

2004 Zucker Systems, Inc. Audit Recommendations Grouped by Status

Completed

Distribute report for review. The report was sent to interested stakeholders and placed on the County Webpage. #1

Agree on an implementation plan. A plan was presented and adopted by the County Council in March 2005. Except for the reduction of backlog, it did not contain a time table as suggested in the audit. #2

Adopt short term implementation plan. Several of the eleven recommendations proposed for a short term plan were implemented. Others will wait pending funding or other resource needs. #3

Allocate \$400,000 for consultants and backlog. The County Council allocated \$700,000 in March of 2005. #9

Adopt Advance Planning annual work plan. The Advance Planning work program is reviewed by the Planning Commission and County Council before it is implemented. #13

Declare planning permits “complete” on acceptance of application. All applications accepted by PALS meet this standard. It is unclear why the audit thought there was a difference with planning applications. #16

Conduct PALS space study. Erickson McGovern architects were hired. A final report was presented. #19

Perform comprehensive first time reviews. This item is done. This has always been a standard/theme for the department. It is not however, memorialized in a Peabody policy. #23

Budget to allow for small equipment. Budget always had provisions for small equipment. #37

Develop Information Bulletin. Several bulletins are available. The specific bulletin referenced was under revision for the new codes and was available in September of 2005. #38

Add two Building Inspectors. Two inspectors were added in 2005 and 1 more is being added in June of 2006. #39

Add one Plans Examiner. One plans examiner was added in 2005 and 1 more is being added in June of 2006. #40

Add a Civil Engineer III. An Engineer CE II has been hired in order to fill the position. As a CE III some supervision would have been required. #45

DENG to communicate geotechnical comments directly to applicant. Each section communicates directly with the applicant. #51

Have plan check consultants hired directly by the County. Kolke Consulting Group is under contract. Previously we allowed contactors to see consultants if they wanted to pay extra. #52

LUACs and community groups to be considered parties of record. The assistant to PC Hearing Examiner confirmed that LUACs are noted as party of record on the Hearing Examiner's decisions. #71

Create private office for Current Planning Supervisor. Completed in Early '05 #80.

Set timeline for updating Subdivision Ordinance. We have the proposed Ordinance before the CDC at the end of July, 2005, then on to full Council. There were only a couple of items that needed more attention. This recommendation has been completed. #82

Eliminate Permit Coordinator Position. Eliminated in 2005. #85

Install wireless router in lobby. 03/31/2005 completed #97.

Make all of PALS a wireless hotspot. 06/31/2005 completed #98.

Install LCD computer monitors in lobby workstations. Completed April '05 #99.

Three Permit Technicians dedicated to Make applications. Effective August 15, 2005, we have dedicated 5 Permit Technicians to appointments for applications. #109

Have complete codes in Development Center. There are now complete codes in the Development Center. Some of the codes are accessed on the Intranet and some in hard copy. #116

Make appointments within 48 hours of request Effective. August 15, 2005, we have dedicated 5 Permit Technicians to a new appointment system. Appointments are now made for the next day. #120

Hire an additional office assistant. An additional OA has been added in the Development Center Division. #128

Hire two new Permit Technicians. These two positions plus a third have been added. #129

Remove cardboard Stop sign. Sign in lobby was removed. #130

Add a Civil Engineer III position. Position was added to DENG. #134

Assign lead for final plats to Development Engineering. Recommendation was deleted in final Audit. #135.

County Engineer to delegate signature authority. Recommendation was deleted in final Audit. #157

Develop a training program. Program was developed. #163.

Develop policy on private sewage disposal system expansion. A policy on private sewage disposal system expansion has been developed for additions to existing structures. #177

Send review comments directly to applicant. Review comments are coordinated through DENG and copied to the applicant upon request. #184

Notify Dev Engr/ Current Planning when review is completed. This has always been the case. #190

Ongoing (Considered done with an element that requires ongoing monitoring)

Solve customer concerns. The recommendation was to share the report with staff for the purpose of brainstorming ideas to answer customer concerns. We have done this and will continue to do more. #4

Adopt overriding mission and goals. Items in the proposed mission statement are implied in our current statement. The mission statement is reviewed annually. The proposed statements may be addressed in some form at the next review. #5

Resolve PALS Management issues. The proposed reorganization and additional positions are under review. The Oversight Committee has looked at the issue but made no recommendation. #7

Calculate backlog of cases. The number of backlogged applications was calculated in Nov of 2004. We continue to report backlog on a monthly basis #8

Adopt guidelines for fees and budget. The 2006 budget process was completed. At this time there is no recommendation to change the budget process or funding priorities. 10.

Resolve PALS data issues. PALS Plus is addressing some of the issues raised. Inconsistent data entry is also addressed in the training plan on the new permit system. The use of drop down selections rather than codes is expected to address the inconsistency issue. #18

Review sick leave data. Sick leave data was reviewed early in 2005. Supervisors are watching for inconsistencies. #25

Provide training on County View. Training is offered on an as needed basis. It is a key component of the permit system. #27

Resolve addressing issues. PALS has an ongoing coordination with the GIS department. While not all issues are resolved the recommendation is to work with the GIS department and we are doing that. 28.

Return phone call the same day. The department has had a policy of returning phone calls within 24 hours since the mid 1990s. The department has decided to stay with this policy and to look at ways to monitor how successful we are. We are planning to do some customer surveys to establish a baseline to measure future improvements. #34

Develop expanded training program. Expanded training plan established. First round of classes set for October. #41

Use consultants when plan check goals cannot be met. Current policy always allowed this as a customer option. With new funding we are now able to take better advantage of the resource. #47

Hire consultants to clear up the backlog. Kolke Consulting Group is under contract. #48

Consultant plan check to be reviewed by PE Supervisor. A QC program has been established. The Plans examiner supervisor is in charge of that effort #49.

Review ISO evaluation for changes. A cursory review of the report concluded that we should see an increase in our score on the next evaluation. #53

Team approach for plan and ordinance preparation. Chip Vincent and Vicki Diamond reported to the Oversight Committee the efforts that we have made to coordinate staff in preparation of new code or code amendments. This is ongoing effort made by both Sections #54

Implement project manager approach. Draft policy was developed and was implemented on October 1, 2005. The PALS model for project managers is different than the one proposed in the Audit. Industry representatives and staff jointly developed a model that works within our system. It will be evaluated annually. #60

Complete assessment of backlog. Initial assessment was completed in Nov. '04. We continue to monitor and refine our reporting tools. #75

Advance Planning liaison to Development Center & Current Planning. The last year, an Advance Planner has been assigned to assist in the implementation of new regulations. These individuals are not only available to the public, but assist staff during the initial (6 month) implementation phase. #79

Facilitated staff retreats. There has been some reorganization regarding Technical support staff. Additionally a process change is planned for late summer of 2006 that may address the concerns raised. #84.

Routine sessions to critique operations. Division Supervisor is meeting regularly to review intake and distribution of applications. #87

Use focused agendas for staff meetings. Have been using meeting agendas for some time, also publishing meeting minutes. #88

Revise and streamline codes. This is and has been an ongoing goal of PALS. There is not set schedule for a comprehensive overhaul. #91

Confer during code development. Completed with item #54 and part of our ongoing effort for improved regulations. #92.

Continue changes to permit system for end users. Programmers are compiling a list of requests. When the basic conversion is done they will start on the requests.. #100

Allow staff to attend ICC training courses. ICC training is encouraged and we send people as the budget allows. 103.

Expand training for Office Assistants. Diversified training is encouraged as budget allows. Sections have been working on training plans as part of the PALS on PALS implementation. #104

Adopt list of over-the-counter permits. Many permits are now processed over-the counter, tenant improvement permits are currently being added to the over-the-counter list. #105

Dedicate one Permit Tech to Application & Block Appointments. Effective August 15, 2005, we have dedicated 5 Permit Technicians to appointments. #106

Schedule Application and Block Appointments in 48 hours. Effective August 15, 2005, we have dedicated 5 Permit Technicians to a new appointment system. Appointments are now made for the next day. #107

Expand training for Cashier and receptionist. Diversified training is encouraged as budget allows. Sections have been working on training plans as part of the PALS on PALS implementation. #127

Revise handout materials. Handout materials are constantly being revised. #131

Conduct staffing impact analysis on new regulations. This is a current requirement for any legislative change. #133

Furnish data for monthly PALS report. Monthly reports are currently being provided. A more robust report will be available when PALS Plus is complete with Phase III. #136

95% of first reviews in 20 working days. We have already adopted the stated goal, but need to complete the contract process. With some engineering consultants that we have hired, develop some of the process with the consultants and also do some training with the consultants. #149

Keep Public Works counter with PALS. This item is complete for now. Even though the majority of Public Works has moved out of the Annex they are still maintaining the presence of two employees assigned to public assistance. There is a possibility that these two staff members may be relocated when the Public Works Department builds a new office which would make us non-compliant at that point with this recommendation. #151

Send all but 50 plans to consultants for review. Use of consultants expanded in 2005. #152

Send plans that cannot meet performance standards to consultants. Use of consultants expanded in 2005. #153

Small plan corrections to be field verified. Implemented. #155

Hire consultants for DENG backlog. Contracts were in place in 2005 with extensions for 2006 and beyond. #166

Adjust staff to meet timelines. This has always been our business practice to the greatest extent possible given other priorities. This would be enhanced with additional staff requested in the 2006 budget. #185

In Progress (Currently being worked on)

Adopt guidelines for the development permitting system. Many of the elements proposed are current goals in our ongoing development of the permit system or process. Others are dependent on additional staffing or other initiatives. As we work through recommendation #117 these items will be part of our review. #6

Initially absorb PALS facility upgrades in General Fund. Facility upgrades will be funded through under expenditures in 2005. Decisions about the funding sources in 2006 will be made as part of the budget process. #11

Study Centralization of Code Enforcement. A consultant reviewed the County ordinance for any potential problems. Staff has met once in April 2006 to begin formulation of a proposal. #14

Modify Chapter 18 of County Code. All applications accepted by PALS meet this standard. It is unclear why the audit thought there was a difference with planning applications. We will confirm with Zucker Systems as we work on item 117 "20 Minute Lobby Waits". #15

Adopt overtime rules. The Department's informal overtime policy follows the general points outlined in this recommendation. A more formalized version may come out of our work on item 117 "20 Minute Lobby Waits" later this year. #21

Increase commitment to PALS on PALS. The department is fully committed to following through on this process. A second employee survey (PALS on PALS) was completed in April and the results distributed on April 26, 2006. #22

Consider requiring electronic final plat submittals. Reviewing options. Some application currently include an electronic copy. #29

Install optical imaging system. Will review for possible inclusion in 2007 budget. #30.

Support PALS+ expenditure needs. The project budget was extended to June of 2006. #31

Prepare data entry specifications for pals Plus. The programming for Pals Plus addresses the points raised in this recommendation. As with item 23 there is no formal policy on this topic but the concepts are being used. #32

Improve phone system. Needs funding. While we have made some improvements the proposed changes in this recommendation are very costly. As we continue to look at process improvements under item 117 "20 Minute Lobby Waits" this item may be reviewed. #35

Expand E-government. This topic is one that we would like to move forward on. While it might get some attention during our review of 117 "20 Minute Lobby Waits", it needs to be on hold until PALS plus has completed the phasing out of all DCIS permits. #36

Solve Building Inspector concerns. ADR Options is working with staff. Scheduled completion May. #43.

Establish new time goals for Building plan check. New goals were dependent on new staff. Residential goals were the same as our existing goals. Commercial are shorter. Once backlog is eliminated goals will be reassessed. #46.

Prepare indexed policy and procedures manual. The index for the policy manual has not been completed. The Procedure Manual (SOP Manual) has not been completed. #55

Add two Planner III positions and one Planner II. One position is in the 2006 budget request. #57

Assign a Planner III to Tech Support team. Under rearview with # 117 Getting to 20 minutes. #58

Create four Current Planning teams. Planners are assigned to specific areas of the County. The realignment proposed here is dependent on the reorganization proposed under # 7 which is also under consideration. #59

Project managers should intake projects and declare complete. The PALS model for project managers is different that the one proposed in the Audit. Industry representatives and staff jointly developed a model that works within our system. It will be evaluated annually. #61

Change NOA process. We believe we are currently doing the items recommended in this item Timing issues are still in flux until the backlog is gone and additional Staffing is approved. #62

Planning Project Manager to monitor timelines. See item #61 above #65.

Encourage LUACs early participation in process. A draft policy is under review. #66

Determine level of staff support for LUACs. The Executive and County Council does determine the level of support every budget cycle. #67

Planning Project Manager to review related final & Bldg Pmts. See item #61 above. #68

Relocate receptionist. #122
Redesign counter area. #123
Relocate Development Center Supervisors office. #124
Assist some customers at staff desks. #125
Merge cashier station and reception station. #126

For the 5 items above, Erickson McGovern was hired to do the space study. The final report was released early August '05. We have reviewed it and reworked some recommendation. We have started some moves.

Implement traffic impact fee. PW&U is currently working on the needed revisions to PCC. #69

Require more Pre-application meetings. See item #60 - #72

Re-structure pre-application and pre-development meetings. See item #60 - #73.

Decrease non-fee administrative work for case planners. This issue will get addressed in the last part of 2005 through the oversight committee. #74

Establish training program for LUAC members. In LUAC Draft #81

More open communication between managers & Staff. Human Resources is working with Development Center to improve open communication. Pals on Pals is reviewed as a part of every staff meeting. #83

Consolidate permit categories. This is part of the PALS Plus conversion project. Where appropriate this is being done. #89

Create clear thresholds for project review. This topic will be re-evaluated during our review of 117 "20 Minute Lobby Waits". #93

Exempt certain projects from DENG Review. This topic will be re-evaluated during our review of 117 "20 Minute Lobby Waits. #95

Re-instate Lobby Service Attendant. This topic will be re-evaluated during our review of 117 "20 Minute Lobby Waits". #96

Assign two Permit Technicians to phone system. Additional staff are being hired. When trained additional phone coverage will be added. #101

Better training for Permit Technicians. With each phase of PALS Plus that is released the staff is getting training. Additional training will follow the conversion. #102

Three Permit Technicians dedicated to info * quick apps. We have requested a supplemental budget to increase the number of Permit Technicians dedicated to information & quick applications. #108

Schedule appointments within 48 hours for making applications. New performance measures were based on new staffing. Will continue to use existing standards until staffing provided. Up to 12 appointments are now being scheduled the next day. #110

Dedicate five workstations to Technical Support. This topic will be re-evaluated during our review of 117 "20 Minute Lobby Waits". #111

Accept planning applications by Current Planner. This topic will be re-evaluated during our review of 117 "20 Minute Lobby Waits". The version of PALS plus just released would have to be redesigned to accommodate this change. If adopted the change might be delayed until second quarter of 2006 to allow for the completion of the initial conversion to PALS Plus. #112

Planning applications to receive priority by Permit Techs. This topic will be re-evaluated during our review of 117 "20 Minute Lobby Waits". #113

First priority of Technical Support staff to be customers at counter. This item is not done for some divisions. A draft policy is slowly being implemented. This recommendation has the potential to create backlog. #114

Implement project manager system. Draft policy is being developed. A final draft should be ready in August '05. #115

Lobby waits to be no more than 20 minutes. The Oversight Committee will begin an examination of how this can be done. In addition there are several other recommendations that will be reviewed with this effort. #117

Complete Information and Quick Processing in 30 minutes. #118

Complete scheduled appointments in 90 minutes. #119.

Revise call in system. Made one revision more pending #132

Consolidate engineering permit fee categories. This is part of the PALS Plus conversion project. Where appropriate this is being done. #137

Study moving enforcement to Code Enforcement. An initial study of County regulations has been done to see if there were any legal constraints. The next phase of the review has not been assigned. #139

Public Works to communicate directly to applicants. This item is not complete. We have already adopted the stated goal, but need to complete the contract process with some engineering consultants that we have hired, develop some of the process with the consultants and also do some training with the consultants. #147

Monitor timelines, This item is not complete. We do have a monitoring system in place (TO-DO list) so that it is simple to tell what is behind, but we are currently in a mode of trying to ship things out to consultants to eliminate our backlog. The proposed recommendation would be best implemented when our backlog situation is eliminated and our workflow is normalized. #150

Prepare and maintain a policy handbook. Development has started #162.

Make organizational changes in Resource mgmt. See item on organizational management issues #7 - #164.

Improve wetland mapping. Partially complete. #165

Adopt new performance standards. New performance measures were based on new staffing. Will continue to use existing standards until staffing provided. #168

Outside PALS (Topic is for another department or requires Executive or Council action)

Change PALS budget document. The budget document is reviewed annually as part of the budget process. There were minor changes in the 2006 document. The recommendations in the audit were not incorporated this time. #12

Provide annual overtime budget of \$100,000 for PALS. The executive and County Council addressed this issue as part of the annual budget process. #20

Incorporate PALS+ improvement needs into budget. The ongoing support staff were included in our 2006 budget requests. The executive and County Council addressed this issue as part of the annual budget process. #33

Monitor staffing needs. Executive has included a Supplemental for an additional Fire Permit Coordinator and an OA in the FPB budget for 2006. As other departments increase staffing to expedite plan review, FPB continues to be one of the bottlenecks. FPB has utilized outside plan review resources and overtime to expedite review process, but still remains significantly backlogged with reviews. Additional full time staffing in 2006 will significantly improve plan review turn around time and greatly reduce bottleneck potential. #174

Submit copy of proposed private sewage plan w/bldg permit. This is a PALS submittal standard outside the permitting authority of the TPCHD. This recommendation is part of the review of item 117 Getting to 20 Minutes. TPCHD will participate in discussions. #175

Perform initial review of private sewage disposal in 21 days. This recommendation continues to be considered. TPCHD has made a commitment to our stakeholders to process applications efficiently and cost effectively. To implement and maintain this level of service at this time would require a significant increase in fees and may not provide a satisfactory level of efficiency. TPCHD will be working with our stakeholders to establish customer service expectations and conduct a fee audit for the 2007 Budget Cycle. Workflows are currently under review to determine where process reduction and coordination of technical review will add to efficiency. #176

Staff to meet 15 day review for reviews. Public Works Sewer #178.

Approve simple tenant improvements over-the-counter. Working with Building Division on a proposal for OTC tenant permits. Public Works Sewer #179.

PW&U Accept credit cards. #180.

Review and implement employees improvement ideas. Public Works Sewer #181.

PW&U Remove notarization requirement. #182

PW&U Revise approach to incomplete applications. #183

Co-locate traffic review to PALS. The traffic impact fee ordinance if adopted would minimize the expected outcome of this recommendation. Public Works Transportation #186

Establish fees for traffic review. Discussions are underway as part of the 2006 budget proposal. Public Works Transportation #187.

Complete first review in 10 working days. Additional staff if approved in the 2006 budget request may make this possible. Public Works Transportation #188.

Use standby consultants as needed to meet timelines. PW&U Not viewed as an efficient use of resources. 189.

Not Implemented

Expand applicant notification. Applicant notification has been in place for some time. The suggestion of a postcard notice was not implemented. The additional cost and time for mailings did not seem practical. #42

Post job inspection card. The current field inspection report acts as a job inspection card. It contains additional information not found on many job cards. #44

Need for geotechnical report by building plan checkers. By ordinance the need for a geotechnical report is made by DENG not the building division plans examiner. This process has not proven to be a problem. #50

Development Center Supervisor to have Admin over Tech Support. The Department has begun a restructuring of the Technical Support function. Our solution does not meet the recommendation exactly but after careful study this was determined to be the best solution. #86

Dedicate 75 % of Technical Support staff time to Dev Center. The Department has begun a restructuring of the Technical Support function. Our solution does not meet the recommendation exactly but after careful study this was determined to be the best solution. #121

Not Started

Create integrated time system and payroll system. #17.

Develop a public awareness program. Not started #24.

Transfer Environmental Coordinator to Current #56.

Meet with applicant 20 days after NOA is mailed #63.

Mail information to applicant within 28 days of NOA #64.

Tech support planner to do SEPA review for some Bldg Pmts #70.

Adopt new performance measures. New performance measures were based on new staffing. Will continue to use existing standards until staffing provided. 76.

Adopt qualitative indicators. 77

Establish mandatory planner rotation. 78

Simplify noticing requirements. 90

Create standard plan details. 94

Add one engineer and one engineer tech/inspector for enforcement. 138

Create Surveyor job classifications. 140

In-house training program for engineers. 141

Publish permit manual. 142

Shorten and simplify checklist. 143

List permits exempt from engineering review. 144

Study additional permits that can be exempt from review. 145

Distribute applications to engineering faster. 146

Create quality control program. 148.

New system for abbreviated and minor plans. 154

Change applicant notification system. 156

Meet with Public Works staff for final acceptance 158

Use Public Works sign off form. 159

Add one engineer inspector. 160

Add three Engineer I positions. 161

Add one biologist in addition to any needed for Directions Pkg. 167

Incorporate qualitative indicators in performance standards. 169

Expand implementation of mitigation programs. 170

Establish pre-design site assessment for a fee. 171

Establish conservation easement documents. 172.

Establish fee for wetland mitigation monitoring. #173.

Category	# of Recommendations	# Done, Ongoing, In progress	# Remaining Not Started.
General	7 (#1 to #7)	5	2
Issues impacting all functions	29 (#8 to #36)	27	2
Building Safety	17 (#37 to #53)	17	0
Current Planning	29 (#54 to #82)	23	6
Development Center	50 (#83 to #132)	48	2
Development Engineering	29 (#133 to #161)	14	15
Resource Management	12 (#162 to # 173)	6	6
Fire marshal	1 (#174)		
TPCHD	3 (#175 to # 177)		
PW – Sewer	6 (#178 to #183)		
PW - Transportation	7 (#184 to #190)		
		total	33 (18%)