations**
- **Landmarks Commission**
- **Urban Design Commission**
- **Plan Commission**
- **City Department of Planning, Community & Economic Dev.**
- **City Development Assistance Team**
- **General Public**
- **Alders**



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### Previous Reports

- **2006 – Streamlining the Development Review & Building Permitting Process**
  - City of Madison Interagency Team
- **2005 – Evaluation & Analysis of Madison’s Development Review & Permitting Process**
  - Robert M. LaFollette School of Public Affairs
- **2004 - Opportunities to Make Madison City Government More Friendly**
  - City of Madison Economic Development Commission



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## Who's the customer?

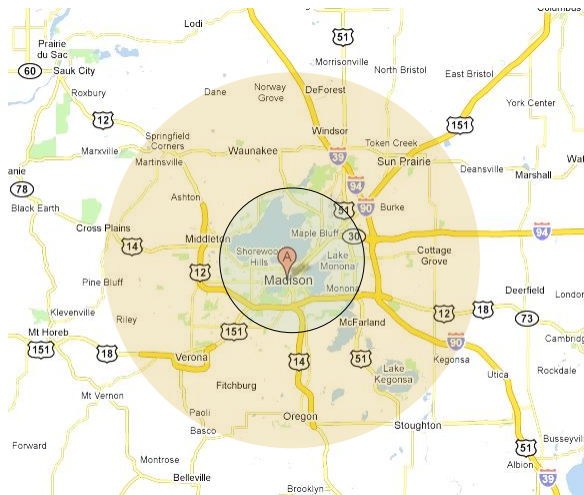
- **City of Madison**
  - Tax base
  - Comprehensive plan
  - Future residents & businesses
- **Adjacent neighborhood(s)/Residents**
  - Appropriateness
  - Compatibility
- **Property owner**
  - Best use
  - Marketability
  - ROI
- **End user**
  - Suitability



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## In some instances the metro area is also part of the customer base

*The core depends on the suburbs and the suburbs depend on the core.*



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## Proportionate Voices / Inputs

- **Neighborhoods**
  - Residents
  - Businesses
  - Commercial property owners
- **Commissions & Committees**
  - Advisory and/or decision-making
- **Elected Representatives**
  - Common Council

*Balancing short-term wants  
with long-term needs  
of the city*



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## Strategy

***Increase Madison's competitiveness for investment and job creation by streamlining the development process, maintaining quality of the built environment, and ensuring efficient, fair, and responsive decision making.***



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Why?  
*Employment Growth*

***“Metropolitan areas with stringent development regulations generate less employment growth than expected given their industrial bases.”***

Federal Reserve Board



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Why?  
*Costs*

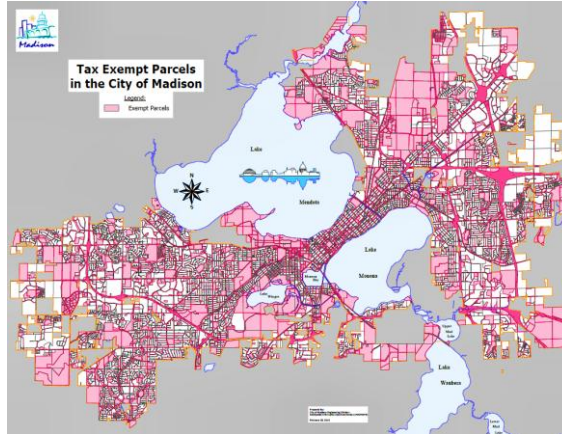
***“The time period from application to approval of entitlements can be quite long, in effect constraining the amount and timing of development through delays in the review and approval process. While there is no explicit restriction, in practice the delay lengthens the development period and increases the cost to the developer (and end-user.)”***

JOURNAL OF HOUSING RESEARCH



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## Why? Fiscal Sustainability



Over 55%  
of the City  
is Exempt  
From  
Property  
Taxes

Level of Services = Levy X Taxable Asset Value



## Three Phases

- **Pre-Application**
  - Alders
  - Neighborhoods
  
- **Application, Review & Approval**
  - City Planning
  - Commissions & Committees
  - Common Council
  
- **Post-Approval**
  - City Agencies



# Efficient = Streamlined = Simplified

*Goal is to maintain standards while reducing  
time for approval*



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## GOAL: Establish predictable expectations for neighborhood review of development proposals

- **Implementation options**

- Encourage first point of contact to be with DPCED staff
- Require developer/property owner to register project via web-based system
  - Standardized fact sheet on proposed development
  - Generates notification to Alder(s), Neighborhood/Business Associations, and City staff
  - Starts 30-day notification period (*only ordinance requirement*)
- Standardize applicant notification & neighborhood review
  - Meet with Alder & Neighborhood Association president and/or design designee
  - Meet with Neighborhood Association (Business Association)
  - Neighborhood Association transmits official comments and/or recommendation to Planning Department to be included in City Development Transmittal package



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## GOAL: Establish predictable expectations for neighborhood review of development proposals (con't)

- **Implementation options**
  - Enhance notification of projects to broader neighborhood
    - Web/physical sign
    - Significantly increase the printing and postage budget of the Common Council Office to enable Alders to send letters and postcards to resident , business owners and property owners of their districts alerting them of projects that may be of interest.
  - Allow alders to use City facilities at no cost for neighborhood meetings if a facility is not otherwise booked.



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## GOAL: Inclusive, fair, and uniform neighborhood input into development projects

- **Implementation options**
  - Encourage neighborhoods to have standard membership, governance, and development review policies and procedures
    - Encourage membership to include:
      - Homeowners & renters
      - Business owners
      - Commercial property owners
    - Within neighborhood association recommendation, request disclosure of voting composition and provide information regarding degree of support behind recommendation(s)
      - i.e. inclusion of contrary viewpoints
    - Work with Neighborhood Associations to post/publish meeting agendas where development projects would be considered
  - Planning staff & Applicant work with neighborhood association
    - To disseminate accurate project information
    - Collect stakeholder feedback
    - Provide support at neighborhood meetings for complex project



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## GOAL: Inclusive, fair, and uniform neighborhood input into development projects (con't)

### • Implementation options

- Clarify that neighborhood association may provide advice with range of viewpoints in lieu of specific recommendation
- Provide option on MyMadison to connect to all “project web pages”.
  - Individuals interested in a project could voluntarily sign-up to receive updates. Every time an item is added to a webpage an updated email would be sent to the subscribers.



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## GOAL: Increase information available to property owners/investors/developers

### • Implementation Options:

- Add within City “Property Lookup” feature
  - Designations
    - Urban design district
    - Landmarks district
    - Neighborhood/Business association (link)
    - Neighborhood plans (link)
    - Comprehensive Plan (link)
- Publish development fee information
- Expand utilization of Development Services Center website
- Fully digitalize and catalogue all property information
- Continue to make owner/occupant mailing lists available for purchase
- DPCED develop/maintain catalogue and hierarchy of all plans and studies that have a spatial impact on the City.
  - The “order of control” between documents should also be established.



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# GOAL

(Time following formal submission to Planning Division)

**Simple Projects**  
**3 to 10 business days**

**Complex Projects**  
**(Requiring Board or Commission Review)**  
**3 weeks\* to 4 months\*\***

\* Code Variances, Landmarks Commission COA, Sign Variances

\*\* Zoning Map amendments, Subdivision preliminary/final plats, Public improvements



# Existing Development Approval Flowchart

## Generalized Zoning, Subdivision, Plan Review, Permitting and Inspection Process

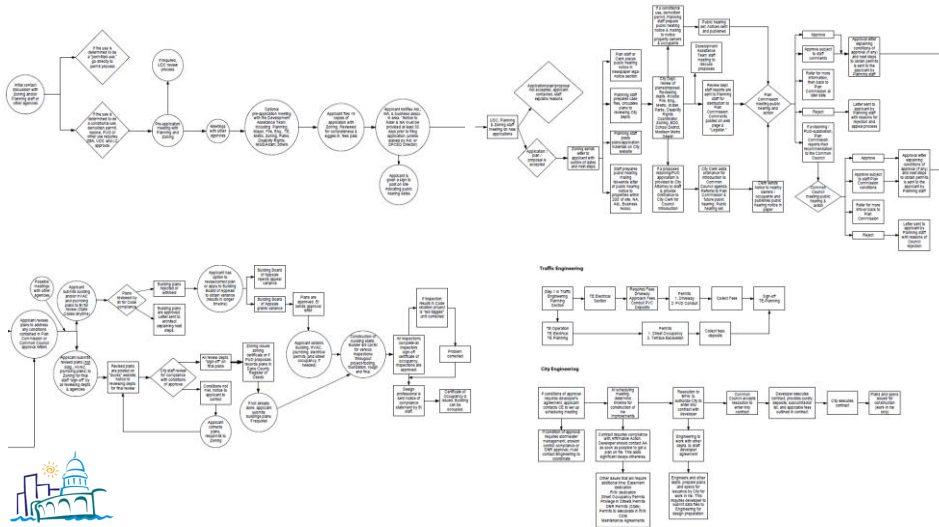
Permitted Uses (Skip Step 2)

All Other Projects (Zoning Map Amendments/PUD, Conditional Uses, Demolition Permits, Urban Design, Landmarks Commission) Start at Step 1





## Existing Development Approval Flowchart



## GOAL: Differentiate between development proposals that require more than internal Staff approvals

### • Implementation options

- Permitted Uses vs. uses requiring Board or Commission approvals
  - Within municipal ordinance, provide Director of Planning Division with greater discretion to make determination
- Complex developments to be matched with DPCED liaison
  - Responsible for City staff & review facilitation with Applicant
  - Provides staff support in working with neighborhood associations
  - Follows project through to final agency sign-offs





## **GOAL: Compliance with Commission/Committee mandates**

### **• Implementation options**

- Review and revise (if necessary) commission/committee mission statements
- Empower professional staff to make decisions not requiring external review
  - Example: Design of Façade Grant projects should be reviewed/approved by staff
- Provide significant orientation to all new commission/committee/ members.
  - Consider a mentoring system whereby new members are assigned a more senior member of the commission/committee/ board for guidance and mentoring during their first year.
- Provide semi-annual or annual self-critique/tour of projects for development review commission/committee to jointly attend.



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## **GOAL: Reduce number of development approval entities & centralize final decision making with elected representatives**

### **• Implementation options**

- Transfer Landmark Ordinance functions to Urban Design Commission
- Make Urban Design Commission an advisory committee to Plan Commission
- Add additional option for Urban Design Commission
  - Approve development plan
  - Approve with recommendations
  - Reject development plan
- Make Landmarks Commission and Urban Design Commission subcommittees of Plan Commission
- Eliminate super majority requirement from Council action to reverse Commission decisions



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### **OPTION: Landmark Commission maintained in current form**

- **Continue meeting 2X/month**
  - Continue not charging fee for application process
- **Continue to allow staff to approve small projects**
  - Allows 80% of projects to be approved by staff
- **Require Landmark Commission to review projects before presentation to UDC**
  - Structure LC's COA to allow staff review and sign-off of changes required by UDC
- **Amend Landmarks Ordinance**
  - Make easier to interpret w/o diminishing effectiveness
  - Provide training to staff, neighborhood associations, developers, and commission members on new ordinance



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### **OPTION: Urban Design Commission maintained in current form**

- **Create sub-committee of UDC to review certain projects**
  - i.e. variances to Sign Ordinance
- **Integrate UDC into Plan Commission/Common Council application & scheduling process**
  - Provide single written staff report to UDC and Plan Commission
- **Update older UDC district plans to provide more specific, objective standards**
- **Amend UDC ordinance**
  - Formalize practice to allow staff to approve small projects and alterations to projects previously approved



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## GOAL: Streamline and clarify Commissions' Review of Applications

### • Implementation Options

- Schedule joint presentations/meetings of commissions for large projects where there is significant overlap of information required (i.e. Plan Commission and Urban Design Commission)
  - Move away from the three minute speaking limit for each member of the development team before a commission to a total “not to exceed” requirement.
- Institute consent agendas at Commissions
  - Items pulled must be done 48 hrs. in advance
- Institute an expectation and practice that results in projects obtaining one “approval” or recommendation from a Commission
  - In lieu of granting “initial approval” and requiring projects to come back for “final approval”.
- Commissions must distinguish and agree upon in writing suggestions from regulatory requirements for approval.
- Provide applicants with Conditions of Approval and Plan Commission report one week in advance of meeting where item will be considered.



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## GOAL: Streamline and clarify Commissions' Review of Applications (con't)

### • Implementation Options

- Consider staff administrative review/approval of all signage(both within and outside of UDC Districts).
- Remove requirement that Façade Improvement Grant Projects be referred to UDC unless the project is located within an Urban Design District
- Provide an option for “Administrative Sign Approval” within older commercial areas of the City (State Street, Monroe Street, Williamson Street, etc).
  - The applicant would have the option of complying with the underlying sign ordinance or applying for administrative sign approval if ordinance does not appropriately fit within historic or physical nature of existing building



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## GOAL: Develop clear standards of application materials and review criteria for staff and public use

- **Implementation Options**
  - Specify what type of information is required and have it presented in a clear/uniform fashion through the use of checklists, etc.
  - Integrate the new ELAM system and the Legistar system
    - Single “web presence” for individual projects.
      - Date and label all materials to be posted online in an understandable and easy-to-read fashion.
  - On referral, require specific rationale and specific items needed to satisfy the Commission.
    - At the start of subsequent meeting, the Chair should review the reason for the referral.
  - As identified in the 3-5 Year Strategic Economic Development Implementation Plan, develop and utilize a benefit/cost model to measure the fiscal impact of key development projects and to align TIF and other City economic development tools with the benefits received.



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## GOAL: Designate Project Staff & Project Liaison as means for faster and efficient application review

- **Implementation Options**
  - Expand DAT concept to include “group review” of applications prior to submission to determine what remaining issues need to be addressed.
  - Assign staff project coordinator to all complex projects
    - Guide and facilitate a project through development review.
      - This staff person should attend all commission meetings and fully track/interface with other City agencies, work with Alder/neighborhood associations to insure proper information sharing, and assist with reporting to various commissions and the Council.
  - Require City staff from all “development review departments” to attend all commission meetings where a project is under consideration
    - Empower staff person to speak on behalf of his/her department



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## GOAL: Better coordinate and expedite City agency sign-offs on approved development plans

- **Implementation Options**
  - Offer applicant a DAT–style post –approval meeting(s) to discuss and clarify conditions of approval
    - Distinguish between conditions of approval and City standards for all projects
      - Example: mapping required for City Engineering
  - Presumptive approvals for agency signoffs
    - Set maximum time for sign-offs
    - Clock resets for changes
  - Gather applicant feedback through customer surveys, exit interviews and/or post project review meeting.
    - Data , both positive and negative, to be used in updates of the “Participating in the Development Review Process” handbook
    - Input for continuous process improvement



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## ADMINISTRATION: Neighborhood Plans, Training & Feedback

- **Implementation options**
  - Neighborhood plans
    - Keep plans up-to-date
      - Revisions at minimum of every 10 years
      - Standardized
      - Include economic feasibility
      - Reviewed by EDC/PC/LRTPC/etc.
  - Training
    - Customer service training for City development staff
    - Development process/issue mandatory training for review committees/commissions, Common Council, Neighborhood/Business Associations
    - Provide small annual stipend to Plan, Landmarks, Urban Design and Zoning Board of Appeals commission members to off-set the cost of attending conferences or training related to their respective roles.
    - Increase funding for and encourage all staff involved with development review to regularly attend conferences, trade shows, training opportunities for their respective fields



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## ADMINISTRATION: Neighborhood Plans, Training & Feedback (con't)

- **Implementation options**
  - Feedback
    - Online evaluation and feedback form
    - Create incentives for performance
  - Host annual summit for architects, developers, engineers and contractors to discuss changes to City ordinances and policies and to discuss concerns/problems within the development review system



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## ADMINISTRATION: Development Guidelines, Website & Development Assistance Team

- **Implementation options**
  - Development Guidelines
    - Revise customer focused print and web-based guides, manuals, and checklists
  - Prioritize restructuring of DPCED website
    - Direct link from City homepage
    - Identify and adopt web modules from best practice cities
    - Develop online development tracking and approvals
  - Expand use and decision-making power of DAT
    - Empower professional staff to make more routine decisions
  - Review/expand use of Development Services Center website
    - First implemented in 2009
  - Formalize process to hear complaints and appeals regarding internal “administrative ruling” by City staff.
    - Likely an internal review board



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## ADMINISTRATION: Physical facilities to facilitate development review process

- **Implementation options:**
  - Install a permanent computer in all meeting rooms used by development review
    - MMB LL-110, 201, 260, 130
    - Computer connected to projector /LCD screen(s) within room
    - Access to Internet, City file servers and GT Viewer.
  - Renovate the Council Chambers so that everyone can see presentation materials; this would likely include computers and monitors.
  - Develop a true one-stop permitting shop with a representative presence of all agencies involved in the development review process



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## ADMINISTRATION: Review, Set Deadlines, & Adopt Remaining Recommendations from Previous Reports

- **2006 – Streamlining the Development Review & Building Permitting Process**
  - City of Madison Interagency Team
- **2005 – Evaluation & Analysis of Madison’s Development Review & Permitting Process**
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## Next Steps

- **Is this the approach that EDC wants?**
- **Timeline for Development Process Improvement Report**
  - 10/6 – EDC Briefing
  - 10/20 – Initial report draft
  - 11/29 – Final report draft
  - 12/15 – Final report approval by EDC and transmittal to Common Council

