



City's Construction Permitting Needs More Customer Focus and Consistency

PRESENTATION TO THE SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL LAND USE COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 20, 2023



What we did

Construction permitting process



Reinforce a customer focus

FINDING

Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections should reevaluate its tracking metrics and reporting methods to reduce review times.

The City lacks a process to routinely collect customer feedback.

RECOMMENDATION



Track by total review time



Complete Racial Equity Toolkit



Engage customers strategically



Promote transparency and fairness

FINDING

The City is inconsistent and opaque in how it prioritizes permit applications.

SDCI could do more to ensure a positive ethical culture.

RECOMMENDATION

 Review and formalize prioritization process

 Evaluate SDCI ethical culture



Strengthen a Citywide approach

FINDING

The City has engaged in permitting improvement efforts, but not all identified changes have been made.

There is not a unified approach to funding staff nor an effective strategy for supporting permitting software.

RECOMMENDATION



Evaluate and prioritize past recommendations



Evaluate governance and funding structures



Create a strategy to support software and better integrate other departments



Standardize review comments

FINDING

SDCI lacks a consistent process for handling construction permit corrections.

The City does not have a policy to routinely evaluate the quality and necessity of permit application corrections.

RECOMMENDATION



Create a policy for issuing permit corrections



Consistently evaluate permit corrections



Dig into our report

seattle.gov/cityauditor/reports



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