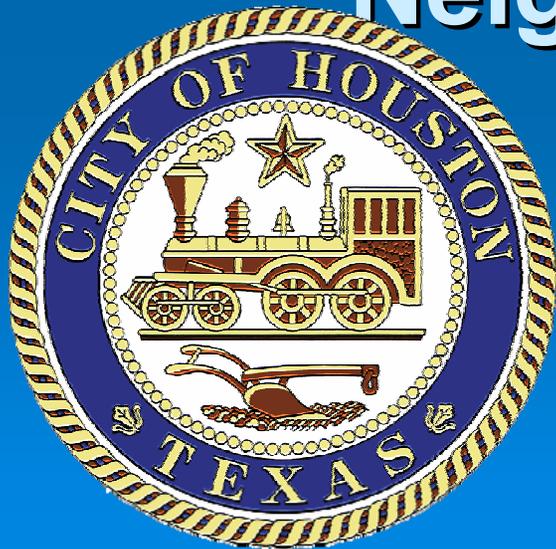


**Public Works & Engineering's**

# **New Express Program**

**Regulation, Development and  
Neighborhood Protection  
Committee**



**April 20, 2006**

# Recent Initiatives

- Real Time Access to Online Data
- New Residential Master Plan Program
- Checklists – Residential, Schools, Leases
- Waiting Room Pagers
- Online Wastewater Applications
- Quick Start 1
- Online Inspection Scheduling
- E-mail notifications

# Plan Review Service Improvements to Date

**Residential: 20 day average reduced to 7 days**  
**Overall time to permit: 90 days reduced to 30 days**

■ **Commercial: 35 day average reduced to 21 days**  
**Overall time to permit: 155 days reduced to 104 days**

■ **Inspections: consistent 1 day turn around**  
■ **(18.78 inspections per day per inspector)**

# Growth Indicators

<b>Plans</b>	<b>FY03</b>	<b>32,279</b>	<b>(Avg. / Day 124)</b>
<b>Reviewed</b>	<b>FY04</b>	<b>34,263</b>	<b>(Avg. / Day 131)</b>
	<b>FY05</b>	<b>37,213</b>	<b>(Avg. / Day 142)</b>
<b>Permits Sold</b>	<b>FY03</b>	<b>132,392</b>	<b>(Avg. / Day 507)</b>
	<b>FY04</b>	<b>144,301</b>	<b>(Avg. / Day 552)</b>
	<b>FY05</b>	<b>153,963</b>	<b>(Avg. / Day 590)</b>
<b>Revenues</b>	<b>FY03</b>	<b>\$20,687,000</b>	
	<b>FY04</b>	<b>\$21,495,000</b>	
	<b>FY05</b>	<b>\$23,461,000</b>	
<b>New Single</b>	<b>FY03</b>	<b>&gt;5,000</b>	
<b>Family</b>	<b>FY04</b>	<b>&gt;6,000</b>	
<b>Residential</b>	<b>FY05</b>	<b>&gt;7,000</b>	

# Last Fee Increase 2003

## ➤ Goals and Achievements:

- Decrease 20 inspections per day to 18
- Absorb new energy code enforcement
- Increased investigations
- Decrease One Stop plan wait times
- Commercial plan review average of 20 days
- Improve internet access of data
- Online inspections scheduling
- Email permits and reports
- Open a new satellite office

# Major Improvement Goals

- Make the Plan Express 11 day review the standard for ALL commercial plans
- Expand Help Desk type customer service and expanded customer education to improve the quality of plans submitted for review
- Provide additional Inspection personnel for more thorough inspections and more time on the job site to resolve code issues with the builder.

# Other General Improvements

- Increased walk-thru service opportunities
- Supervisory review of plan review correction data to improve consistency
- Increased face-to-face meeting time with plan reviewers
- More preliminary design meetings
- Expanded review comments
- Improved coordination between plan reviewers and inspectors
- Develop more support products - permit process brochures, checklists, and guidelines
- Customer education seminars

# Targeted Improvements

- **Commercial Plan Review average reduced from 21 to 11 days**
  - (eliminate the 65% premium for express service)
- **Supervisory Intervention for plans after three submittals**
- **Reduce the 18.78 inspections per day average to 15.8 inspections per day**
- **Increased options for inspections by appointment.**
- **Full time staffing of a Help Desk with knowledgeable experienced persons to assist in shepherding projects through the permitting process.**
- **Staff Engineer to create detail handouts and to expedite the review of engineered design alternatives**
- **City of Houston approved drawing details that can be downloaded off the website for insertion in plans (stairs, ramps, block foundations, etc.)**

# Computer System Improvements

- **Implement a Technology Governance and Change Control Process to improve efficiency and delivery of services**
  - **Convert the ILMS databases to Oracle Environment to share information with other systems**
  - **Continue to improve reporting capabilities**
  - **Continue deploying wireless initiatives for additional groups and for emergency operation continuance**
  - **Automated Workflow technology**
- 

# Increased Staffing

<b>STAFF</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Increase</b>
<b>Code Enforcement Plan Review</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Help Desk / Code Development</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Other Reviewing Departments/Sections</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Inspections</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>47</b>

# “Help Desk”

- Ombudsman role in the process
- Improved customer educational outreach
- Increased development of printed guides, etc.
- Professional staffing:
  - 2 Customer Service Representative IIIs
  - 1 Structural Engineer
  - 2 Staff Analysts
  - 1 Senior Plan Analyst

# Annualized Costs

\$4.3 M	Personnel / Supply costs
\$1.0 M	Forfeited expediting fees
\$1.5 M	Computer system upgrade
\$ .6 M	Relocation & Support Costs
\$2.5 M	Current annual shortfall

---

**\$9.9 M = TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS**

# Valuation Based Fees

- Self-indexing for inflation
- Standardized rate structure for all permits
- Better method to properly address variations in quality and complexity of construction issues.
- Affordable Housing reduction of 50% for valuations up to \$100,000

## National Standard Definition

-methodology used in most jurisdictions defined in code as:

***“Valuation: the total cost of construction to the end user, excluding the land purchase costs. The value of donated goods and services are included in the valuation.”***

# Proposed Building Permit Fee Schedule (\$4.9M)

❖ \$35	Flat rate for valuations up to \$7,000
❖ \$7K -\$150K	$\$35 + \$4 / \$1,000$ valuation
❖ \$150 K- \$200K	$607 + \$3.75 / \$1,000$ valuation
❖ \$200K - \$300K	$\$794.50 + \$3.5 / \$1,000$ valuation
❖ \$300 - \$500K	$\$1,144.50 + \$3.25 / \$1,000$ valuation
❖ \$500K-\$1M	$\$1,794.5 + 3 / \$1,000$ valuation
❖ \$1,000,000	$\$3,294.50 + 2.75 / \$1,000$ valuation
❖ Over \$5 M	$\$14,294.50 + 2.5 / \$1,000$ valuation

# Proposed Trade Permit Fee Schedule (\$5M)

- ❖ All Minimum Fee Permits = \$35
- ❖ Administration Processing Fees = \$10  
(all permits)
- ❖ Item Count Incremental Changes:
  - \$0 - \$2.5 = Next 50 cents
  - \$3 - \$9 = Next \$1
  - \$10 - \$40 = Next \$5.00

# Comparable Permit Fees (Local Cities)

BUILDING PERMITS	Current Houston	Baytown	Spring Valley	Pearland	Proposed Houston
Residential (1,800 sq. ft.; \$100,000 value)	\$90	\$450	\$895	\$490	\$204
Residential (2,400 sq. ft.; \$150,000 value)	\$120	\$575	\$1,175	\$915	\$607
Commercial Office (10,000 sq. ft.; \$500,000 value)	\$500	\$2,175	\$2,855	\$2,490	\$1,795
Commercial Apartments (75K sq. ft.; \$3M value/70 Unit)	\$3,750	\$14,550	\$12,255	\$9,990	\$8,795
Commercial Office (150K sq. ft.; \$9M value)	\$7,500	\$26,200	\$23,375	\$27,990	\$24,295
Residential Alterations (1,000 sq ft; \$80,000 value)	\$360	\$390	\$790	\$570	\$327
Commercial Alterations (4,000 sq ft; \$300,000 value)	\$1,350	\$1,425	\$2,015	\$1,590	\$1,145
<b>TRADE PERMITS</b>					
Electric Permit Minimum	\$12	\$45	\$50	\$25	\$35
Mechanical Permit Minimum	\$25	\$45	\$50	\$17	\$35
Plumbing Permit Minimum	\$12	\$35	\$50	\$17	\$35

# Comparable Permit Fees (Major Cities)

BUILDING PERMITS	Current Houston	Austin	Dallas	San Antonio	Proposed Houston
Residential (1,800 sq. ft.; \$100,000 value)	\$90	\$165	\$665	\$661	\$204
Residential (2,400 sq. ft.; \$150,000 value)	\$120	\$205	\$887	\$761	\$607
Commercial Office (10,000 sq. ft.; \$500,000 value)	\$500	\$840	\$5,087	\$1,623	\$1,795
Commercial Apartments (75K sq. ft.; \$3M value/70 Unit)	\$3,750	\$8,775	\$15,050	\$6,043	\$8,795
Commercial Office (150,000 sq. ft.; \$9M value)	\$7,500	\$12,925	\$12,426	\$15,184	\$24,295
Residential Alterations (1,000 sq ft; \$80,000 value)	\$360	\$520	\$772	\$608	\$327
Commercial Alterations (4,000 sq ft; \$300,000 value)	\$1,350	\$1,920	\$2,870	\$1,207	\$1,145
<b>TRADE PERMITS</b>					
Electric Permit Minimum	\$12	\$34	\$60	\$25	\$35
Mechanical Permit Minimum	\$25	\$34	\$60	\$25	\$35
Plumbing Permit Minimum	\$12	\$34	\$60	\$25	\$35

# Timeline for Achievement

(ESTIMATED ACCOMPLISHMENT DATES)

<b>May 2006</b>	<b>Ordinance adopted</b>
<b>July 1, 2006</b>	<b>New fee schedule becomes effective</b>
<b>October 1, 2006</b>	<b>Locating, leasing and build out of additional location</b>
<b>December 1, 2006</b>	<b>Recruitment and Hiring of additional staff</b>
<b>December 1, 2006</b>	<b>Build-out and furnishing of reconfigured 3300 Main</b>
<b>April 1, 2007</b>	<b>Expedited basic code training for new staff</b>
<b>June 1, 2007</b>	<b>11 Day Review average achieved</b>