GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2025
WORKSHOP, 5:30 PM
FIRE DEPARTMENT TRAINING ROOM
625 UTE AVENUE

1. **Discussion Topics**

    a. Update on Expedited Review Process Study

    b. 5/10 Year Capital Plan and Prioritization

    c. Role of the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem and the Associated Agenda Committee

2. **City Council Communication**

    An unstructured time for Councilmembers to discuss current matters, share ideas for possible future consideration by Council, and provide information from board & commission participation.

3. **Next Workshop Topics**

4. **Other Business**

What is the purpose of a Workshop?

The purpose of the Workshop is to facilitate City Council discussion through analyzing information, studying issues, and clarifying problems. The less formal setting of the Workshop promotes conversation regarding items and topics that may be considered at a future City Council meeting.

How can I provide my input about a topic on tonight's Workshop agenda?
Individuals wishing to provide input about Workshop topics can:

1. Send input by emailing a City Council member (Council email addresses) or call one or more members of City Council (970-244-1504)

2. Provide information to the City Manager (citymanager@gjcity.org) for dissemination to the City Council. If your information is submitted prior to 3 p.m. on the date of the Workshop, copies will be provided to Council that evening. Information provided after 3 p.m. will be disseminated the next business day.

3. Attend a Regular Council Meeting (generally held the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall) and provide comments during "Public Comments."

Grand Junction City Council

Workshop Session

Item #1.a.

Meeting Date:	March 3, 2025
Presented By:	Niki Galehouse, Planning Manager, Tamra Allen, Community Development Director, Isaac Bales, Elaine Costello
Department:	Community Development
Submitted By:	Niki Galehouse, Planning Manager

Information

SUBJECT:

Update on Expedited Review Process Study

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City engaged Baker Tilly to assess its development review services, which included the Community Development Department, Engineering and Transportation Department, Fire Department, and City Attorney's Office. The focus of the assessment was to identify opportunities for process improvements and provide specific recommendations for the purpose of meeting the State requirement and the City policy to "Fast-Track" affordable housing projects, as well as to determine if those recommendations and practices could apply to all City development reviews.

BACKGROUND OR DETAILED INFORMATION:

To be eligible for financial assistance programs through Colorado's Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and the Governor's Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT), the City must establish a process to ensure compliance with Section 29-32-105 for Fast Track Approval. C.R.S. 29-32-105, establishes the "Fast-Track Approval Process". "Fast Tracking" requires municipalities to establish processes to enable a final decision on any application not more than ninety calendar days after submission of a complete application for development projects. The requirement applies to special permits, variances, or other development permits, but excludes subdivisions that have at least fifty percent or more of the total residential units in the development as affordable housing. To remain eligible for affordable housing production funds within Article 32 in the 2027-2029 cycle, local governments must demonstrate implementation of an expedited review process by November 1, 2026.

The City engaged Baker Tilly to assess its development review services, which

included the Community Development Department, Engineering and Transportation Department, Fire Department, and City Attorney's Office. The focus of the assessment was to identify opportunities for process improvements and provide specific recommendations for the purpose of meeting the State requirement and the City policy to "Fast-Track" affordable housing projects, as well as to determine if those recommendations and practices could apply to all City development reviews.

The study makes multiple recommendations over 4 themes - Process, People, Regulations, and Technology. This presentation will provide an overview of the recommendations and next steps for implementation.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

SUGGESTED ACTION:

This item is for discussion purposes only.

Attachments

1.   Grand Junction Expedited Process Review Analysis & Recommendations

![bakertilly logo]

To: Tamra Allen, Director of Community Development

                City of Grand Junction

                Niki Galehouse, AICP, Planning Manager

                City of Grand Junction

From: Jacquelyn McCray, AICP Director

                Elaine Costello, FAICP, Subject Matter Expert

                Kristian Vaughn, Manager

                Isaac Bales, Manager

                Ashley Bertholf, Senior Consultant

Subject: City of Grand Junction Development Review Process Assessment for Expedited
                Review of Affordable Housing - Analysis and Recommendations

Date: February 28, 2025

Purpose

The City of Grand Junction has engaged Baker Tilly to assess development review services carried out by the City, including staff in the Community Development Department, Engineering and Transportation Department, Fire Department and City Attorney's Office. The focus of the assessment is to identify opportunities for process improvements and provide specific recommendations for the purpose of meeting the State requirement and adopted City policy to "fast-track" affordable Housing projects as well as to apply these opportunities and recommendations to all plan review projects that undergo city review. Baker Tilly's assessment involved the Community Development Department and other departments and divisions such as Engineering, Fire, and the City Attorney's Office.

As part of our analysis, we completed the following activities:

- Conducted interviews and focus groups with City leadership, department and division staff, and industry and development stakeholders who are directly or indirectly part of the development review process.

- Led an on-site process mapping workshop with key process participants.

- Documented and validated the current-state (as-is) process maps for multifamily new construction and single-family residential subdivision.

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- Reviewed and analyzed relevant policies, procedures, process details, and forms/applications available on the department websites, and clarified additional process-related details through discussions with the Community Development Director, Planning Manager and other City staff.

Background

A major influence on the City's pursuit of this project relates to the State of Colorado's affordable housing-focused regulatory modification. Specifically, Colorado Revised Statutes, Article 32, "Statewide Affordable Housing Fund," identifies the requirements that local municipalities must satisfy to be eligible for financial assistance programs for affordable housing projects.

Further, the City has articulated its own goal for the timely processing of affordable housing projects in City Resolutions 48-22, 97-22, and 65-23. These resolutions commit the City to supporting affordable housing, meeting affordable housing production targets, and establishing more stringent review timelines for affordable housing projects. The commitments set forth mean that current City operations must be maximized in their efficiency to meet these new targets.

Baker Tilly has identified the elements of an improved development review process that will result in greater efficiency and time savings of housing applications in general, with a focus on a streamlined process for affordable housing developments. Our recommendations address front-loading applicants with information needed to have a successful application, establishing and tracking realistic turnaround times for application review and comments, managing projects, effective communications and use of technology.

Fully implementing these recommendations will take time. The City of Grand Junction needs a process for expediting application submission and intake, plans review, and permitting for eligible affordable housing projects that can be implemented soon. This report contains specific recommendations for this expedited review process to ensure that the City of Grand Junction can meet the November 1, 2026 deadline approved in Article 32 to be eligible for state funds in the next funding cycle (2027-2029).

Through Baker Tilly's work with Community Development staff to establish an expedited review process, the recommended process improvements will also positively result in greater efficiency of Grand Junction's overall development review processes for developments that do not meet affordable housing thresholds.

Strategic Initiatives and Policy Directives for Addressing Affordable Housing

City Initiatives Addressing Changing Environmental Conditions

The City of Grand Junction is located in Mesa County, Colorado, with a population of approximately 69,412 (2023). Its population has grown steadily, with notable increases from the 2000s through 2020. Housing data for Grand Junction show an owner-occupied housing rate of 62.8% (2019-2023), with the median value of owner-occupied housing units at $358,300 and a median gross rent of $1,101 (2019-2023). The median household income for residents of the City for the same period was $66,676, with a poverty rate of 13%. The civilian labor force participation rate for those aged 16 and older was 61.3%. With the growth and rising housing costs in Grand Junction, the City is focused on improving operations to provide affordable housing for its residents.

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A policy focus on housing is illustrated in the Grand Junction Strategic Plan adopted by City Council in 2023. This plan establishes five strategic outcomes and additional initiatives to guide City decisions and programs. The Community Development Department is responsible for land use development in Grand Junction, ensuring it adheres to legal standards and considers the needs of its residents and community members, all of which contribute to realizing the City's vision and strategic framework.

Grand Junction's Vision Statement

> *Grand Junction is a safe, welcoming, healthy and accessible city that builds on its collective character to be a place where opportunity abounds, resources are well-managed, and people are connected and engaged in their community.*

The 2024-2026 Strategic Framework, built off the 2020 Comprehensive Plan and adopted by City Council, is outlined below.

1. ***Placemaking.*** Grand Junction catalyzes projects and investments that emphasize people-centric spaces with inclusive infrastructure that promotes vibrant, multi-use environments to ensure people can comfortably live, recreate, and move throughout our community.

2. ***Thriving and Vibrant.*** Grand Junction is recognized for its economic vitality, innovative and visionary policies, intentional growth, talented workforce, and for fostering a thriving environment for all.

3. ***Welcoming, Livable, and Engaging.*** Grand Junction fosters a sense of belonging, where people are accepted as themselves and have access to the amenities and services they need to thrive, and actively seek participation from our community.

4. ***Safe and Healthy.*** Grand Junction public safety departments are exemplary providers of police, fire and emergency medical services and work in close collaboration with community partners to ensure a safe and healthy community.

5. ***Resource Stewardship.*** Grand Junction is committed to balancing fiscal responsibility and environmental health and fosters a unique blend of natural beauty and urban innovation by maintaining an accessible, well-kept environment, enhancing outdoor lifestyles, and preserving community character.

In addition to the overarching themes in the Strategic Framework, the City has made significant steps to address housing needs through the Grand Junction Housing Strategy (2021) and more recently through the 2024 update to this strategy. The Housing Strategy is a comprehensive evaluation of the current and future housing needs in Grand Junction. It identifies gaps in the housing market, assesses affordability, and provides recommendations for addressing housing shortages. The assessment aims to guide policy decisions and resource allocation to ensure adequate and affordable housing for all residents. The 2024 update provides a realignment to the City Council's Strategic Framework, analyzes changes that impact the supply of housing in Grand Junction, and provides updated recommendations.

Compliance Requirements of Colorado Statute Article 32, Statewide Affordable Housing Fund

The City has committed to fulfilling the goals set out in Colorado's Proposition 123, a state initiative, approved as Colorado Revised Statutes, Article 32. This statute establishes the State Affordable Housing Fund, which allocates 40% of funds to the Affordable Housing Support Fund administered by the

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Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and 60% to the Affordable Housing Financing Fund overseen by the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT). The use of these funds could significantly offset some of the barriers to increasing the supply of affordable housing in Grand Junction. By adhering to the requirements of Article 32, Grand Junction can access funding from the State Affordable Housing Fund. Article 32 outlines two key requirements for municipalities to be eligible to access state funds. Requirements of Colorado Revised Statutes, Article 32 include the following:

1. **Affordable Housing Commitment**

   - Local governments must commit to increasing their affordable housing stock by 3% annually to qualify for funding.

   - The Revised Article 32 defines "Affordable Housing" as "rental housing affordable to a household with an annual income of at or below sixty percent of the area median income, and that costs the household less than thirty percent of its monthly income. Affordable housing also means for-sale housing that could be purchased by a household with an annual income at or below one hundred percent of the area median income, for which the mortgage payment costs the household thirty percent or less of its monthly income. Targets set for the local governments and tribal governments under section 29-32-105 for affordable housing shall be based on the area median income."

2. **Expedited Review Process**

   - Local governments must implement an expedited review process for specific applications for housing projects where at least half of the units meet the definition of affordable housing in Revised Article 32. Figure 1 below summarizes the type of review by application required per Proposition 123 and Article 32.

   - To remain eligible for affordable housing production funds within Article 32 in the next 3-year cycle (2027-2029), local governments must demonstrate they have implemented a "fast-track" or expedited review process by November 1, 2026, to meet the time requirements below. Fast tracking using an expedited review requires local municipalities to establish processes to enable a final decision on any application not more than ninety calendar days after submission of a complete application for development projects. The requirement applies to special permits, variances, or other development permits, excluding subdivisions, that have at least fifty percent or more of the total residential units in the development as affordable housing.[1]

     — Expedited Review Required Timeframe

       o 90-Day Review Period: The expedited review process must result in a 90-calendar-day timeframe from the determination of application completeness to a final decision (See Article 32, Paragraph (2)(a) of Section 29-32-105).

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[1] That report references Article 32 in its original form approved in 2022, as well as amendment to Article 32 via Colorado House Bill 23-1304 passed in 2023.

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Figure 1.   Type of Review Required for Common Application Types per Proposition 123 / Article 32

Expedited Review Required	Expedited Review Possibly Required	Expedited Review Not Required
• Administrative Modification • Alternative Compliance • Building Permit • Conditional Use • Development Plan • Site Plan • Special Use/ Use by Special Review • Variance or Waiver	• Accessory Use Permit • Civil / Construction Drawings • Master Plan • Planned Unit Development (PUD) and PUD Amendment	• Annexation • Appeals • Comprehensive Plan Amendment • Concept / Pre-Application • Rezoning • Subdivision / Plat / Division of Land • Subdivision Exemption • Zoning Establishment

Source: Presentation by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, 2024 American Planning Association Conference

This legislation is expected to alleviate housing shortages, reduce living costs, and improve the overall quality of life for Colorado residents. Grand Junction has already gained access to funds for a few key development projects. Although the City currently reviews a limited number of eligible affordable housing projects under Article 32 (typically only 1-2 projects per year), it is crucial to continue meeting eligibility requirements to access this funding stream for the City.

Local Legislation Addressing Affordable Housing

While the Strategic Framework described above sets forth goals and objectives for the City, the Housing Strategy and Article 32 commit the City to making significant and impactful changes to specifically address the housing needs of the Grand Junction community. To meet the goals of Article 32, the City has approved Council resolutions No. 48-22, No. 97-22, and No. 65-23.

The City aims to increase its affordable housing stock by 3% annually, which translates to approximately 125 units per year, or a total of 374 units by December 31, 2026. The Council resolutions create policies that help the City conform to the requirements of Proposition 123, which are described below.

- **Resolution No. 48-22** establishes the Affordable Housing Goals. This resolution was derived from the strategies identified in the 2021 Grand Valley Housing Needs Assessment. The policy set goals to increase the total affordable housing stock in the City from 225 to 350 units over five years, serving residents at 80% area median income or less. In addition, the policy defined "Affordable Housing and Attainable Housing".

- **Resolution No. 97-22** commits to an expedited review process for affordable housing projects. The City commits to an initial review of applications of for-sale and rental units within 30 days of a complete submittal with subsequent submittal issues within 15 days of resubmittal. This expedited process is designed to streamline review periods.

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- **Resolution No. 65-23** amends Resolutions Nos. 48-22 and 97-22. It updates the definitions and goals related to Grand Junction's affordable housing initiatives. This resolution ensures that the City's policies remain aligned with current housing needs and regulatory requirements, further supporting the development and maintenance of affordable housing. In addition, Resolution 65-23 specifically amends the production goal to match the requirements of Article 32 and updates definitions, including:
    - Increase affordable housing stock by 9% or 374 units over the next three years.
    - Affordable housing is redefined as, "Housing units with a contractual requirement (deed restriction or income restriction of no less than 30 years) that keep the cost of rental housing units affordable to households making 60% AMI or below, or for-sale housing that is affordable to households making 100% AMI or below," per the resolution.
    - Attainable housing is defined as "Housing units that keep the cost of rental housing units affordable to households making 80% to 100% AMI or for-sale housing that is affordable to households making 100% to 140% AMI, per the resolution.

The changing environment, state legislation, and local ordinances together create the necessity for this engagement. To meet these obligations and address housing issues, the City of Grand Junction must improve its current development review processes. This is essential to operate efficiently, ensure expedited review timelines are met and satisfy the community's need for increased affordable housing.

Staffing

There are multiple departments and external entities involved in the Grand Junction development process, including Community Development, Engineering, Legal, Survey, Fire, and other external entities. Table 1 displays the budgeted, filled, and vacant positions as of January 2025 for positions within the aforementioned departments that are directly involved in the development review process. As represented, Community Development has three positions vacant, including two that are critical to the development review process (Senior Planner and Associate Planner). Filling these positions and identifying organizational practices to ensure employee retention will be essential in meeting the obligations of an expedited review process.

For the other departments included, there were no vacancies in the positions that support development review as of January 2025. It is important to note, however, that in the City Attorney's office, there are two vacant positions; these vacancies create additional workload, which pulls time away from development review. Aside from the engineers, all other internal reviewers are not solely dedicated to development review, so additional vacancies in their respective departments and other external workloads can affect their ability to dedicate time to this process.

Although these positions are currently filled, one engineering and one surveyor position were added within the last 3 years. Filling these skilled roles is difficult for the City, and these vacant positions often sit empty for up to a year before getting filled. Consultants were utilized to fill in workload gaps due to vacancies; however, consultants' work still needed to be reviewed by City staff, causing increased workload on current staff members. Lastly, although quality candidates eventually filled these positions, there is a training and learning curve upon hire to get new employees onboarded and fully trained. Thus, the period of vacancy is often longer than appears in staffing data.

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Table 1.   Staffing Levels and Vacancies for Positions Involved in the Development Review Processes as of January 2025

	Total Involved Positions	Filled Positions	Vacant Positions
Community Development Department	**18**	**15**	**3**
Community Development Director	1	1	0
Planning Manager	1	1	0
Principal Planner	2	2	0
Senior Planner	3	2	1
Associate Planner	2	1	1
Zoning Supervisor	1	1	0
Development Coordinator	1	1	0
Planning Technician	3	3	0
Engineering Department	**3**	**3**	**0**
Engineer	3	3	0
Legal Department	**2**	**2**	**0**
Assistant City Attorney	1	1	0
Staff Attorney	1	1	0
Surveyor's Office	**2**	**2**	**0**
Surveyor	2	2	0
Fire Department	**3**	**3**	**0**
Fire Marshall	1	1	0
Fire Prevention Specialist	2	2	0
Multi-Departmental Total	**28**	**25**	**3**

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Workload

Applications Received and Closed

Table 2 shows the number of applications by type submitted to the Community Development Department from 2021 to 2024. Generally, year-over-year, total applications submitted from 2021 to 2024 have decreased by 47.98%, with the bulk of the workload concentrated in land subdivisions (31.9%) and site plan reviews (28.4%).

Table 2. Applications Received by Project Type Calendar Years 2021 to 2024

Application Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total
Annexation	16	8	10	6	40
Certificate of Designation Site	1				1
Comprehensive Plan Amendment	3		4	4	11
Conditional Use Permit	4	2	2	2	10
Environmental / Sensitive Lands		1			1
Institutional & Civic Facilities Master Plan	1		1		2
Planned Development	10	4	10	3	27
Planned Development - Amendment	2	2	2		6
Revocable Permit	12	7	8	17	44
Rezone	14	17	10	4	45
Site Plan	59	46	39	29	173
Special District Service Plan			1		1
Street Name Change	2			4	6
Subdivision	31	34	18	6	89
Subdivision, Simple	30	29	27	20	106
Vacation	10	10	5	3	28
Variance			4		4
Zoning Code Amendment	3	5	3	5	16
Grand Total	**198**	**165**	**144**	**103**	**610**

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Table 3 shows the number of applications by type that were closed in a given calendar year. Closed indicates that the City issued an approved or completed status for an application.

Table 3.   Applications Closed by Project Type Calendar Years *2021 to 2024*

Application Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	Not Closed	Grand Total
Annexation	9	8	8	2	13	40
Certificate of Designation Site					1	1
Comprehensive Plan Amendment	3		1	3	4	11
Conditional Use Permit	1	3	3	1	3	11
Environmental / Sensitive Lands			1		0	1
Institutional & Civic Facilities Master Plan	1				2	3
Planned Development	5	5	3	1	13	27
Planned Development - Amendment		2	2	1	1	6
Revocable Permit	9	4	4	9	18	44
Rezone	11	12	2	7	13	45
Site Plan	35	38	34	26	38	171
Special District Service Plan					1	1
Street Name Change	2			3	1	6
Subdivision	14	16	22	14	23	89
Subdivision, Simple	13	19	22	18	34	106
Vacation	7	5	3	1	12	28
Variance			2		2	4
Zoning Code Amendment	1				15	16
Grand Total	**111**	**112**	**107**	**86**	**194**	**610**

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Note: Applications labeled 'Not Closed' consist of those with the plan status of Active, Withdrawn, Denied, or See File. Withdrawn or Denied applications are not actively open; however, current data do not have a closed date attached to them.

Table 4 shows the total number of applications received and completed from 2021 to 2024. While the number of applications received has decreased since 2021, applications completed have stayed relatively steady. The number of applications completed during the given year does not account for the complexity of projects reviewed; however, it does indicate that current staffing levels have maintained a consistent output over the past four years, despite some vacancies and changing regulations and code.

Table 4. Applications Received and Completed in Calendar Years 2021-2024

Year	Total Applications Received	Total Applications Completed
2021	198	11
2022	165	112
2023	144	107
2024	103	86

Application Cycle Times

Table 5 shows the duration of the application review (in days) from application submittal/intake to final close-out. Please note that applications that are currently open are not included in Table 5. Open applications are those that have not received a final approval or have not been issued a "completed final" status. Given that some of the open applications have been in the application process for two, three, or four years, the number of review days may be skewed. The workload review averages, shown in Table 5, are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Table 5 can be used as a means of benchmarking the average, minimum and maximum review times (in days) by application type, and the progress needed for the City to conform to a 90-day turnaround for affordable housing applications. While some of the application types included below do not require completion within 90 days, understanding overall turnaround times and holding staff accountable to current baseline averages are important steps in identifying process improvements needed to ensure an expedited review process for affordable housing.

Table 5. Development Services Workload Data – Applications Closed, Calendar Years 2021 to 2024

Application Type	No. Closed (Outliers Excluded)	Average Review Period (Days)	Max Review Period (Days)	Min Review Period (Days)
Annexation	26	160	419	70
Comprehensive Plan Amendment	7	130	232	68

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Application Type	No. Closed (Outliers Excluded)	Average Review Period (Days)	Max Review Period (Days)	Min Review Period (Days)
Conditional Use Permit	7	139	334	43
Environmental / Sensitive Lands	1	281	281	281
Institutional & Civic Facilities Master Plan	1	99	99	99
Planned Development	13	156	292	83
Planned Development - Amendment	5	99	170	48
Revocable Permit	18	57	145	2
Rezone	31	111	236	51
Site Plan	133	173	576	3
Street Name Change	5	42	85	16
Subdivision	65	346	1053	64
Subdivision, Simple	69	194	759	23
Vacation	16	145	464	21
Variance	1	14	14	14
Zoning Code Amendment	1	66	66	66
Total	**399**			

Note: For the workload data above, applications that have not been closed out are not included in the analysis for averages, maximum, or minimum review periods. The number of applications closed includes all applications that have an end date associated with them in the data provided. Applications not included are those with the plan status of Active, Withdrawn, and in one instance each, See File or Denied. This does skew averages, minimums, and maximums as applications left out might change these numbers; 194 applications are still open. Of these open applications, some have been in review for multiple years. Additionally, outliers have been removed from the data set at .05 Significance Level. There were 17 outliers removed from the data set. The 'No.(number) Closed' is a sample of closed applications that does not include outliers.

Stakeholder Engagement

Baker Tilly used several forms of engagement to inform our analysis, including 1) employee interviews, 2) applicant/customer interviews, and 3) process mapping.

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Employee Interviews

The Grand Junction employee interviews were conducted in October 2024. The Baker Tilly team engaged City staff across various departments to gain perspective on the development services workflow. Interviewees discussed what is and is not working well, where operational practices and procedures can be improved, customer service experiences and areas for improvement, technology experiences, and suggestions to improve the overall permitting workflow and efficiencies.

The themes cover participants across Community Development, Fire, City Attorney's Office, and Housing. While not comprehensive of all City voices, the themes provided a starting point for uncovering common issues and concerns and helped direct findings and areas for further investigation. Attachment A includes detailed themes and feedback generated from the completed interviews with City staff.

Applicant/Customer Interviews

The Grand Junction applicant interviews were conducted in October through November of 2024 with developers, engineers, and builders. The Baker Tilly team engaged a range of current and prior applicants/customers to understand their perspectives on the development review process. During the interviews, we discussed process pain points, areas that are working well, areas for operational improvement, customer service experiences, technology use, and suggestions to improve the overall process.

Although the sample of stakeholders engaged might not represent all experiences working with the City's development review process, their input provided meaningful observation for understanding and identifying common issues, concerns and ideas for improvement. Attachment B includes a detailed summary of what we heard from applicants and customers.

Process Mapping Workshop

Baker Tilly held an on-site workshop with City staff from Community Development, Engineering, Fire, Survey, Legal, and Mesa County Engineering departments to discuss and document existing workflow operations and steps in the development review process for two types of projects. The workshops covered the key steps by applicants and City staff from initial intake through the completion of plan review, project approval, planning clearance issuance, and site inspections to successful project completion. Based on this workshop with staff, Baker Tilly prepared draft and final process maps that document the as-is or current-state workflow and process steps for the following two application types:

- Single-Family Subdivision New Construction

- Multifamily Site Plan New Construction

The current state process maps are included as Attachment C to this report.

Observations and Recommendations

The following observations are derived from comprehensive interviews and data collection involving City staff and community stakeholders. While each group provides valuable insights and experiences regarding the Grand Junction development review process, no single perspective encompasses the entire truth. The recommendations aim to integrate both viewpoints and experiences, recognizing that effective

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process improvement requires ownership and action from all parties involved. The focus of these recommendations is on what Community Development, along with their counterpart departments, can do to enhance and streamline the development review process.

As a preface to our observations and recommendations, it is important to describe what embodies a highly effective organization for carrying out development permitting functions. In simple terms, people, policy, process, and technology are the fundamental building blocks of a development review process that – when optimized – performs effectively and efficiently to produce a mutually supportive and productive outcome. The result is a highly functioning and well-organized development review system that achieves beneficial outcomes for the community and provides a satisfactory experience for all participants. The following summarizes the ideals that guide and direct people, policy, process, and technology in the attainment of development review process excellence.

- *Process.* Clear and efficient application intake systems, combined with well-coordinated plan review, planning clearance, and inspection processes, are activated to result in plans and built environments that are in compliance with applicable policies and ordinances of the local government – and applicable laws and regulations of other public agencies.

- *People.* An organization of dedicated, well-trained, supported, collaborative, trusting, and empowered team members with:

    a) an understanding of their role in and the mission of the development review process (e.g., facilitating quality development in a time-efficient and highly coordinated manner that results in a better community); and

    b) a mindset for excellence in internal and external customer service, effectiveness, problem solving, continuous learning and improvement, and communication.

- *Regulations.* Intentional, internally consistent, and mutually reinforcing sources of authority (i.e., policies and ordinances) that clearly communicate expectations for development. Policies, such as those found in Comprehensive Plan and Design Guidelines, are typically intended to guide decision making and achieve specific goals. Ordinances, such as Building Codes, Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, and Engineering Design Standards are typically adopted to implement policy; they are binding and enforceable laws (more rigid than policies), intended to result in outcomes that uphold public health, safety, and general welfare, and are often called standards, codes, requirements, or regulations that often include terms such as "shall" or "must."

- *Technology.* Integrated technology that efficiently and effectively carries out the functional needs of processes for and between staff and applicants, reduces or eliminates the need for manual activities, and facilitates transparency of information, project status, performance, and communications.

With the preceding as context, the following four sections provide Baker Tilly's observations and recommendations on Grand Junction's development review and permitting process.

Baker Tilly identified the following overarching best practices for the City of Grand Junction development review process to ensure it will be prepared to meet all local and state affordable housing review requirements and provide a timely review for all applicants:

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1. Provide applicants with predictability on timing, cost, information requirements, and applicable regulations.

2. Supply applicants with comprehensive, easy-to-use information to help them create a complete application with the required content at the beginning of the application process.

3. Front-load identification of issues and keep applications moving - staff manages projects so problems are solved and issues are resolved quickly.

4. Avoid multiple review cycles.

5. Assist applicants in creating high-quality development.

6. Ensure policies and regulations are met. For affordable housing, meet the timeline requirements in Article 32 and Resolution No. 97-22.

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Theme 1: Process

Observation A.   Staff-level permit approval is a benefit and assists with expediting current processes

Most housing development application reviews in Grand Junction can be approved at the staff level and do not require additional review and approval by the Planning Commission or City Council. There are a few exceptions for projects requiring zoning changes or approval of a conditional use permit.

Staff-level approval for housing permits is one of the most important actions needed to expedite housing developments that a community can implement, which Grand Junction has already accomplished. A review of development applications by the Planning Commission and City Council adds time and uncertainty for the applicant. Staff level approval does, however, add pressure on City staff to effectively resolve and reach an agreement on code issues that the City supports since they are the final decision makers.

Observation B.   Staff accepts applications with incomplete information, resulting in extra review cycles

Applications are currently deemed 'complete', and the staff review process commences when the required documents have been submitted. The Planning staff do not confirm that the application contains all the necessary information. Instead, departments often must determine whether all the information needed for their review is included during the review process. Currently, information is often missing or wrong and must be requested after the application review process is underway. Both staff and applicants observed that, as a result, there is a consistent pattern of multiple requests for additional information and multiple rounds of iterative and time-consuming review.

This procedure must change to meet the timelines required for affordable housing and to improve other development review outcomes. The 90-day period required by Colorado Revised Statutes 29-32-105 to act on an affordable housing project starts when the application is deemed complete. Additionally, City of Grand Junction resolution 97-22 sets turnaround times for staff review of affordable housing applications that begin once an application is complete. Within those 90 days, there is not sufficient time to continue the status quo of sending an application through multiple rounds of review because the original application did not contain complete information. The standard of a 'complete' application is critical to ensure that the 90-day timeline can be met. Additionally, City of Grand Junction resolution 97-22 sets turnaround times for staff review of affordable housing applications that begin once an application is complete.

Before an application is deemed complete, the planning staff need to review the contents of documents to ensure they meet minimum standards based on the Submittal Standards for Improvements and Development (SSID) manual. This change will result in front-loading the request for and ensuring the submittal of necessary information. The goal is that the reviewing departments can provide complete comments in the first round of review, and the applicant can then make the necessary changes. This also underscores the necessity of an effective pre-application process.

This step adds time at the front end of the application process but will save applicants and staff time overall. Baker Tilly's experience is that communities that review the content of applications before they are deemed complete often allow up to 30 days for this review to allow staff to coordinate with other

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departments and agencies to conduct the sufficiency review. The City of Grand Junction can establish a timeframe that works based on the City's staffing levels and the quality of submittals.

Requiring complete information before starting the staff review process is designed to help limit the number of review cycles that staff and applicants are currently experiencing. Stakeholders who participated in interviews expressed frustration with the review process. They noted that instead of a comprehensive first review followed by dwindling numbers of comments, they often receive new and conflicting comments in subsequent rounds. This leads to multiple rounds of revisions, with some projects requiring up to ten rounds of review. The introduction of new comments in later stages creates delays and inefficiencies, making the process unpredictable and frustrating for applicants. Staff noted that often the introduction of new comments in subsequent rounds of review was due to an incomplete application in the first round or where the applicant had made significant changes upon resubmittal.

A sufficient, complete application when staff start their review allows staff to conduct a comprehensive review of a development application in the first round of review. The applicant may need to revise their application to respond to staff' comments where compliance with the Code has not been reached. The goal is to limit additional rounds of review for the modifications the applicant made in response to staff comments to as few as possible. Additional review may be needed when an applicant makes major changes after the initial submittal is made and review comments have been made. Applicants should be encouraged to discuss plan/project changes with staff prior to a resubmittal. This practice will aid in a smoother review of the revisions.

To successfully implement this change, comprehensive, easy-to-use information on what is required to create a complete application needs to be available at the beginning of the application process. This requires all the departments involved in the development review to be included in creating standards for applications and to provide examples of what information is required from applicants. Staff then need to undertake this review of the content of applications efficiently. Applicants reviewing these materials and standards will help them develop a robust application that requires minimal review for compliance.

The City has already developed checklists and is currently revising the SSID Manual, which contains development forms and standards. The next step is to review them to ensure they contain all the information an applicant needs for a complete application. Checklists should include everything that is required so the planning staff will have a clear understanding of what to look for when reviewing applications for information sufficiency as part of the completeness review.

Providing examples of complete applications with supporting documents is a best practice that is useful to applicants. Doing so helps applicants see how another applicant for the same permit created a complete application/acceptable document. Staff can create a library of these applications and documents to show to applicants, which will help staff define the required information. Staff noted that there are developers who currently submit complete, high-quality applications and documents that are nearly code compliant. Once staff confirms code compliance, these are examples staff can show to applicants.

This front-loading of information will be an adjustment for both City staff and applicants. Staff will need to be empowered to reject submittals with incomplete information. Additional staff may be needed to implement this sufficiency review of applications before applications are deemed complete. Communicating to applicants the reasons for this change and how it benefits them will also be important.

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Recommendation 1.   Revise the current submittal process by adding a step for sufficiency review before an application is deemed complete and staff review starts.

   a) Provide applicants with the information they need to submit a complete application.

   b) All city departments need to review relevant sections of the SSID manual and ensure that comprehensive information and examples are available to applicants that describe and illustrate the information that must be approved as part of the development review process.

   c) Conduct training with the development community to review the expected standards of a submittal.

   d) Use a variety of communication methods, including creating handouts available on the website and at the counter to explain this process change to applicants.

   e) Establish a timeframe to undertake the content review of applications and documents to determine if an application is complete.

Recommendation 2.   Ensure first-round reviews are comprehensive and set a goal of no more than two additional review cycles for revisions that are necessary for the application to meet Code compliance.

Recommendation 3.   All changes, staff- or applicant-driven, must be called out on plans to allow for a transparent review of subsequent rounds. Additional comments and/or rounds of review may be necessary based on the changes made during the resubmittal process.

Observation C.   *Pre-application and general meetings increase the applicant's overall timeline*

Given the importance of front-loading information to shorten the plan review process, the pre-submittal process is a critical step for applicants. There are currently two options for meetings prior to a formal submittal: a non-mandatory general meeting and a mandatory pre-application meeting. Pre-application meetings have been required since January 2023 for major site plans, major subdivisions, and planned developments before an applicant can apply. An applicant does not necessarily need to attend both meetings, depending on the timing of the project and the need for information at various stages.

Scheduling these meetings and receiving feedback from them can be time-consuming for applicants and staff. From 2021 to 2024, there was an average of 268 general meetings and 45 pre-application meetings per year (Table 6).

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Table 6.　General and Pre-application Meetings, Calendar Years 2021 to 2024

Meeting Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
General Meeting	328	240	242	260	1,070
Pre-Application	45	45	37	51	178
Total	**373**	**285**	**279**	**311**	**1,248**

In 2024, scheduling a general meeting took two to three weeks after an initial inquiry, and comments were provided one or two weeks afterward. Baker Tilly questions the usefulness of continuing the general meeting. It was recently revised in January of 2025, including implementing a Planner of the Day and a call tree, so more questions are being answered by a planner on the phone instead of scheduling for a general meeting time slot to scope the question. These changes have reduced the need for general meetings and started to address this observation, with general meetings now being able to be scheduled for the next week. There are good, more streamlined alternatives to these general meetings. Phone calls, in-person counter inquiries and handouts, online information, or emails are effective approaches to give applicants the initial information they need about the review process, application requirements, and project feasibility. When requested by applicants, ad hoc meetings can be scheduled with appropriate city staff.

The focus should be on the pre-application meeting since it is a mandatory requirement for certain application types. Currently, there are several steps involved:

- Applicant requests a pre-application checklist;
- Applicant submits a pre-application with the accompanying required materials on the City's online portal. Pre-application checklists require that applicants submit contact information, a pre-application fee, project narrative, conceptual site plan, and subdivision sketch. Other required information, determined on a case-by-case basis for submission include pedestrian bike analysis, drainage evaluation, traffic impact study, Geotech analysis, preliminary tree survey and preliminary wetlands/floodplain analysis.
- Pre-application submittal is reviewed by city departments and external review agencies;
- Applicant is sent comments in advance of the meeting;
- Pre-application meeting, attended by Planning, Engineering, and Fire staff as well as other review agencies on an as-needed basis, is held with the applicant to discuss the written comments and issues; and
- Applicant receives revised or additional comments from city staff after the meeting, if necessary.

Concerns about the pre-application meeting's effectiveness were expressed during staff and stakeholder interviews. Staff commented that many pre-application submittals do not contain sufficient information and/or detail for staff to provide complete comments. Additionally, staff found that applicants do not routinely incorporate meaningful feedback from this meeting into their plan applications. Applicants questioned whether these pre-application meetings are worth the time they take.

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Recommendation 4.   Revise the pre-submittal process to facilitate the expedited plan review timeframe.

a) Eliminate the general meeting. Instead, utilize a variety of methods, including phone calls, emails, online and counter information, or ad hoc in-person meetings to allow applicants to do an early consultation with city staff about their project's feasibility and to gather information about the approval process. Eliminating the administrative burden of general meetings will free up staff time to focus on other key administrative tasks such as project management, pre-application meetings and related tasks. This change will require a code amendment.

b) Focus on the pre-application meeting as the time to help applicants understand the requirements, major issues for their project, the application timeline, all the required documents, the steps in the review process, and what information is required to create a complete application so the application can be reviewed in one round.

I. Be prepared to explain to the applicant what the City requires for a complete application and provide the checklists and examples that are recommended above in Recommendation 1.

II. Increase the time the applicant receives to review the pre-application comments from 24 hours to at least 3 days.

III. Continue to send out City staff notes from these meetings to the applicants - require the applicant to respond to the staff's recommendations in these pre-application meeting notes and have staff review those responses as part of the completeness review of the application to ensure that applicants responded to the staff comments when preparing their submittal.

IV. Pre-application meetings should continue to be optional, not mandatory, for small projects like lot line adjustments or small subdivisions. More informal meetings can be used for these projects.

Observation D.   Staff meetings and problem-solving forums are not currently meeting the goal of expediting projects

Staff hold several regularly scheduled interdepartmental meetings to talk about projects (Development Engineering every Tuesday, Legal/Survey every Tuesday, and Development Review [Planners/Engineers] every Thursday). These are helpful for building interdepartmental agreements on project issues and should continue.

Comments were made that staff tasked with resolving an issue identified during one of the regularly scheduled interdepartmental meetings will sometimes wait a week for one of these meetings to discuss a project issue when the issue could have been resolved sooner by a phone call or a smaller meeting. Informal communication between departments outside regular interdepartmental meetings needs to be used more frequently to shorten project review time and allow these interdepartmental meetings to focus on major issues.

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Recommendation 5. **Use various communication tools such as emails, phone calls, or in-person meetings based on the issue and timing.** Use phone calls, in-person meetings and emails to resolve minor interdepartmental issues in order to shorten review times. Use interdepartmental project meetings for major issues that require the larger group's input.

Observation E.   *City review staff involved in the development review process are currently struggling to adhere to the City's targeted turnaround times*

For applications deemed complete, the City's current target is to complete their review and provide comments in three weeks (Resolution 97-22 applies to affordable housing projects and requires an initial round of review issues within 30 days of a complete submittal with subsequent submittal issues within 15 days of resubmittal). Both staff and applicants noted that this three-week turnaround time is rarely met. Comments from Planning staff on application submittals have sometimes taken twelve to fourteen weeks, with comments from the City Attorney sometimes arriving four to six weeks after the planners.

Staff note that several things cause these delays: incomplete applications that and require requests for additional information before staff can provide complete comments, time needed to resolve unclear regulatory direction, delays from outside agencies, the volume of projects, and inadequate staffing.

Applicants also stated that it felt like there were silos and a lack of coordination across departments, leading to conflicting comments and delays. Applicants highlighted that the City Attorney's Office and City Surveyor are sources of delays and that there is no one point of contact to ensure these departments meet their timelines. Applicants commented that the multiple departments that work across development have separate processes and feel largely disconnected and that the planners do not have enough power to move other departments along.

Baker Tilly also observed that using three weeks as the target turnaround time to review comments for all plan review types is not a best practice. For example, it takes longer to develop review comments for a subdivision involving many housing units with complex infrastructure than it does to develop comments for a site plan review of a small apartment building on a single lot. The best practice is to create different turnaround times for different types of applications and projects so the fact that more complex projects take longer is recognized. These turnaround times also need to be realistic and reflect current staffing. A tracking software is used to monitor these turnaround times electronically, remind staff when comments are due, and follow up when comments are behind schedule.

Recommendation 6. **Create target turnaround times for different types of projects and for staff responses by project/application type.** City staff will need to inform applicants if the target turnaround time for their project will not be met and provide them with a realistic updated timeline that they can rely upon.

Recommendation 7. **Enhance the use of tracking software to monitor turnaround times. Use the results of that tracking to periodically review and update established turnaround times to ensure they continue to be realistic and reflect current staffing.**

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Recommendation 8.   Create reminders and follow-up tools to assist staff with turnaround time requirements and standards.

Recommendation 9.   Communicate with the public using the City website when application volume will result in delay or extend average turnaround times.

Observation F.   Making effective use of Planners as project managers

Development review requires close coordination and collaboration among various departments and agencies. Plans are submitted, and comments are made by one or more reviewing agencies, which frequently require changes to the submitted plans. Depending on the changes required, other departments may need to review the revised plans and revise their comments. For example, the Fire Department or Engineering may require that a roadway be modified, which affects setbacks and parking reviewed by Planning. Poor or delayed coordination between departments can add weeks to the review process.

Applicants expressed the sentiment that it feels like there is not a City staff person responsible for keeping a project moving through the process. Although there is an assigned project manager, frontline staff comment that currently they do not have the time, or the authority, when they see a roadblock to work interdepartmentally to resolve issues and keep projects on schedule. Applicants talked about how they sometimes turned to elected officials to keep their projects moving.

It is the intent of Community Development that planners act as project managers. Efforts are underway to make the planners' project management role better understood and more robust. Making the most effective use of planners as project managers requires empowering the staff and giving them the organizational support, training, and time to fully take on the project manager role. This work is in progress but has not been fully implemented.

The best practice is that a project manager, the assigned planner, is responsible for moving the project forward by tracking turnaround times, identifying where a project may have gotten stuck, and bringing parties together to resolve issues causing delays. The project manager also serves as the applicant's point of contact for their issues throughout the entire process. To be successful, all agencies and departments involved in development review must recognize that it is the project manager's job to resolve issues and keep a project moving forward. This includes inviting the planner/ project manager to meetings on their assigned project and adding the project manager to all communications.

A project manager does not need to be an expert in every aspect of the project but should facilitate meetings with subject matter experts to keep the project moving. While not a project advocate, the project manager serves as a facilitator throughout the process, providing applicants with the necessary information and guidance for success.

Effective project management requires training. Planners may feel uneasy resolving issues outside their usual scope, such as those involving Engineering or Fire. However, learning to facilitate issue resolution without stepping on others' roles or expertise is a valuable skill that can be taught.

Recommendation 10.   Train and empower planners to effectively serve as project managers, with responsibility for tracking progress, monitoring projects, resolving issues across disciplines, and keeping the project moving based on established timelines.

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Recommendation 11.   Train project managers to ensure they serve as the main contact person for the applicant, from the determination of application completeness to the conclusion of the review process.

Recommendation 12.   Educate and expect other reviewers and applicants to utilize the planner as a project manager, including them in all communication and requests for meetings.

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Theme 2: People

Observation G.   Staffing levels are generally appropriate for the level of work required by the development review process. However, changes in expectations for expedited review may require staffing changes.

City staff provided mixed feedback about the current staffing levels for divisions involved in the development review process. While some staff believe the Community Development Department is understaffed and overloaded, others find that, overall, the department has an appropriate number of staff but struggle when there are significant fluctuations in workload caused by position vacancies and/or changes in application volumes during busier seasons. Table 1 (page 7) shows City staff who are involved in the development review process across Community Development, Engineering, Surveyor's Office, and the Legal Department.

According to Table 3, the number of applications submitted has continued to decrease since 2021, with an overall percent change in applications received of -35.5%.

Staffing issues and concerns should be addressed; however, process improvement elements have the power to significantly reduce the feeling of being overburdened. Process improvement recommendations, like those mentioned above under Theme 1: Process, will reduce workload by ensuring complete applications and providing applicants with essential information.

Staffing levels are difficult to assess until other process improvement initiatives are incorporated. Reducing review times and communication gaps could reduce the feeling that the Department is understaffed.

Applicants expressed concerns about perceived high staff turnover, whether from attrition, retiring, or promotion of internal staff into new positions. There is an applicant perception that onboarding new staff who need a period of training to be fully versed on City regulations, policies, and processes causes delays and inconsistencies.

> **Recommendation 13.   Assess the need for an additional planning position to assist City staff and developers in preparing complete applications after implementing recommended process improvements.** Potential functions of the position would include reviewing applications to ensure they contain all the necessary information needed for review, maintaining comprehensive checklists and examples to assist developers, reviewing for ADA compliance, and administering project management functions for projects that qualify for the expedited review process.

Observation H.   Opportunities exist for staff and applicants to collaborate on solution-oriented approaches to solving issues

Applicants provided many positive comments about how personable staff are and how seriously they take their work. Baker Tilly also heard and observed that staff take pride in their work and contribute meaningfully to their divisions and interdepartmentally. However, from applicant interviews and Baker Tilly observations, there is room to enhance problem-solving efforts with applicants.

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Applicants expressed that they often express roadblocks from City staff without feeling like staff help them identify a reasonable route forward. This often results in multiple application submittals by an applicant before the staff can complete their review, resulting in frustration and increased project review times. While staff are encouraged to problem solve with applicants, this does not always meet with willingness from applicants to comply with city regulations, which can result in tensions that often are elevated to departmental management or, in some cases, City leadership. There are instances where staff are presented with highly underdeveloped plans and asked to design the project for the applicant. This is not an expectation or standard for staff to uphold. However, finding opportunities to get to 'yes' with the applicant and problem solve could improve the overall perception of development staff and the City's perceived willingness to work with applicants.

Staff mentioned that when their workload volume is high, they do not feel they have the time necessary to act as project managers, brainstorm resolutions, or maintain effective communication with applicants. As a general practice, planners wait for the applicant to respond and revisit the project at that time instead of proactively following up on outstanding issues. This can delay the project timeline and result in diminished applicant experience. Addressing staffing after meaningful process improvement efforts will be necessary in order to address staff workload and ensure the departments involved in development review are appropriately staffed.

To reduce the number of excess application reviews, staff need to assist in finding solutions in addition to reviewing project plans and accompanying information. Executive leaders must lead the way in support of a solution-oriented approach to development review. Educating applicants on what is expected at the time of submission, providing tools for applicants to educate themselves, and avenues to resolve issues are all ways to ensure the development community has the knowledge and resources to solve issues.

> **Recommendation 14.   Task executive leaders with establishing an interdepartmental culture of collaboration, alternatives, identification, and timeliness.**

> **Recommendation 15.   Task department management with articulating key development goals to frontline staff.** Key goals should include front-loading information to applicants, greater interdepartmental coordination, and an emphasis on strong customer service and reducing timelines for application processing.

> **Recommendation 16.   Provide community meetings and training opportunities to continue educating the development community on the City's processes, expectations for applicants, and the newly adopted code.**

Observation I.   Gaps in staff training frustrate applicants and cause delays in review cycles and/or inaccurate interpretations of code

Continuous training and development are essential to keep staff updated on best practices and new regulations. Staff mentioned that more opportunities for training might reduce inconsistencies in code and regulation interpretation. Staff need training on new codes and clarity on where staff have discretion. Stakeholders interviewed acknowledged that there is a steep learning curve for new staff members, which often affects consistency, quality, and length of reviews. In addition, applicants pointed out that many staff members are new and unfamiliar with the extensive and newly adopted codes. For new employees, no

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matter the experience level, learning about local contexts, policies, processes, and regulations can be a lengthy undertaking.

In some instances, developers are resistant to the new code; however, City staff are directed by the code and must comply with and enforce its provisions. Consequently, applicants may perceive staff as inflexible when, in reality, staff are simply upholding the regulations they are obligated to enforce. This disconnect underscores the importance of clear communication and education about the new code to ensure all parties understand and adhere to the current standards.

Recommendation 17.   Identify opportunities to train staff through consistent and recurring training sessions on federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Recommendation 18.   Create tools and resources for staff to ensure the consistent interpretation of code. Periodic training on code interpretations is essential to consistency.

Recommendation 19.   Provide recurring community training opportunities for the development community to learn about the planning process and any updates to applicant expectations and processes.

Recommendation 20.   Create an online repository for recent code changes and how-to documents for ADA compliance.

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Theme 3: Regulations

Observation J.   Changes to City codes require training and ongoing clarification

In January 2024, the updated and substantially revised Zoning and Development Code and Transportation and Engineering Design Standards (TEDS) Manual became effective. These documents contain significant changes to requirements for developers. For example, the TEDS Manual contains new street, pedestrian, and bicycle design standards. Whenever new development regulations become effective, questions will arise about expectations for code compliance. Certain provisions of code are not always black and white; how a certain provision is interpreted often comes through application and use over time.

The best practice is that staff and applicants must be trained in the content and application of new codes. Some planners noted that there could be more training to help them become more confident about the content of these codes and how they should be applied. Planning staff noted, for example, that it is not clear how much discretion they have in applying many of the new regulations and that it takes time to work with the Department leadership to clarify the regulations. This is not unusual with a new code. Another best practice is to create a system for keeping track of interpretations of the code so the staff and developers can gain increasing clarity and consistency in the implementation of the code. Sections of the code that are found to be problematic are also tracked so they can be eliminated or revised during periodic code revisions.

Frustrations that have arisen around code interpretations are proactively being managed by Community Development staff. Staff meet weekly to discuss code interpretations and the application of issues within the new code that requires special attention and consideration. This is a period of transition for the City.

Recommendation 21.   Apply and enforce the revised Zoning and TEDS Manual

    a)   Work with the line staff in Planning and Development Engineering to determine what training is needed on these updated codes. Ensure that staff understand the discretion they have and apply these codes consistently.

    b)   Provide additional training opportunities to educate applicants on the new codes, how they are applied, and how questions of interpretation are resolved.

    c)   Track interpretations of the code that the City supports so the staff and developers gain increasing clarity about code implementation.

    d)   Continue to identify with internal and external stakeholders problematic or unclear code sections and periodically schedule them for revision or elimination.

Observation K.   The Affordable housing expedited approach required by Colorado Revised Statutes 29-32-105 need to be formally defined by the City

To meet the expedited review and action requirements for affordable housing included in Colorado Revised Statutes 29-32-105 the City needs to establish an interdepartmental team ready to get to work quickly. This interdepartmental team needs to include Planning, Public Works, Fire, the City Attorney and

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the City Surveyor. This team needs to be trained in the requirements of affordable housing regulations and empowered to advise applicants on how to create a complete application and a successful project. This group's job is to ensure interdepartmental procedures, coordination and problem solving are in place so issues can be resolved quickly and the timelines in regulations are met.

Establishing this interdepartmental team within the next few months will provide time to ensure adequate familiarity with the affordable housing regulations and the expedited process to be followed for project approval outlined in Colorado Revised Statutes 29-32-105. All members of this team can start to put together examples of complete applications and documents for housing projects. It would be helpful for the City Attorney to provide examples of CC&Rs, for example, and for the City Surveyor to provide examples of good surveys. This team, because it is charged with ensuring these examples of complete applications and documents are available for affordable housing projects, plays an important role in the gathering of the documents referenced in Recommendation 1. These examples will be useful information going forward for all developers.

Affordable Housing projects also need day-to-day guidance. For each affordable housing project, an experienced staff planner should be assigned and empowered as a project manager who is personally responsible for keeping these projects on schedule and convening the interdepartmental team, in whole or in part, as needed to resolve issues and keep the project moving forward. This use of planners as strong and enabled project managers for affordable housing will provide planners with experience in the interdepartmental project management role.

Colorado Revised Statutes 29-32-105 has a ninety-calendar-day requirement for each application that begins when the City determines that an application is complete and must result in a final decision by day ninety. Review by staff of the content of application submittals before they are determined to be complete, as described previously in this report, is essential to conform to the ninety-day timeline. The goal is to complete the City staff review in one round of comments, so the applicant has time to make any required revisions and receive a final decision within ninety days.

Colorado Revised Statutes 29-32-105 allows local agencies to create flexibility with possible extensions. The statute provides extension options that the City of Grand Junction can add to the overall ninety-calendar-day timeframe. The first option is a ninety-calendar-day extension (Paragraph (2)(b)) that a developer may request to address comments from an outside agency with approval authority over the application. There is a second extension option (Paragraph (2)(c)) that a local government can enact to review modifications to an application. While the flexibility these extension options provide is useful, the spirit of this statute is to expedite affordable housing, so these extensions are best used for unique circumstances outside the control of the city or the applicant. The interdepartmental team should adopt internal policies that determine how the City wants to administer the extensions allowed in paragraphs 2(b) and 2(c) of this statute.

Developers of market-rate housing expressed the concern that their projects would move more slowly because affordable housing projects would be given priority and an expedited process. This report focuses on changes to expedite projects and improve internal coordination that will start with affordable housing projects but will become templates for all projects to reduce the protracted review timelines that staff and developers are currently experiencing.

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Recommendation 22. Establish an interdepartmental affordable housing development review team, including the City Attorney and the City Surveyor, to expedite affordable housing application reviews. This group should ensure that interdepartmental coordination and problem solving are in place so issues can be resolved quickly, affordable housing is expedited, and both City policy and State requirements are met.

Recommendation 23. Appoint this interdepartmental team within the next two months to allow time for training and to agree on operations and procedures for working together to ensure the deadlines for expedited/fast-track project approvals are met.

    a) Create a protocol for making the determination for eligibility into the expedited review process based on the City and State specifications for the percentage of affordable housing.

    b) Oversee the processing of affordable housing projects that conform to the requirements of Colorado Article 32 and the City Resolutions. Decide how the City wants to administer the extensions to the ninety-day review period allowed in paragraphs 2(b) and 2(c) of Colorado Revised Statutes 29-32-105. These extensions provide useful flexibility but should be used only for unique circumstances.

    c) Ensure the availability of easy-to-use checklists, examples of complete applications, and documents required for affordable housing projects to assist affordable housing developers with providing a complete application.

    d) Act to overcome delays that could impede the City's ability to meet the expedited timelines in Revised Statutes 29-32-105 and the City Resolutions.

    e) Coordinate with outside review agencies to set expectations for fast-tracking reviews.

    f) Annually refine and improve expedited review operations and procedures.

Recommendation 24. Assign an experienced planner to act as project manager for each affordable housing project. The planning project manager will provide day-to-day guidance for affordable housing developers, keep the project on schedule, and convene the interdepartmental team, in whole or in part, to resolve issues quickly.

    a) Meet with developers to set expectations.

    b) Identify any items within the application that may need to be scheduled for a public hearing, such as a vacation of easement or revocable permit.

Recommendation 25. Determine that an affordable housing application is complete only after staff review the content of the submittal. The completeness review must ensure that a submittal contains all the information needed for staff to complete a comprehensive review in round one and provide a final decision to the applicant within 90 days after the City determines the application is complete.

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Recommendation 26. Ensure that the expedited staff review requirements of Resolution No. 97-22 for affordable housing projects are met. These required timelines are the initial staff review of applications within 30 days of a complete submittal with subsequent submittal issues within 15 days of resubmittal.

Recommendation 27. Prioritize affordable housing developments on the Planning Commission schedule and agenda and those with proposed conditional uses or other use permit requests that require Planning Commission consideration. Doing so will ensure that a decision can be reached within the ninety days required by Colorado Statute 32.

     a) Advise the Planning Commission about the expediting requirements of Colorado Statute 32 so the Commission and the public understand why affordable housing projects are given this priority.

Recommendation 28. Communicate to non-affordable housing applicants the legal requirements and rationale for expedited review of affordable housing developments.

Recommendation 29. Inform all applicants that process changes for reducing review times for affordable housing applications will also be used to streamline review cycle times for other application/project types.

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Theme 4: Technology

Observation L. Applicants appreciate online submittals and the use of digital tools in the application submission and plan review process

In general, applicants were very appreciative of the online submittal process and online portal. However, there were some suggestions for improvement to streamline the online submittal process. Issues with the current technology systems included a lack of acknowledgment of submissions and inconsistent use of document management systems. One interviewee mentioned that they used to see documents in the system with expected comment dates, but now they receive emailed comments that are not specific or numbered.

The City uses EnerGov for its planning applications and Bluebeam for the internal review of project plans. EnerGov has all the functionality of a modern planning/permitting system, and the City is actively using this functionality. One area of consideration would be to incorporate a public-facing dashboard that would provide information on the total number of applications, permits, review times, inspections, and other information the public finds important. Another would be to have department leaders run performance reports on a recurring basis. The focus of these reports is to see how long specific tasks are taking to perform and compare the length of time against the City's stated standards. These reports can also be used to identify applications that are taking longer and pivoting resources to promptly resolve outstanding issues.

Recommendation 30.   Produce additional applicant-facing tools, application guides, and resources and publish on the Community Development website specifically discussing the online portal.

Recommendation 31.   Develop and run recurring reports to analyze cycle times and identify applications that are held up in the process.

Recommendation 32.   Work within the EnerGov system to provide notifications to applicants when applications have been received, processed, etc.

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Attachment A: Employee Interview Themes

People

1. **Workload and Staffing**

   - **Description:** Workload and staffing levels impact the efficiency and effectiveness of the permitting process. High volumes of projects and insufficient staffing can lead to delays and reduced quality of service. Some staff feel overburdened by the current workload and attribute timeline delays to staffing challenges. Staff reflected that staffing levels should be addressed in order to successfully comply with Proposition 123. Some staff indicated that having a better way of managing high and low periods of workload will help reduce staff stress.

2. **Training and Development**

   - **Description:** Continuous training and development are essential to keep staff updated on best practices and new regulations. Staff mentioned that more opportunities for training might reduce inconsistencies in code and regulation interpretation.

3. **Interdepartmental Communication**

   - **Description:** Effective communication between departments is a recurring theme. Employees noted that while there are regular meetings, such as the Development Engineering Review meeting, there are still gaps in communication that lead to inefficiencies. Oftentimes, staff are waiting for meetings to get their questions answered, thereby causing delays.

     o Staff expressed that there often feels like a delay in decision making as staff do not feel empowered to make the decision themselves and must rely on others. Many times, the opportunities to discuss or come up with a decision occur in weekly meetings, but oftentimes, not all issues are addressed, leading to further delays in projects.

Process

4. **Permitting and Plan Review**

   - **Description:** The efficiency and transparency of the permitting and plan review process are critical. Applicants often face delays and multiple rounds of comments. Staff receive significant pushback from applicants on code requirements and exceptions to rules, causing delays in processing applications. In addition to low-quality submittals, staff expressed frustration with applicants not implementing or acknowledging comments in previous rounds, requiring staff to continue to make the same comments over multiple rounds of review.

5. **Low-Quality Submittals**

   - **Description:** Quality of submittal was highlighted as a large pain point in the process and consistently identified across interviews. Staff identified that the current application acceptance process frequently allows for applications that are missing information or contain a significant amount of low-quality information. Poor-quality submittals lead to excessive rounds of reviews and slow progress through projects. Staff feel the initial intake process can be improved to ensure only complete and accurate submittals are accepted. Staff suggested more comprehensive checklists and more staff empowerment to reject bad submittals. Comprehensive submittal checklists include drawing standards, line standards, paper sizes, etc.

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6. **Effective Applicant Communication**

   - **Description:** Staff feel there is an opportunity to better educate the applicant at the start of their engagement with the City. There often feels like a lack of knowledge about what the City expects from applicants, causing frustrations.

Technology

7. **System Integration and Usability**

   - **Description:** The technology systems in use, such as EnerGov, have strengths and weaknesses. While they facilitate online submittals and tracking, there are significant issues with integration and usability leading to manual data entry and tracking, which is time consuming and prone to errors. Improving system integration could enhance efficiency and reduce the administrative burden on staff.

8. **Self-Service Portal**

   - Description: The self-service portal for applicants is not user-friendly, leading to a preference for in-person assistance or submissions for certain application types.

February 28, 2025

Attachment B: Applicant Interview Themes

People

1. **Responsiveness and Communication**

   - **Description:** Applicants frequently mentioned that while some City staff are responsive and helpful, others are not. There are significant delays in communication, with some staff taking weeks to respond to emails or set up meetings. One interviewee noted that it took over 100 days to get comments back on a project, and another mentioned that vacations of multiple staff members cause delays without any backup.

2. **Staff Knowledge and Training**

   - **Description:** There is a concern about the high turnover of staff and the resulting lack of experience and knowledge. New staff members often have a steep learning curve, which affects the consistency and quality of reviews. Applicants pointed out that many staff members are new and unfamiliar with the extensive and newly adopted codes, leading to inconsistent and sometimes unnecessary comments.

3. **Staffing Levels**

   - **Description:** Applicants expressed concerns about high staff turnover and insufficient staffing levels within the City's departments. They noted that many staff members are new and face a steep learning curve, which affects the consistency and quality of reviews. The frequent turnover leads to a lack of experience and knowledge, resulting in inconsistent and sometimes unnecessary comments. Additionally, the understaffing issue means that the existing staff are often overwhelmed, contributing to delays and inefficiencies in the review process.

Process

4. **Process Efficiency and Predictability**

   - **Description:** The development review process is seen as unpredictable and inefficient, with many projects experiencing significant delays. There is a lack of clear timelines and accountability, which frustrates applicants. Some applicants indicated that they are given an estimate of the timeline at the start of their engagement, but that timeline is rarely followed. One interviewee mentioned that they have waited for City comments for 12 to 14 weeks. Applicants mentioned that delays in reviews could be due to being short staffed and what appears to be high staff turnover.

5. **Interdepartmental Coordination**

   - **Description:** There is a significant issue with siloed departments and a lack of coordination between them, leading to conflicting comments and delays. Applicants highlighted that the City Attorney's Office and City Surveyor are major sources of delays and that there is no one in charge to ensure these departments meet their timelines. Applicants commented that the multiple departments that work across development have separate processes and feel largely disconnected and that Community Development does not have enough power to move other departments along.

6. **Plan Review Comments**

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for Expedited Review of Affordable Housing - Analysis and Recommendations

February 28, 2025

- **Description:** Applicants expressed frustration with the significant and seemingly unending comments during the review process. They noted that instead of a comprehensive first review followed by dwindling numbers of comments, they often receive new and conflicting comments in subsequent rounds. This leads to multiple rounds of revisions, with some projects requiring up to ten rounds of review. The lack of consistency and the introduction of new comments in later stages create delays and inefficiencies, making the process unpredictable and frustrating for applicants.

7. **Source of Authority**

- **Description:** Applicants feel they are frequently asked to do things or supply information that is not required by code. Applicants feel that plans are used as a repository of information and are full of extra information that is not necessary. In addition, some Applicants feel the City oversteps in the commentary about the design and visual appearance of buildings, not the technical regulations.

Technology

8. **Use of Technology in the Review Process**

- **Description:** In general, applicants were very appreciative of the online submittal process and online portal. However, there were some suggestions for improvement to streamline the online submittal process. Issues with the current technology systems included a lack of acknowledgment of submissions and inconsistent use of document management systems. One interviewee mentioned that they used to see documents in the system with expected comment dates, but now they receive emailed comments that are not specific or numbered. Improving the existing technology systems to provide real-time updates and acknowledgments of submissions could enhance efficiency. Ensuring all comments are specific, numbered, and directly linked to the relevant sections of the submitted documents is also recommended.

9. **Document Management and Tracking**

- **Description:** The current document management system is not user-friendly and leads to inefficiencies. There is a need for better tracking and organization of documents to streamline the review process. Applicants noted that they receive lists of comments without specific markups and that the system does not provide clear updates on the status of their submissions. Upgrading the document management system to include features like automatic document naming, version control, and clear status updates, along with providing training for both staff and users, could address these issues.

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for Expedited Review of Affordable Housing - Analysis and Recommendations

February 28, 2025

Attachment C: Current-State Process Maps

City of Grand Junction - Development Services Process Improvement

Introduction

A process map series is a visual guide that outlines the steps involved in various procedures, helping users understand and navigate complex workflows. It works by breaking down each process into clear, manageable stages, providing detailed instructions and identifying key personnel involved. This approach ensures consistency, efficiency, and compliance with regulations. The impact of using process maps includes improved communication, streamlined operations, and enhanced overall productivity. Maps are meant to align departments on their shared coordination and communication, highlight inefficiencies, and track use of technology in the process.

The following process maps were prepared through a series of process mapping workshops with Grand Junction staff and Baker Tilly in October 2024. The "as-is" maps depict current process steps across key divisions and key phases of the process.

Map 1 – Subdivision New Construction
Map 2 – Multi-Family New Construction

Each process map includes some or all of the following symbols: 1) the oval denotes the beginning, end or completion point in a process; 2) the square represents a process activity or step; 3) the diamond is a decision point; 4) the picture window represents a sub-process and has additional activity steps and decision points that are not shown on the process map; 5) an activity or shape with a dashed line signifies a key customer touchpoint; and 6) the banner is a process step that involves more than one party. 7) The pentagon is an off-sheet connector that links a process step to a step on another page; and 8) a circle indicates an on-sheet reference.

Process Map Symbols

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Beginning/End/Completion	Activity	Decision Point	Sub-Process	Key Customer Touchpoints	Step involving multiple parties	Off-Sheet Reference	On Sheet Reference

Legend

- Green Shading — indicates predevelopment review process.
- Blue Shading — indicates concurrent plan reviews conducted by all required reviewers, per pre-established workflows.
- Orange Shading — indicates a workflow managed by email.
- Yellow Shading — indicates a workflow that involves EnerGov/Bluebeam.
- Gray Shading — indicates a sub-process.
- Purple Shading — indicates a manual tracking process.

Subdivision New Construction Workflow (Map 1 – Page 1 of 8)

Application Interest and General Meeting

Applicant

Potential applicant inquires about project → Applicant contacts Planning staff with initial interest via phone call or email

Applicant submits Pre-Application checklist through online portal[6] → Applicant pays fees prior to Pre-Application meeting → A

Planning Services Division

Planning Technician provides initial information[1] → Planning Technician notifies applicant of general meeting (optional)[2] → Does Applicant proceed with a general meeting?

No → Planning Technician provides information on next steps → Planning Technician prepares checklist → Planner notifies Applicant of Pre-Application (required)[4] → Does Applicant move forward?[5]

Yes → Planning Technician schedules general meeting with Applicant → Planners/Dev. Engineering review general meeting[3]

Planner provide checklist and notes from meeting to Applicant

Planner preps checklist and reviews with the Development Engineering

Yes → (to Applicant submits Pre-Application checklist)

No → Project Ends

Various Departments (Planning & Development, Engineering)

Planning hosts general meeting → Review agencies provide comments to Planning in EnerGov

Notes:
1. General inquiry emails and calls are received by a variety of planning staff including planning technicians and planners. Starting January 1, 2025 interactions will be filtered through the assigned planner of the day (POD).
2. General meetings are optional for applicants and applicants are not required to bring anything to the meeting. General meetings are meant to provide feedback on a proposed idea.
3. This action occurs 2-weeks prior to the general meeting.
4. Pre-Application checklists and meetings are required prior to submitting a planning application.
5. Many applicants do not move forward at this point.
6. Pre-application checklists require that applicants submit contact information, pre-application fee, project narrative, conceptual site plan, and subdivision sketch. Optional items for submission include pedestrian bike analysis, drainage evaluation, traffic impact study, Geotech analysis, preliminary tree survey and, preliminary wetlands/floodplain analysis.

Subdivision New Construction Workflow (Map 1 – Page 2 of 8)

Pre-Application Submission

Applicant

- Applicant submits notice of neighborhood meeting for review to Planner
- Applicant hosts neighborhood meeting[3]
- Applicant submits application in EnerGov
- B

Planning Services Division

- A
- Development Coordinator reviews Pre-Application submittal
- Development Coordinator routes checklist to reviewing departments
- Development Coordinator notifies reviewing departments via email
- Planner reviews comments
- Are all Pre-Application comments in?
  - Yes → Planner sends comments to applicant 24 hours prior to Pre-Application meeting
  - No → Planner contacts departments to gather missing comments[3]
- Planner sends revised and finalized comments to applicant via email, if needed[2]
- Planner approves date and time of neighborhood meeting

Various Departments (Planning, Development, Engineering, & Fire)

- Reviewing departments review submittal
- Reviewing departments generate comments
- Reviewing departments submit comments in EnerGov
- Planning hosts Pre-Application meeting[1]

Notes:
1. Pre-application meeting attendees include Planning, Engineering, and Fire. Other Departments may attend if deemed necessary by the City or requested by Applicant.
2. On average, staff return Pre-Application checklist comments withing 2-3 weeks of submittal.
3. Neighborhood meeting is an informational meeting to the community and is required by the City. Notice must be mailed out 10 days prior to meeting within 500 ft of property.

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Subdivision New Construction Workflow (Map 1 – Page 3 of 8)

Planning Application Intake and Review

Applicant

B

Applicant posts signs at site and sends photos to Planning[1]

Applicant submits requested information

Applicant reviews comments, submits revised plans, and responses to comments in EnerGov

C

Planning Services Division

Development Coordinator reviews application against checklist

Is application complete and ADA compliant?[2]

No → Development Coordinator requests missing information via email

Yes → Development Coordinator processes application in EnerGov and sends email to check Bluebeam[3]

Is legal review required?[4]

Yes → Submit HighQ request → Planner incorporates legal comments into review

No →

Development Coordinator checks EnerGov daily for updates

Are all reviews complete?

Yes → Development Coordinator organizes comments → Development Coordinator sends comments to Planner via email → Planner sends comments to applicant via email

No → Development Coordinator / Planner requests missing comments

Various Departments (Planning, Development, Engineering, Fire & External Agencies)

Reviewing departments and agencies conduct review of application

Reviewing departments and agencies submit markups in Bluebeam (if applicable)

Reviewing departments and agencies submit comments in EnerGov

Notes:
1. Signs must be posted for entire review period.
2. If all the required documents are included and ADA compliant, the application is deemed complete.
3. The Development Coordinator sends the review request via email to the reviewing departments and agencies. These departments and agencies then receive the email and are responsible for checking Bluebeam for the necessary documents and information.
4. The planner determines if legal review is necessary in EnerGov.

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Subdivision New Construction Workflow (Map 1 – Page 4 of 8)

Planning Application Review and Approval

Applicant

Applicant reviews comments and resubmits

Planning Services Division

C

Development Coordinator reviews resubmittal

Development Coordinator emails review requests and departments check Bluebeam[2]

Is legal review required?[3]

Yes

Submit HighQ request

Planner incorporates legal comments into review

No

Development Coordinator checks EnerGov daily for updates

Does the application comply with city regulations?

No — Development Coordinator organizes comments → Development Coordinator sends comments to Planner → Planner sends comments to applicant via email

Yes — Planner issues decision letter approving the site plan via email → If needed, create Development Improvement Agreement → Planner updates project status, checks documents are uploaded, and updates workflow → D

Various Departments (Planning, Dev. Engineering, Fire & External Agencies)

Reviewing departments and agencies conduct review of application → Conduct internal discussion to identify solutions to remaining comments → Reviewing departments and agencies submit markups in Bluebeam (if applicable) → Reviewing departments and agencies submit comments in EnerGov

Notes:
1. If all the required documents are included and ADA compliant, the application is deemed complete.
2. The Development Coordinator sends the review request via email to the reviewing departments and agencies. These departments and agencies then receive the email and are responsible for checking Bluebeam for the necessary documents and information.
3. The planner determines if legal review is necessary in EnerGov.

City of Grand Junction - Development Services Process Improvement

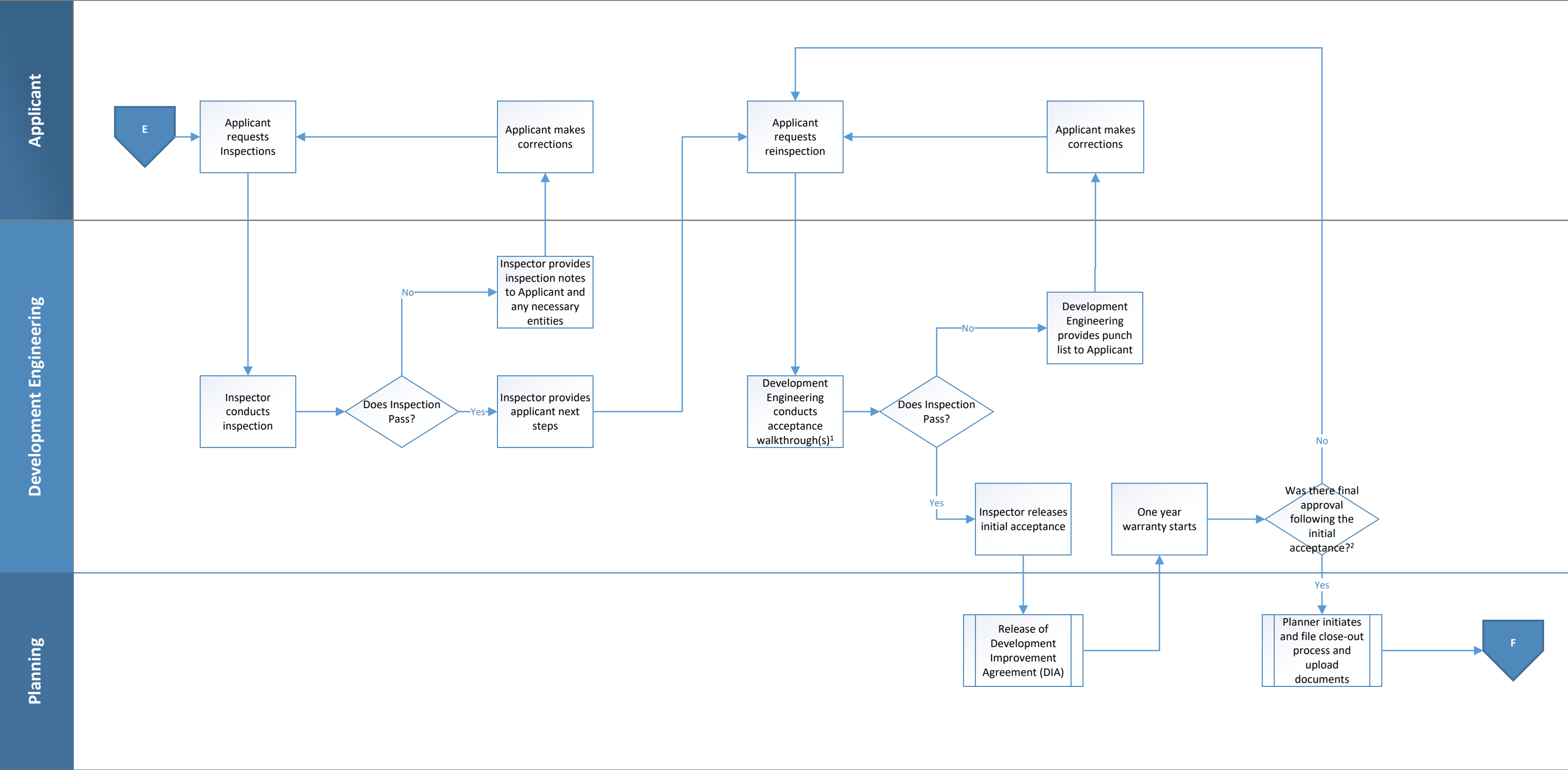**bakertilly**

Planning Clearance and Pre-Construction Meeting

Notes:
1. The plans are already signed by the appropriate utilities at this time.
2. The Pre-Construction Meeting is attended by Transportation, Engineering, Stormwater and MC.

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Subdivision Construction Workflow (Map 1 – Page 6 of 8)

Inspections

Applicant

E → Applicant requests Inspections

Applicant makes corrections

Applicant requests reinspection

Applicant makes corrections

Development Engineering

Inspector provides inspection notes to Applicant and any necessary entities

Development Engineering provides punch list to Applicant

Inspector conducts inspection → Does Inspection Pass? → No → (to Inspector provides inspection notes)

Does Inspection Pass? → Yes → Inspector provides applicant next steps

Development Engineering conducts acceptance walkthrough(s)[1] → Does Inspection Pass? → No → Development Engineering provides punch list to Applicant

Does Inspection Pass? → Yes → Inspector releases initial acceptance

One year warranty starts

Was there final approval following the initial acceptance?[2] → No / Yes

Planning

Release of Development Improvement Agreement (DIA)

Planner initiates and file close-out process and upload documents → F

Notes:
1. There is an initial walkthrough, followed by a final walkthrough. Two are required.
2. Upon initial acceptance, the release of DIA (initially reduced to 20% or an appropriate level) is executed, and the one-year warranty period commences. This process is repeated to achieve final acceptance, after which the Planner initiates the close-out procedure.
3. Plat can be recorded prior to construction on overall subdivision being complete, provided the Applicant provides proper security. This map is expressed in a linear fashion for visualization purposes, however, the plat recording steps might occur simultaneously or one after another depending on Applicant's progress and preference.

Subdivision New Construction Workflow (Map 1 – Page 7 of 8)
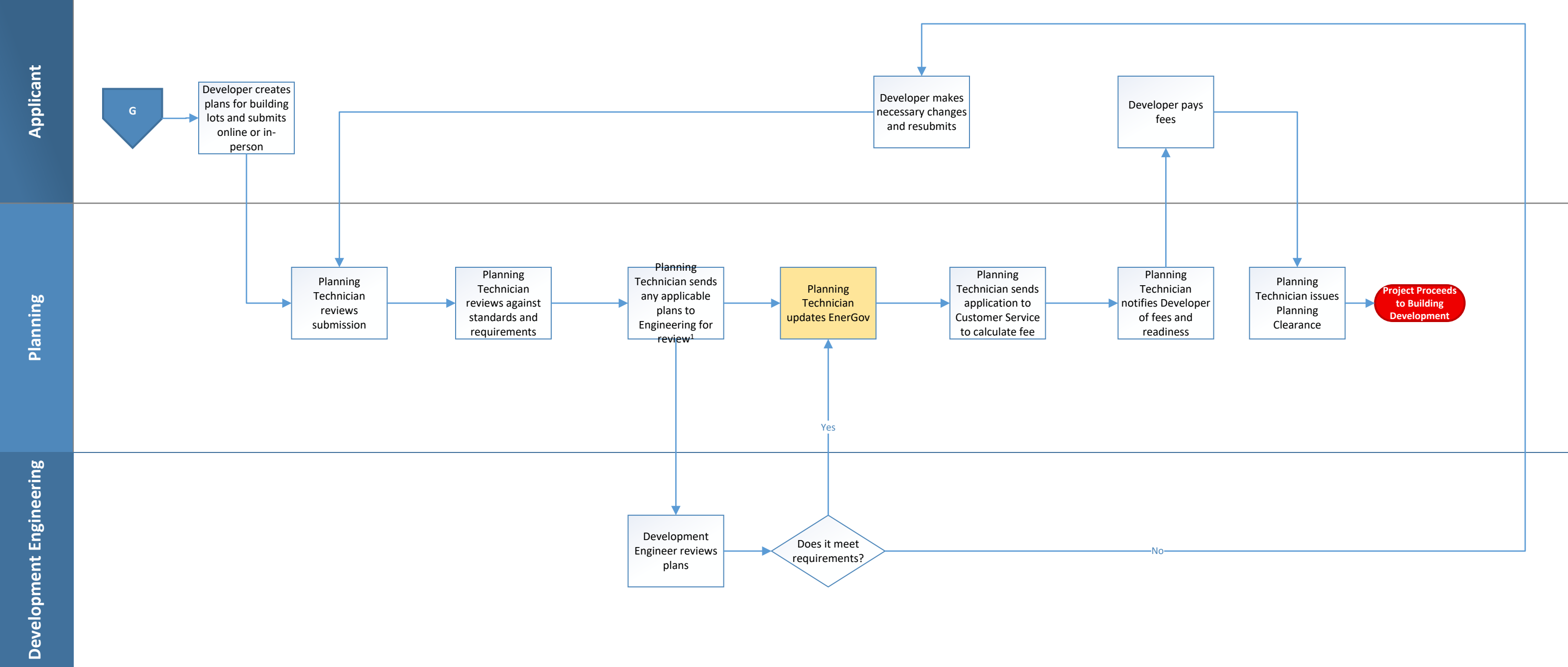
Mylar Review and Recording
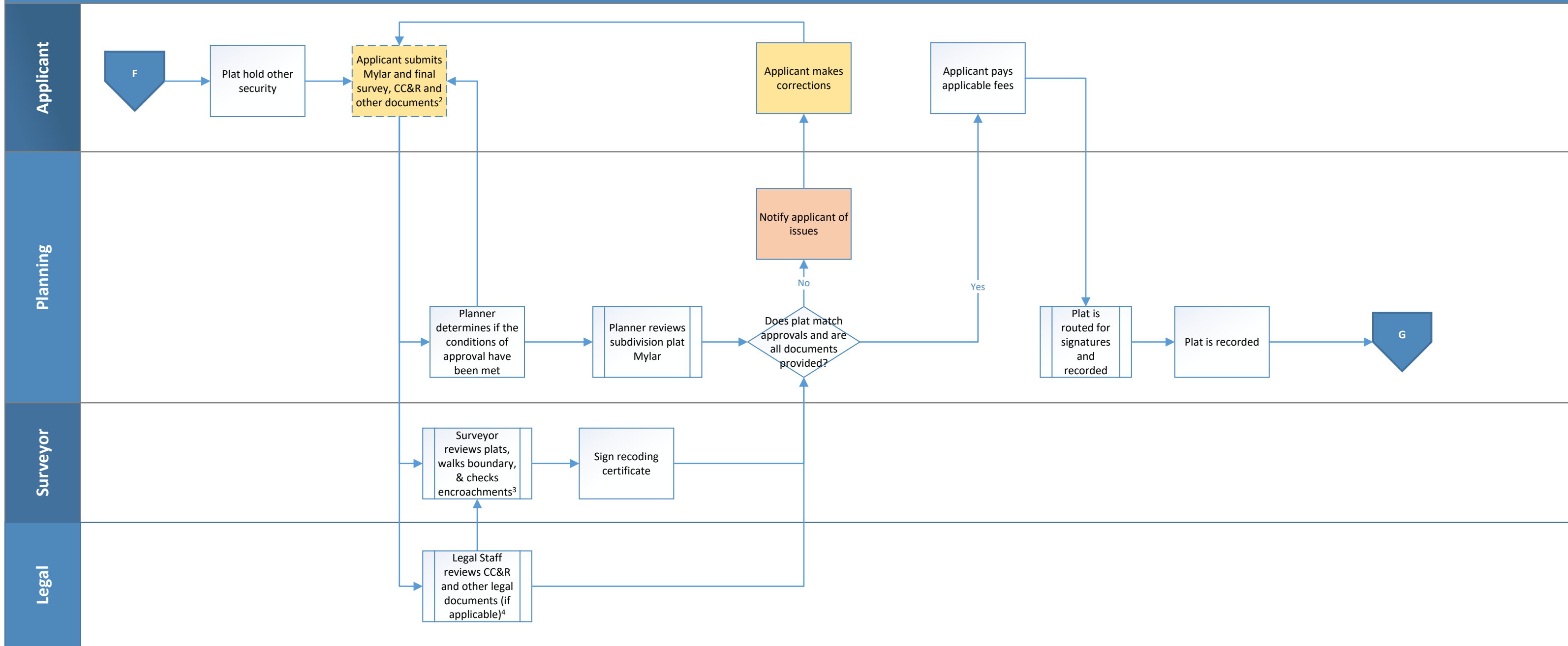
Notes:

1. Plat can be recorded prior to construction on overall subdivision being completed, provided proper security is given. This process is "next" in the process, but it is not contingent on previous steps being completed.

2. Applicant has two years to record plats. Sometimes applicants will hold off recording plats for 6 months to a year. There are examples where applicants begin infrastructure and civil construction but have never recorded plats, allowing them to abandon the construction midway.

3. The Surveyor is not completing these tasks simultaneously.

4. Other legal documents that Legal may need to review include covenants, maintenance agreements, and guarantees of public improvements.

Subdivision New Construction Workflow (Map 1 – Page 8 of 8)

Planning Clearance

Applicant

- G
- Developer creates plans for building lots and submits online or in-person
- Developer makes necessary changes and resubmits
- Developer pays fees

Planning

- Planning Technician reviews submission
- Planning Technician reviews against standards and requirements
- Planning Technician sends any applicable plans to Engineering for review[1]
- Planning Technician updates EnerGov
- Planning Technician sends application to Customer Service to calculate fee
- Planning Technician notifies Developer of fees and readiness
- Planning Technician issues Planning Clearance
- **Project Proceeds to Building Development**

Development Engineering

- Development Engineer reviews plans
- Does it meet requirements?
  - Yes
  - No

Notes:
1. This includes grading plan, floodplain, corner lots, etc.
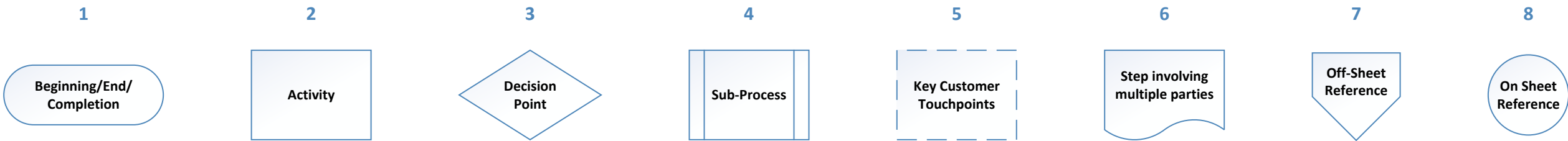
As-Is Workflow Process Maps

Introduction

A process map series is a visual guide that outlines the steps involved in various procedures, helping users understand and navigate complex workflows. It works by breaking down each process into clear, manageable stages, providing detailed instructions and identifying key personnel involved. This approach ensures consistency, efficiency, and compliance with regulations. The impact of using process maps includes improved communication, streamlined operations, and enhanced overall productivity. Maps are meant to align departments on their shared coordination and communication, highlight inefficiencies, and track use of technology in the process.

The following process maps were prepared through a series of process mapping workshops with Grand Junction staff and Baker Tilly in October 2024. The "as-is" maps depict current process steps across key divisions and key phases of the process.

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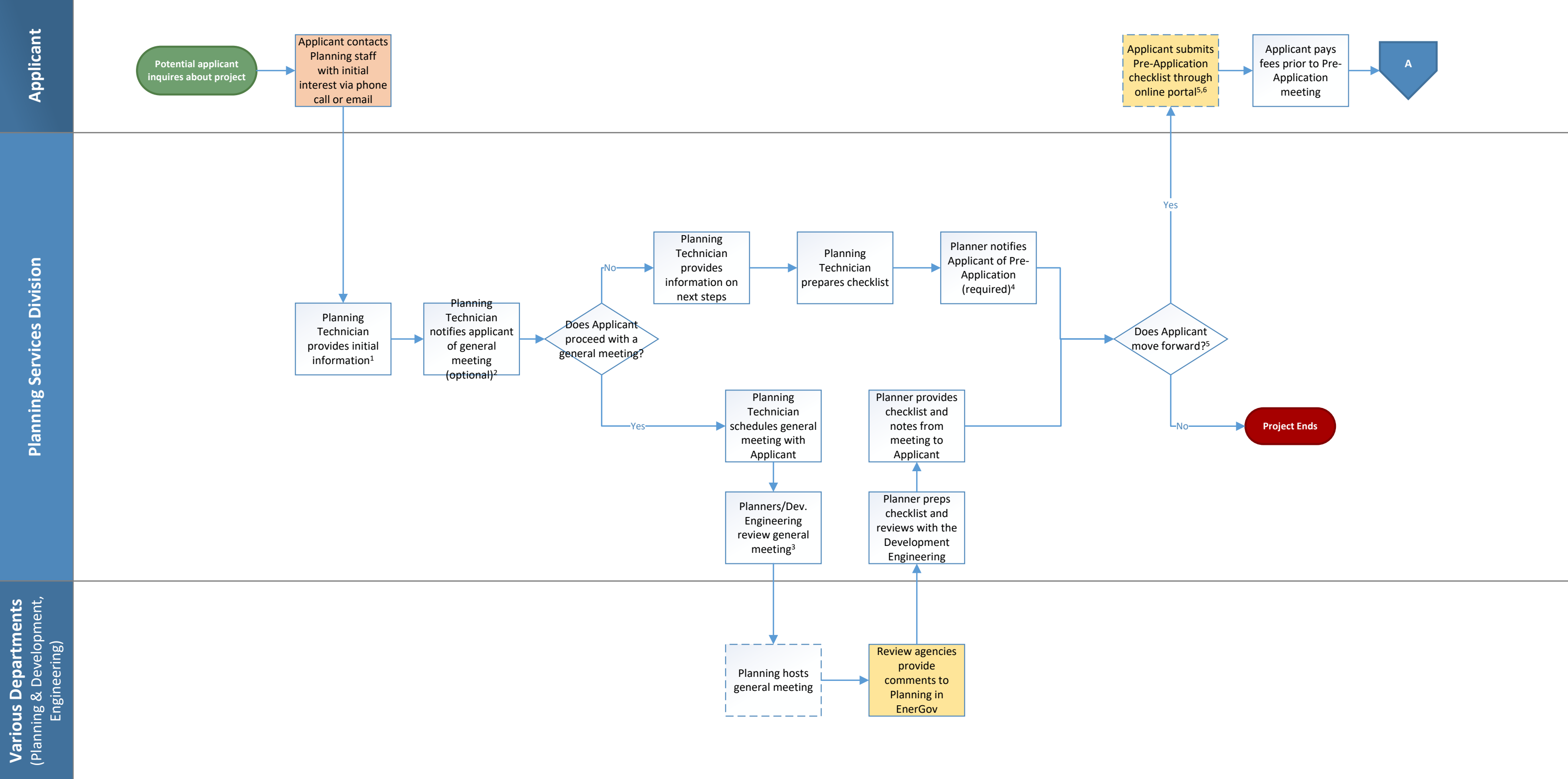
Process Map Symbols

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Beginning/End/ Completion	Activity	Decision Point	Sub-Process	Key Customer Touchpoints	Step involving multiple parties	Off-Sheet Reference	On Sheet Reference

Legend
- Green Shading — indicates predevelopment review process.
- Blue Shading — indicates concurrent plan reviews conducted by all required reviewers, per pre-established workflows.
- Orange Shading — indicates a workflow managed by email.
- Yellow Shading — indicates a workflow that involves EnerGov/Bluebeam.
- Gray Shading — indicates a sub-process.
- Purple Shading — indicates a manual tracking process.

City of Grand Junction - Development Services Process Improvement

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Multi Family New Construction Workflow (Map 2 – Page 1 of 6)

Application Interest and General Meeting

Applicant

- Potential applicant inquires about project
- Applicant contacts Planning staff with initial interest via phone call or email
- Applicant submits Pre-Application checklist through online portal[5,6]
- Applicant pays fees prior to Pre-Application meeting
- A

Planning Services Division

- Planning Technician provides initial information[1]
- Planning Technician notifies applicant of general meeting (optional)[2]
- Does Applicant proceed with a general meeting?
  - No → Planning Technician provides information on next steps → Planning Technician prepares checklist → Planner notifies Applicant of Pre-Application (required)[4]
  - Yes → Planning Technician schedules general meeting with Applicant → Planners/Dev. Engineering review general meeting[3]
- Planner provides checklist and notes from meeting to Applicant
- Planner preps checklist and reviews with the Development Engineering
- Does Applicant move forward?[5]
  - Yes → Applicant submits Pre-Application checklist
  - No → Project Ends

Various Departments (Planning & Development, Engineering)
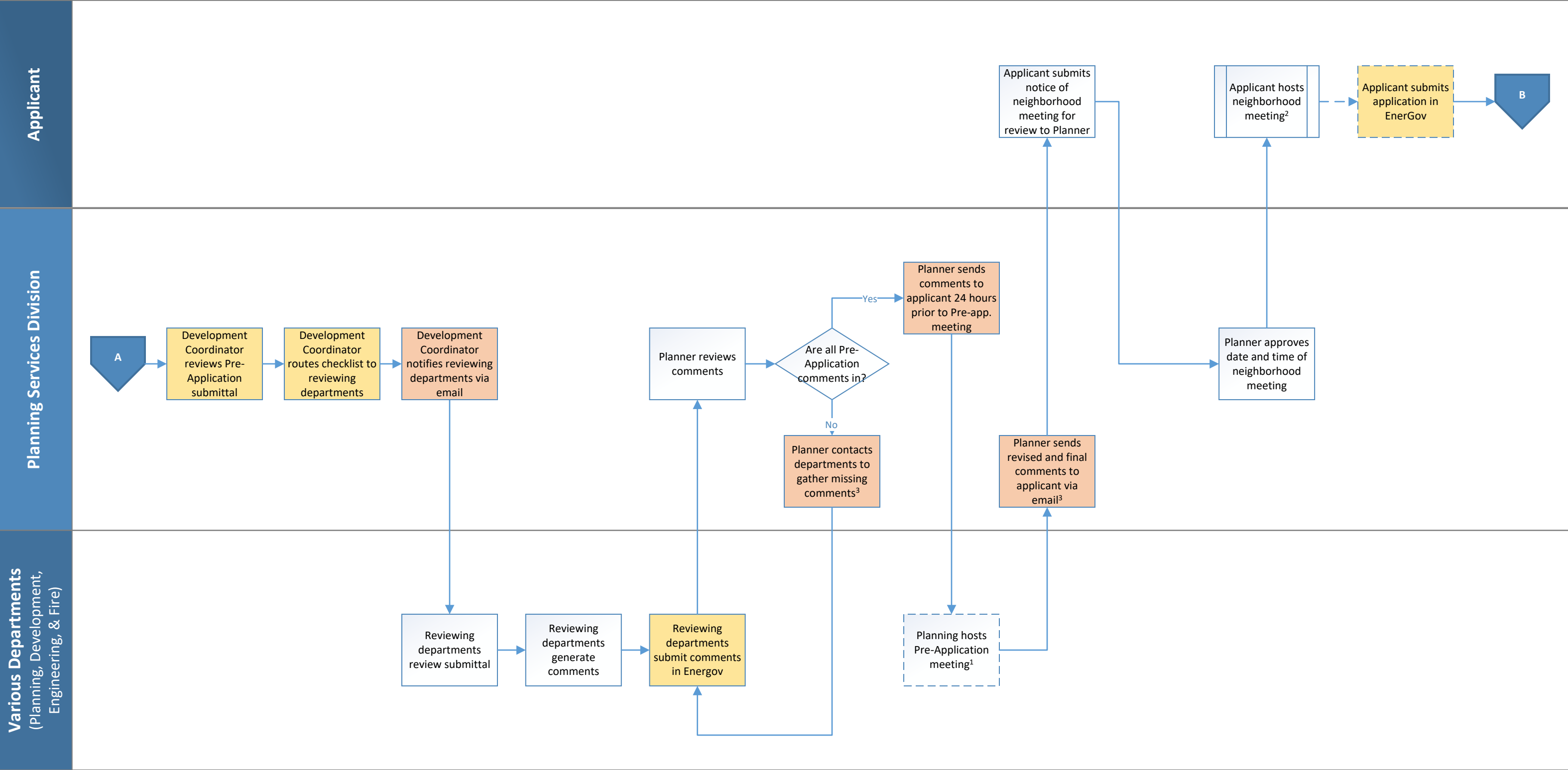
- Planning hosts general meeting
- Review agencies provide comments to Planning in EnerGov

Notes:
1. General inquiry emails and calls are received by a variety of planning staff including planning technicians and planners. Starting January 1, 2025 interactions will be filtered through the assigned planner of the day (POD).
2. General meetings are optional for applicants and applicants are not required to bring anything to the meeting. General meetings are meant to provide feedback on a proposed idea.
3. This action occurs 2-weeks prior to the general meeting.
4. Pre-Application checklists and meetings are required prior to submitting a planning application.
5. Many applicants do not move forward at this point.
6. Pre-application checklists require that applicants submit contact information, pre-application fee, project narrative, conceptual site plan, and subdivision sketch. Optional items for submission include pedestrian bike analysis, drainage evaluation, traffic impact study, Geotech analysis, preliminary tree survey and, preliminary wetlands/floodplain analysis.

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## Multi Family New Construction Workflow (Map 2 – Page 2 of 6)

Pre-Application Submission

Applicant

Applicant submits notice of neighborhood meeting for review to Planner

Applicant hosts neighborhood meeting[2]

Applicant submits application in EnerGov

B

Planning Services Division

A

Development Coordinator reviews Pre-Application submittal

Development Coordinator routes checklist to reviewing departments

Development Coordinator notifies reviewing departments via email

Planner reviews comments

Are all Pre-Application comments in?

Yes → Planner sends comments to applicant 24 hours prior to Pre-app. meeting

No → Planner contacts departments to gather missing comments[3]

Planner sends revised and final comments to applicant via email[3]

Planner approves date and time of neighborhood meeting

Various Departments (Planning, Development, Engineering, & Fire)

Reviewing departments review submittal

Reviewing departments generate comments

Reviewing departments submit comments in Energov

Planning hosts Pre-Application meeting[1]

Notes:
1. Pre-application meeting attendees include Planning, Engineering, and Fire. Other Departments may attend if deemed necessary by the City or requested by Applicant.
2. Neighborhood meeting is an informational meeting to the community and is required by the City. A date and time will be sent for review, once the date and time are approved, a mailing list can be requested. Notice must be mailed out 10 days prior to meeting within 500 feet of property.
3. On average, staff return Pre-Application checklist comments withing 2-3 weeks of submittal. Revised and finalized comments are sent on an as-needed basis and are not provided routinely.

Multi Family New Construction Workflow (Map 2 – Page 3 of 6)

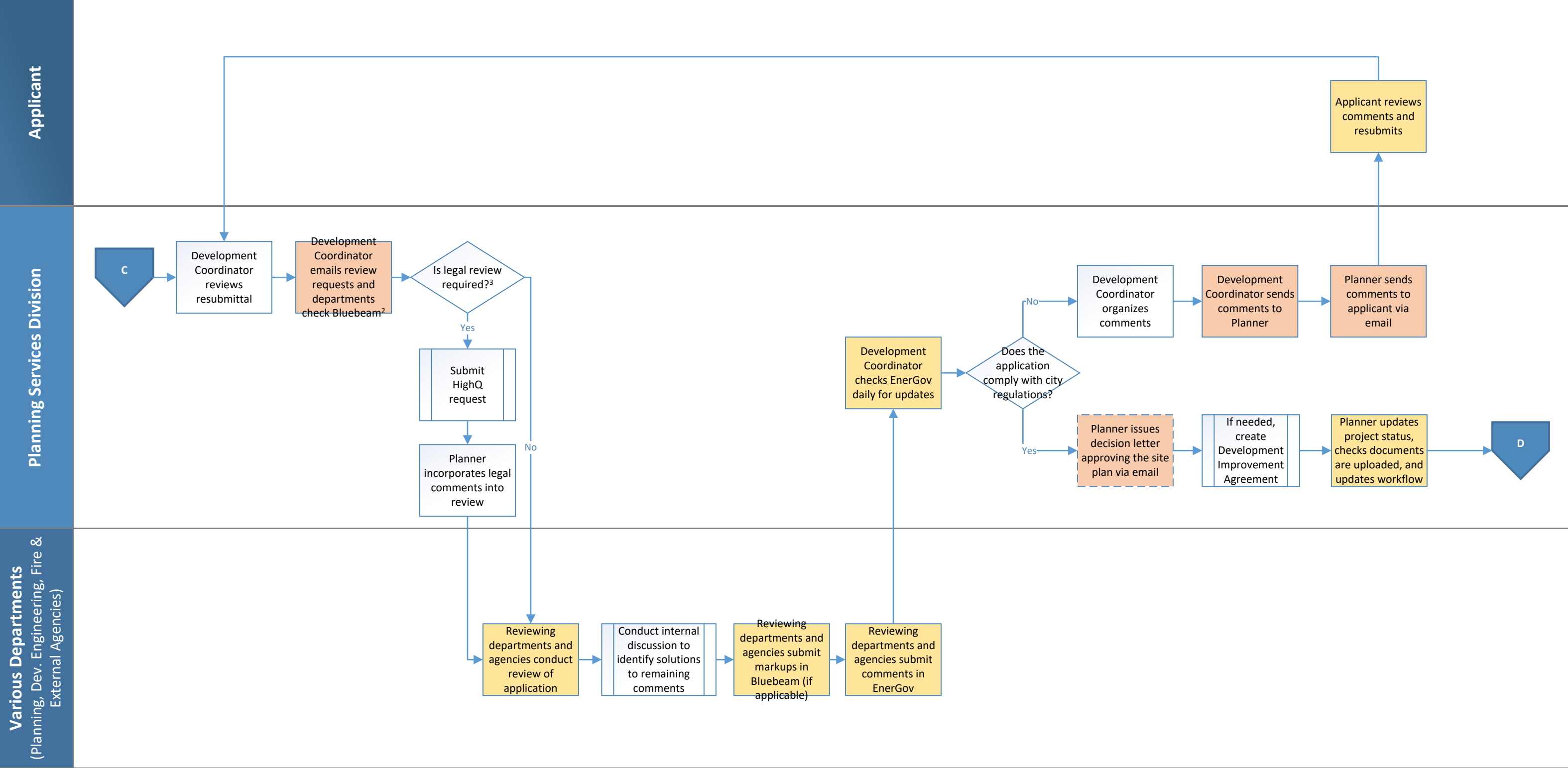**Planning Application Intake and Review**
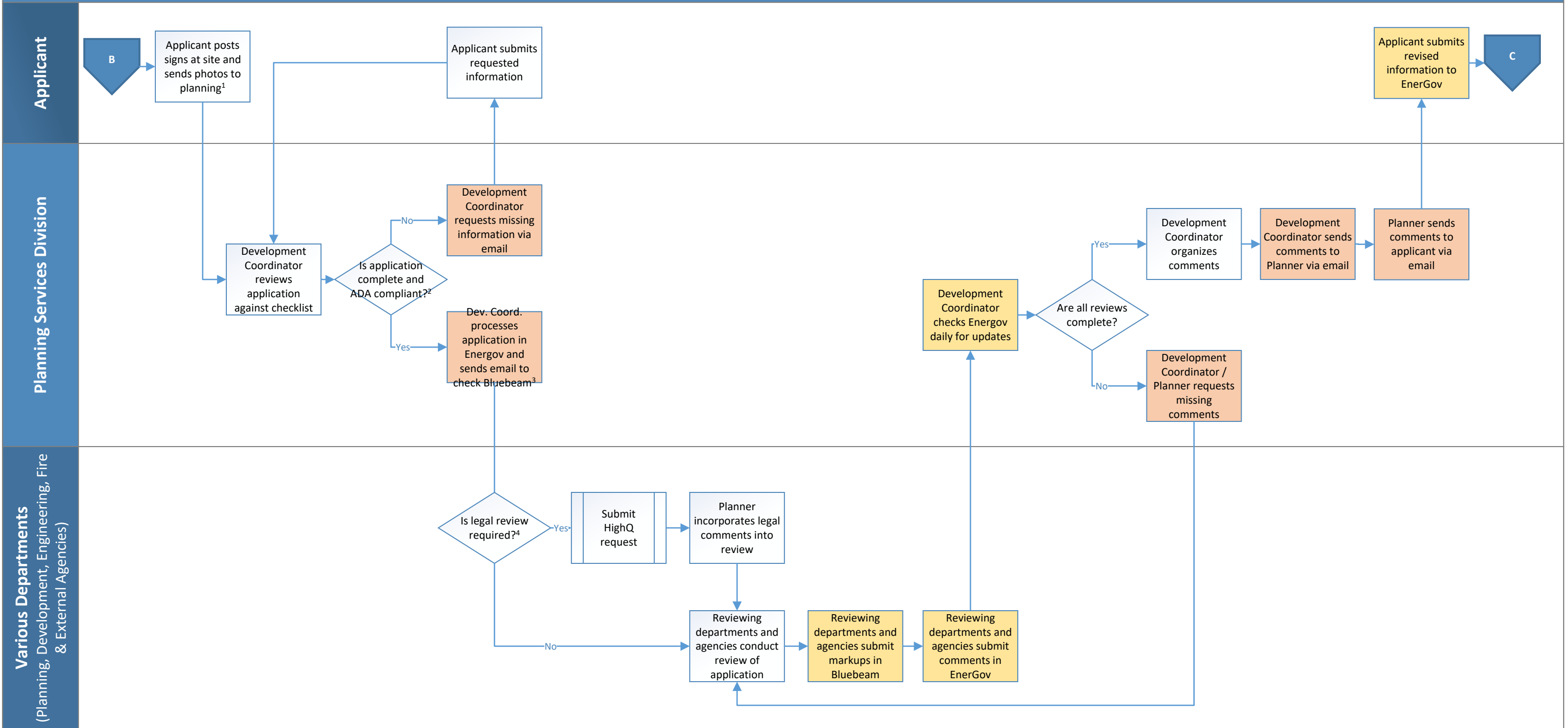
Notes:
1. Signs must be posted for entire review period.
2. If all the required documents are included and ADA compliant, the application is deemed complete.
3. The Development Coordinator sends the review request via email to the reviewing departments and agencies. These departments and agencies then receive the email and are responsible for checking Bluebeam for the necessary documents and information.
4. The planner determines if legal review is necessary in Energov.
5. Applicant reviews comments, submits revised plans, and responses to comments in EnerGov.

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Multi Family New Construction Workflow (Map 2 – Page 4 of 6)

Planning Application Review and Approval

Applicant

Applicant reviews comments and resubmits

Planning Services Division

C

Development Coordinator reviews resubmittal

Development Coordinator emails review requests and departments check Bluebeam[2]

Is legal review required?[3]

Yes

Submit HighQ request

Planner incorporates legal comments into review

No

Development Coordinator checks EnerGov daily for updates

Does the application comply with city regulations?

No → Development Coordinator organizes comments → Development Coordinator sends comments to Planner → Planner sends comments to applicant via email

Yes → Planner issues decision letter approving the site plan via email → If needed, create Development Improvement Agreement → Planner updates project status, checks documents are uploaded, and updates workflow → D

Various Departments
(Planning, Dev. Engineering, Fire & External Agencies)

Reviewing departments and agencies conduct review of application

Conduct internal discussion to identify solutions to remaining comments

Reviewing departments and agencies submit markups in Bluebeam (if applicable)

Reviewing departments and agencies submit comments in EnerGov

Notes:
1. *If all the required documents are included and ADA compliant, the application is deemed complete.*
2. *The Development Coordinator sends the review request via email to the reviewing departments and agencies. These departments and agencies then receive the email and are responsible for checking Bluebeam for the necessary documents and information.*
3. *The Planner determines if legal review is necessary in Energov.*

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Multi Family New Construction Workflow (Map 2 – Page 5 of 6)

Planning Clearance and Pre-Construction Meeting

Applicant

- Applicant completes conditions
- Applicant submits plans for signatures[1]
- Applicant submits copies of signed plans
- Applicant pays fees
- Applicant begins construction
- E

Development Engineering

- D
- Planner creates Planning Clearance and enters fees
- Planner and Development Engineer confirm conditions before Planning Clearance are met
- Planner notifies applicant of corrections
- Are conditions met? — No / Yes
- Development Engineer and Planner review and sign plans
- Planner releases PC via email
- Development Engineering hosts Pre-Construction Meeting[2]

Notes:
1. Plans should already be signed by appropriate utilities.
2. The Pre-Construction Meeting is attended by Transportation, Engineering, Stormwater and MC.

City of Grand Junction - Development Services Process Improvement

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Multi Family New Construction Workflow (Map 2 – Page 6 of 6)

Site Inspections

Applicant

E → Applicant requests site Inspections[1]

Applicant makes corrections

Applicant submits required certifications[2]

Development Engineering

Planner and Development Engineering conduct inspection → Does Inspection Pass?

- No → Inspector provides inspection notes to Applicant
- Yes →

Inspector releases final CO inspection approvals → Release of DIA → One year warranty starts

Planning

Planner closes out file in Energov and uploads document → End

Notes:
1. Other inspections from the City mat be required for work in right of ways (ROW) or other public infrastructure. The applicant can make requests through phone, emails, and occasionally through the portal.
2. Certifications required include stormwater, pond, and landscaping.

Grand Junction City Council

Workshop Session

Item #1.b.

Meeting Date:	March 3, 2025
Presented By:	Mike Bennett, City Manager, Jodi Welch, Interim Finance Director
Department:	City Manager's Office
Submitted By:	Jodi Welch, Interim Finance Director

Information

SUBJECT:

5/10 Year Capital Plan and Prioritization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

During the 2025 budget development workshop with City Council when the capital plan was presented and discussed, staff shared that the 2025 capital budget in the Sales Tax Capital Improvement Fund was balanced, with projects identified over the subsequent nine years for consideration and prioritization in future planning. In previous years, the first five years of the capital plan were balanced; however, due to limited resources and significant future capital projects, the approach was to balance the 2025 recommended budget only. This left the remaining projects in the year of identified need to effectively communicate the prioritization by staff. Council approves only the first year of the Plan in the annual adoption of the budget

Council has requested that this topic be added to workshop for further discussion.

BACKGROUND OR DETAILED INFORMATION:

The primary source of revenue for general government capital projects is the 0.75% City sales and use tax, which is expected to generate approximately $19.9 million in 2025. This revenue stream is used to cover annual debt service obligations and recurring expenses. These include debt service for transportation expansion, lease payments for public safety buildings, economic development funding, and contributions to the Downtown Development Authority for Las Colonias Park and Grand Junction Convention Center improvements. Additional sources of revenue include funds restricted for specific purposes as well as revenues from partners and grants.

In total there were 32 projects for $21.4 million adopted in the 2025 budget. The 2025 capital budget was balanced, with projects identified over the subsequent nine years for consideration and prioritization in future planning. In previous years, the first five years

of the capital plan were balanced. However, due to limited resources and significant future capital projects, the approach in 2025 was to balance the 2025 recommended budget only. This left the remaining projects in the year of the identified need in order to effectively communicate the prioritization by staff.

Attached is the 2025 Capital Budget Letter provided to Council during the budget workshop.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for discussion purposes only.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

This is for discussion purposes only.

Attachments

1.   2025 Capital Budget

CITY OF
Grand Junction
C O L O R A D O

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

September 30, 2024

Re: Capital Summary Letter-2025 Recommended Budget

Members of City Council:

Each year, the City of Grand Junction invests a significant portion of the annual budget in capital improvements in the community. Through the continued assessment of the condition of City assets and a series of long-term capital and financial funding plans, the City of Grand Junction ensures that existing infrastructure is adequately maintained, and that future infrastructure is constructed in a fiscally responsible manner.

The City funds critical capital projects with revenues derived primarily from utility rates and fees, taxes, restricted revenues, and debt proceeds. Grant and outside partner dollars are strategically leveraged as well to maximize City funding sources. The 2025 Recommended Budget plans for investing $162.8 million in capital improvements throughout the community.

As reported and discussed with City Council this year in preparation for the 2025 budget, the capital needs continue to outpace available resources. Over the past 25 years the City has experienced consistent growth in population and land area. These annexed areas often including underdeveloped infrastructure. For many years, the City was able to fund capital projects with cash, however, the increasing demand for expanded facilities and infrastructure, including utilitie and the transportation system improvements, has led the City to issue debt to deliver those projects to the community. The debt service for those past projects continues for a multiple year period (usually 25 to 30 years) and therefore restricts ongoing resources, impacting the City's ability to fund other future capital improvements and maintenance.

The City vigorously pursues grants to leverage capital projects and has a high rate of success. In 2025, grant revenues that are secured are included in available funding and the total project is budgeted for expenditure. If a grant is not yet secured, the match for the grant will be budgeted and then if the grant application is successful, staff will return to Council for a supplemental appropriation to expend the grant funds. This will be included in the project descriptions as well.

Because the available resources in a single year are not enough to fund all identified capital needs, and some projects are not immediately necessary, staff has developed a 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan (Plan) that identifies and prioritizes projects based on the direction provided by the Council's strategic outcomes, criticality of the project, as well as staff capacity to manage the project. For the Sales Tax Capital Improvement and Transportation Capacity Payment Funds, the plan includes detail of revenues and projected fund balances. While a portion of these projects involve the addition of new community assets, there is also a focus on maintenance-based projects aimed at repairing and preserving existing assets. Although the City utilizes the 10-year CIP document for planning purposes, City Council approves only the first year of the Plan in the annual adoption of the budget Capital Improvement Budget.

1

Sales Tax Capital Improvement Fund (.75% Sales Tax Fund)

The primary source of revenue for general government capital projects is the 0.75% City sales and use tax, which is expected to generate approximately $19.9 million in 2025. This revenue stream is used to cover annual debt service obligations and recurring expenses. These include debt service for transportation expansion, lease payments for public safety buildings, economic development funding, and contributions to the Downtown Development Authority for Las Colonias Park and Grand Junction Convention Center improvements. An additional item of note is that because of the delayed development in Dos Rios, the revenue needed to cover debt service for the Dos Rios General Improvement District is not yet being generated, therefore $84,000 is budgeted in 2025 to supplement Dos Rios funds for the 2025 debt payment. After these expenses there is $12.6 million available in 2025 for new or major maintenance projects.

Additional sources of revenue include funds restricted for specific purposes. These include Parkland Expansion funds generated from impact fees and Conservation Trust Funds allocated through the State from lottery proceeds. Revenues from partners and grants are also included if they are already secured at the time of budget development.

In total there are 32 projects for $21.4 million planned in 2025. It should be noted that the infill projects including Kimball, Landing, and Richmark were re-budgeted in 2025 because the projects need to be completed prior to infill incentives being disbursed. The funding for the incentives was received in prior years and is part of the fund balance.

Staff has recommended $2.2 million for housing and unhoused projects and services as well as $250,000 for the accessory dwelling unit production program, and $2.8 million for the Salt Flats infrastructure project. These items combined with the infill projects noted above, total $9.4 million towards housing efforts in the community from the capital budget. Funding is also in the City's operations budget to support this Council initiative.

Four projects are proposed to be self-performed in 2025. Chipseal and crackfill street maintenance and asphalt to concrete trail replacement are two projects that the City is continuing to propose as self-performance projects. In addition, staff proposes self-performance for minor repairs to bridges and guardrails as well providing assistance to an initial phase of demolition and construction of Whitman Park.

The 2025 recommended capital budget is balanced, with projects identified over the subsequent nine years for consideration and prioritization in future planning. In previous years, the first five years of the capital plan were balanced; however, due to limited resources and significant future capital projects, the approach this year was to balance the 2025 recommended budget only. This left the remaining projects in the year of identified need to effectively communicate the prioritization by staff.

Transportation Capacity Payment Fund (TCP Fund)

Transportation capacity and expansion projects are funded by transportation capacity payment impact fees (TCP Fees), debt proceeds, and 0.75% sales tax funds when needed. As authorized by voters in November of 2019, $50 million of debt was issued in 2020, and the additional $20 million is planned to be issued in 2025. The intended purpose of TCP fees and authorized debt was to support the expansion of transportation infrastructure for the future. However, recent years have seen unprecedented inflation and fees not keeping pace with recommended rates. Coupled with the demands of residential and commercial development, the resources available have fallen significantly short of meeting the growing needs.

In total there are seven projects totaling $27.45 million planned in 2025. The major expansion projects contemplated for funding with debt have been prioritized based on transportation impact by area and will be completed in 2026. The 10-year Plan for the TCP fund is balanced in 2025 and 2026. Similar to the .75% Sales Tax Fund, the remaining years' projects are shown in the year of prioritization and are unbalanced to represent the need compared to the resources.

Major Projects Fund (Community Recreation Center)

The major projects fund is used to budget and account for the Community Recreation Center (CRC) Project which is scheduled for completion in 2026. The 2025 recommended budget includes $56.1 million, which is funded by bonds that were issued in the first quarter of 2024. In addition to the original CRC project, a project for outdoor improvements has been added as an anticipated project in 2026.

Water and Sewer Funds

Utility rates, accumulation of reserves, and debt proceeds fund water and sewer projects. In total there are eight water projects (including irrigation) for $2.8 million and 10 sewer projects for $53.9 million planned in 2025.

The capital improvement plan for the utility funds is an integral part of the long-term financial plans for these utilities. These plans are developed in collaboration with external industry consultants through rate studies conducted every few years. These studies help ensure that the utility funds have a sustainable financial strategy in place to support critical infrastructure improvements and maintain the quality of services provided to users.

Utility projects include annual replacement or improvement of existing line and plant infrastructure as well as system expansion. Notably Phase I Persigo Joint Sewer system major rehabilitation and expansion project that began in 2023 will continue with $38.4 million planned in 2025.
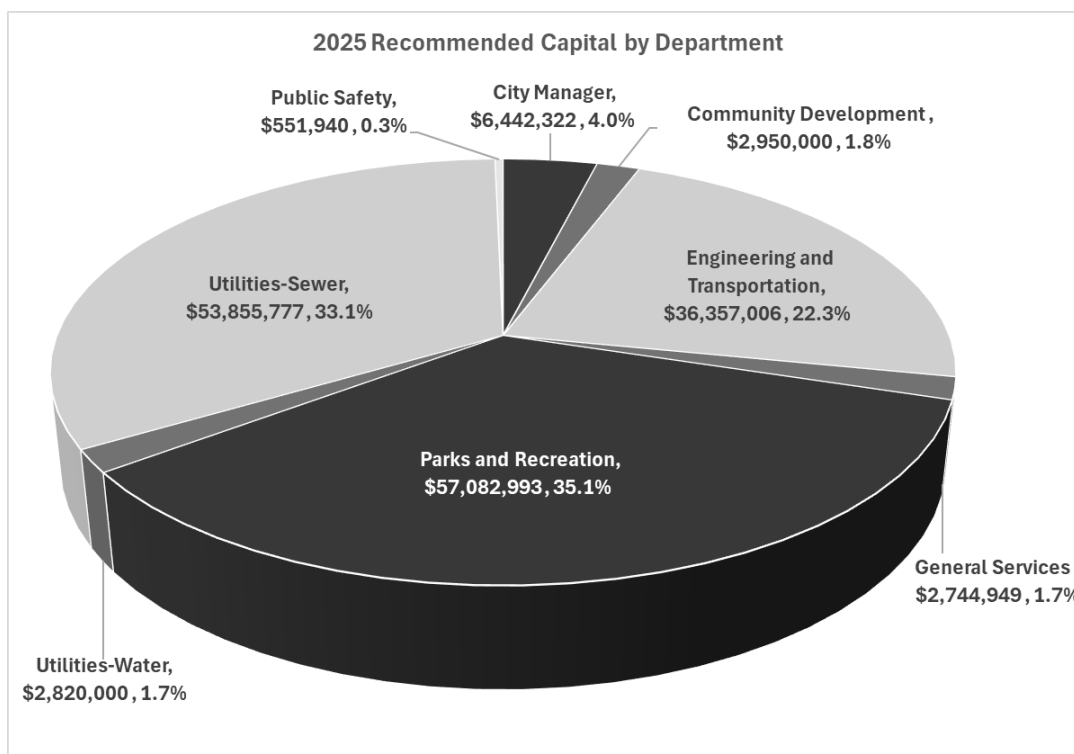
Solid Waste and Recycling Fund

Similar to water and sewer, solid waste and recycling rates, accumulation of reserves, and debt can fund major capital projects for this fund. Major capital for solid waste includes acquisition of new trucks. In 2025 the City plans to purchase one new refuse truck for recycling pick up for $435,000. This is in anticipation of continuing to expand the City's recycling capabilities. The City continues to evaluate the potential of a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF). Because this project is still in the feasibility and evaluation stage, any capital expenditure or funding associated with a future MRF is not included in the 2025 recommended budget.

Other Funds

Also included in the planned projects for the City are a drainage project for $250,000 funded by partner contribution and drainage fees, and a Communication Center 9-1-1 telephone upgrade for $512,490, which is funded by the county wide E911 surcharge.

Capital By Department

A total of $162.8 million in capital investment is planned in the 2025 Recommended Budget. The Utilities Department, Parks and Recreation Department, and Engineering & Transportation Department comprise 92% of the budget. The City Manager's budget includes funding for housing and infill incentives previously authorized by Council Below is a graph showing the investment by department.

2025 Recommended Capital by Department

- Public Safety, $551,940, 0.3%
- City Manager, $6,442,322, 4.0%
- Community Development, $2,950,000, 1.8%
- Utilities-Sewer, $53,855,777, 33.1%
- Engineering and Transportation, $36,357,006, 22.3%
- Parks and Recreation, $57,082,993, 35.1%
- General Services, $2,744,949, 1.7%
- Utilities-Water, $2,820,000, 1.7%

The following listed attachments provide additional detail for the City's capital budget. The Capital Projects Listing is a three-page listing of 2025 projects. Then the Capital Project Descriptions provide a more detailed description of each project. Finally, the Ten-Year Capital Plan establishes the longer-term capital plan beginning in 2025.

- **Attachment B** – 2025 Recommended Capital Projects Listing
- **Attachment C** – 2025 Recommended Capital Project Descriptions
- **Attachment D** – 10 Year Capital Improvement Plan

The continued investment in the City's public infrastructure is key to ensuring the high quality of life for our residents. The City of Grand Junction will continue to ensure that existing infrastructure is adequately maintained, and that future infrastructure is constructed in a fiscally responsible manner.

Sincerely,

Andrea Phillips
Interim City Manager

4

Meeting Date:	March 3, 2025
Presented By:	
Department:	City Council
Submitted By:	Johnny McFarland, Asst. to the City Manager

Information

SUBJECT:

Role of the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem and the Associated Agenda Committee

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This item is intended to discuss the establishment of policy related to the duties and authority of the President of the Council (Mayor), and a policy related to Agenda Management.

BACKGROUND OR DETAILED INFORMATION:

The Council has expressed a desire to consider the adoption of policies defining the duties and authority of the Mayor, and establishing a policy related to agenda management.

The attached draft of the policy related to the duties and authority of the Council President. The policy outlines the key responsibilities of this role and defines the Council President's role in meeting facilitation and hearings.

The attached draft of the Agenda Management policy establishes the procedures for agendizing topics or items of action at regular meetings, special meetings, and workshop sessions. The policy also defines the procedures for Councilmembers to initiate or remove new business, policy issues, or other matters they may wish to be heard.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

SUGGESTED ACTION:

For discussion purposes only.

<u>Attachments</u>

1.   POL-Agenda Policy 020325
2.   POL-President of Council 020325

1 CITY COUNCIL

2 AGENDA MANAGEMENT POLICY

3 _____

4

5 This policy establishes the procedures for agendizing subjects and/or proposed action
6 items on regular and special meeting, and work session agendas of the City Council
7 ("Council"), and the delegation of certain authority to finalize agendized matters once
8 heard and approved by the Council. This policy provides City Councilmembers with a
9 procedure for initiating or removing new business, policy issues and other matters that a
10 member(s) desires to be heard or that he/she desires to sponsor. The procedure will help
11 City Councilmembers respond to constituent inquiries and enhance communication
12 between City Council and the City Staff as well as delegate certain authority to the City
13 Manager and City Clerk.

14

15 **1.   AGENDA PREPARATION AND FULFILMENT**

16

17 **A.   PROCEDURE FOR WORK SESSIONS, REGULAR AND SPECIAL MEETINGS:**

18

19 The City Charter specifies certain duties of the City Clerk[1] and the City Manager[2]
20 and absent delegation by the City Council the prerogatives of the City are vested
21 in the Council. Heretofore the City Council has not had a prescribed set of
22 procedures that apply to regular and special meeting agendas and the fulfilment
23 of agenda items after the completion of meetings.

24

25 i)   The Agenda Committee, consisting of the Mayor and Mayor *pro tem*, may
26 agree to place or remove any item on a work session, regular or special meeting
27 agenda. If both the Mayor and the Mayor pro tem do not agree to agendize a
28 topic, then it will not be agendized. Members of City Council may add to or
29 remove an item(s) from an agenda by approaching the members of the
30 Agenda Committee through customary means of contact. At least four (4)
31 Council Members may direct the Agenda Committee to place an item on a
32 work session, regular or special meeting agenda. The public may not, without
33 approval of the Agenda Committee or at least four (4) Council Members,
34 initiate an agenda item(s).

35

36 ii)   The agenda as set by the Agenda Committee will be noticed by the City
37 Manager, or designee, in consultation with the City Attorney and will be
38 distributed by the City Manager to City Council no less than twenty-four (24)
39 hours before the scheduled meeting.

40

41 iii) The City Manager in consultation with the City Attorney and City Clerk shall
42 determine which meeting agenda is legally and practically appropriate for
43 such item(s). The City Manager shall be responsible for scheduling all meeting
44 agenda items as determined by the Agenda Committee or four (4) or more
45 Council Members as provided in this policy.

46

_____

[1] Article VI § 45
[2] Article VII § 59

1

47

iv) Public comments, issues that arise at or during meetings, and/or topics that Council refers to the City Manager may be responded to in a variety of ways including scheduled meetings with the City Manager, memoranda, or at the Council's next regular meeting or work session. The City Manager, in consultation with the Agenda Committee if the City Manager deems such consultation necessary, will determine whether referred matters necessitate referral to an agenda or may be addressed separately (through the scheduled meetings, memoranda or by a verbal report to Council or other appropriate means of resolution and/or reporting.) The execution of contracts, grants, intergovernmental agreements *etc*. shall after consideration as duly and lawfully noticed agenda items and approval by the City Council of the same be signed and executed by the Mayor, the City Manager, the City Clerk and as necessary or required by the document(s), the City Attorney.

B. WORKSHOP SESSIONS:

The following procedures together with those in A above shall apply to workshop session agendas:

i) Items pertaining to City strategic initiatives and goals shall receive priority on work session agendas.

ii) Guests and outside presenters shall generally be scheduled before other items on the agenda.

2. METHOD OF NOTIFICATION:

i) The meeting agendas shall be posted in accordance with the lawful posting requirements and designated location no less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to a meeting. Any other notice allowable by law shall be permissible. In addition, a reasonable effort will be made to notify the media normally covering a City Council meeting when a meeting is scheduled or cancelled. Notice of a Council meeting shall be posted at the designated posting location at City Hall and on the City website.

ii) In consultation with, as directed by the Agenda Committee, the City Manager will distribute meeting agendas to City Council members no less than twenty-four (24) hours before the scheduled meeting. Councilmembers who request changes to the agenda must request such changes through the Agenda Committee at least twenty-four (24) hours before the scheduled meeting.

3. AGENDA AND PACKET DISTRIBUTION:

The following procedures shall apply to the distribution of work session, regular and special meeting agendas, and packets:

i) Prior to each meeting of the Council, the City Manager shall distribute to each Councilmember:

2

96
97
98   •   A copy of the agenda of the meeting, stating each matter to be
99   discussed by the Council by title, description and/or synopsis.
100
101   •   A copy, in its latest form or edition, of each ordinance, resolution, or
102   other written or printed document to be presented at the meeting,
103   including background information, analysis and recommendation
104   to the City Council when applicable. This policy and respective
105   procedures may not apply to Emergency Meetings.
106
107   •   A copy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
108
109   ii)   Copies of the agenda also shall be posted on the City's website (electronic
110   posting location as annually approved by resolution of the City Council) and
111   kept at City Hall and shall be available in the City Hall Auditorium on the night
112   of a regular, special, or emergency meeting, and shall be made available to
113   any member of the public who so requests.
114
115   iii)   A copy of the information provided to City Council will be available in the
116   meeting location for any member of the public to inspect with all material for
117   the meeting except the material that is subject to the client/attorney or other
118   applicable legal privilege(s).
119
120

3
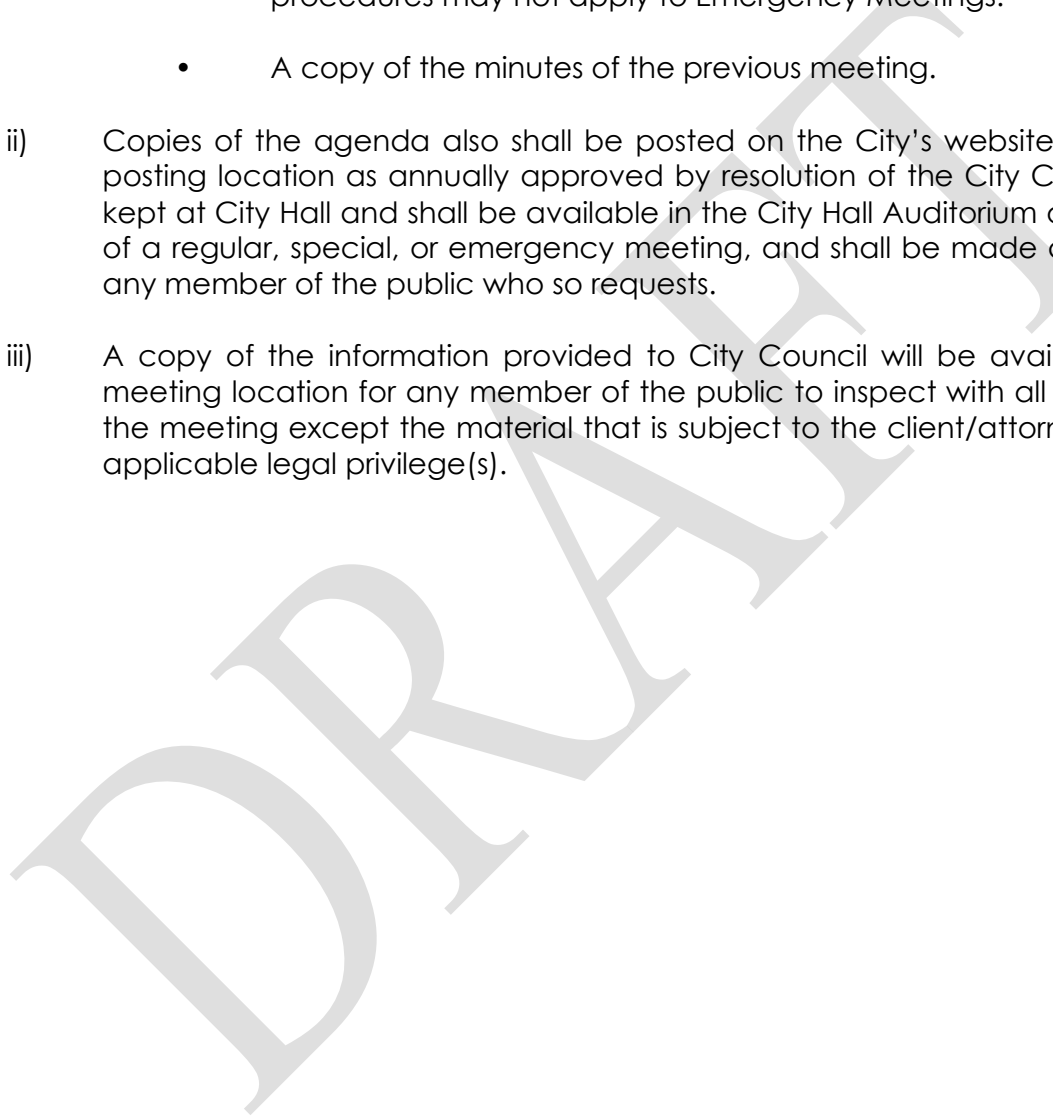
1   City Council

2   Duties and Authority of the President of the City Council *Ex officio* Mayor

3   _____

4

5   The President of Council, or commonly referred to as "mayor", presides over City
6   Council meetings, is the signatory for the City, and is, according to Article V, Paragraph
7   39 of the City Charter, the official head of the City for all ceremonial purposes, by the
8   courts for the purpose of serving civil process, and by the governor for military purposes.
9   The President of the Council is a member of the Council with the same right to speak
10   and vote as any other member but without the right to veto.

11   Most of the powers exercised by the Mayor are created by provisions in the Charter or
12   through resolutions adopted by the City Council.

13   **Responsibilities:**

14   The Mayor's most important duty is to carry out the legislative responsibilities he or she
15   shares with other members of the Council; the Council identifies the goals of the City
16   and directs city staff to develop programs, initiatives, and services to satisfy those
17   needs. The most important role of the Council is to evaluate the extent to which
18   municipal services satisfactorily reflect the policy goals of the Council.

19   In legislative matters, as the presiding officer, the Mayor may properly encourage
20   and/or influence debate and other procedural matters. The Mayor rules on questions
21   of procedure at council meetings, and those rulings are binding unless successfully
22   challenged by a majority of the Council.

23   As signatory for the City, the Mayor is required to sign a variety of documents to give
24   them official legal effect. The Mayor's signature is required on all bonds, and other
25   evidence of debt, as well as ordinances, resolutions, contracts, and legal documents.
26   The Mayor is also responsible for signing proclamations and recognizing special events
27   and personal achievements as determined commendable by the Council.

28   The Mayor's participation in ceremonial events is significant. The Mayor routinely cuts
29   ribbons at ceremonies, opening new ventures, attends groundbreakings and appears
30   at community celebrations. City proclamations are issued in the name of the Mayor.
31   The Mayor is often interviewed by the media and serves as a spokesperson for the City
32   and/or the primary spokesperson for the City Council. The Mayor typically serves the
33   City as its representative to the Colorado Municipal League (CML) and other statewide
34   and local government organizations and the National League of Cities (NLC) the U.S.
35   Conference of Mayors, and other national public interest groups on municipal issues
36   pending before Congress or federal regulatory agencies. The Mayor will write and reply
37   to routine Correspondence with and for City Council.

38

39 Under the council-manager form of government the Mayor has no day-to-day
40 administrative duties; those are vested in the City Manager who is responsible for
41 implementing policies established by the Council. Decision-making is to be exercised
42 by the full council and the Mayor often facilities consensus and collaboration among
43 Councilmembers.

44 The president of the council *pro tempore* or *mayor pro tempore* is also a member of the
45 Council who performs the Mayor's duties during the Mayor's incapacity or absence.
46 The *Mayor pro tem* is selected by majority vote of the Council similarly to the selection
47 of the Mayor.

48 **Meeting Facilitation**

49 The Council, principally by and through the Mayor and Mayor *pro tem*, serving as the
50 Agenda Committee, set the agenda for meetings. The City Council has adopted an
51 Agenda Policy (link).

52 The Mayor is the facilitator of most meetings and controls the meeting flow. The Mayor
53 *pro tem* shall fulfill these duties in the Mayor's absence.

54 As facilitator, the City Council expects the Mayor/Mayor *pro tem* to:

55 1) Start on time and respect others' time and ensure that others' respect Council's time.

56 2) Review the purpose of each agenda item with the Council at least and the purpose
57 of, and procedure for, the meeting with the audience prior to its consideration.

58 3) Have all questions/comments directed to and through the Mayor/Mayor *pro tem*.

59 4) Use a consistent means of making and approving motions in accordance with the
60 meeting procedure policy (link).

61 5) The Mayor/Mayor *pro tem* should show, on behalf of the body, that ideas, opinions
62 and participation are appreciated whether from or with citizens, staff and/or members
63 of the Council.

64 6) The Mayor/Mayor *pro tem* should encourage participation, including by calling on
65 Councilmembers and/or staff, reinforcing ideas or suggestions and helping to facilitate
66 discussion, decorum, and developing consensus when appropriate.

67 7) The Mayor/Mayor *pro tem* are responsible for the conduct of the meeting and its
68 participants and in order to do so the Mayor/Mayor *pro tem* must be attentive to the
69 process. If need be, the Mayor /Mayor *pro tem* may call a recess to confer with other
70 members or staff. Recesses can help regain focus and if used appropriately can
71 increase productivity. In quasi-judicial matters the Councilmembers must not discuss
72 during a recess the evidence/testimony that has been presented and/or will be
73 presented.

74 8) As decisions are made/actions are taken the Mayor/Mayor *pro tem* will assign
75 immediate follow-up/ask if follow-up is necessary.

76   9) Confer with Council to determine if further/additional action is needed.

77   10) Thank everyone for the work that is done at and during the meeting.

78

79   **Hearings**

80   Both quasi-judicial and legislative hearings require Due Process; however, in a quasi-
81   judicial proceeding it is essential for valid decisions that Constitutional rights and legal
82   processes are protected. The Mayor/Mayor *pro tem* shall be responsible to guide the
83   Council and inquire of the City Attorney and staff regarding the process.

84   Legislative proceedings concern the enactment of law and relate to subjects of
85   general applicability and tend to be policy based.

86   A quasi-judicial proceeding generally involves an action for determination of the rights,
87   duties or obligations of specific persons on the basis of the application of presently
88   existing legal standards to past or present facts developed at a hearing, conducted for
89   the purpose of resolving the particular interest(s) in question.

90   Poorly conducted hearings are the perfect setting for confrontation and conflict, which
91   may include legal challenge(s). A well conducted hearing allows for the exchange of
92   ideas/discussion of concerns about and/or benefits of a project and a balanced
93   measuring of an application or proposal. To try and create a positive result the City
94   Council policy is that the Mayor/Mayor *pro tem* as the presiding officer insists that the
95   Council follow consistent procedures, which include an explanation of the testimonial
96   process, the Applicant's right to rebuttal and that there is a structure for
97   admitting/presenting evidence.

98   In all hearings the Mayor/Mayor *pro tem* should control repetitive, cumulative and/or
99   irrelevant testimony. The Mayor/Mayor *pro tem* may segment public testimony by
100   topic. For example, the Mayor/Mayor *pro tem* may ask for a show of hands before
101   beginning testimony on which topic(s) people may be speaking and ask for speakers
102   on those topics before hearing general testimony and to develop a consensus as for
103   the order of the topic(s).

104   The Mayor/Mayor *pro tem* will establish direction and endeavor to maintain decorum
105   by:

106   a)   reminding a speaker(s) that the hearing is not a voting process and that one
107   idea endorsed by multiple people is only one idea; and,

108   b)   reminding a speaker(s) that his/her presence and participation is appreciated;
109   however, repetition is not as i) there are other topics to discuss and ii) that repetition
110   tends to blunt the impact of the testimony presented; and,

111   c)   conducting the hearing for only as much time as the Council and those
112   participating can be reasonably attentive/meaningfully participate. The Mayor/Mayor

113 *pro tem* with the assent of a majority of the Council, may continue a hearing/testimony,
114 deliberations after testimony or a decision.

115 d)   requiring a presenter to enter his/her documentary evidence (including a
116 PowerPoint) into the record. The speaker/presenter should be told to provide the
117 evidence to the City Clerk.

118 e)   discussing with the Council and staff the effect of votes (denial, approval tie and
119 supermajority) and other possible procedures such as continuance/postponement (for
120 time or otherwise.) Staff will be able to assist.

121 e) ensuring impartiality and that the appearance of impartiality is maintained.

122 f) requesting specific response on the record from the applicant or staff as applicable
123 to questions/issues that arise in the hearing.

124 g) requiring that all speakers "describe for the record" if the speaker is referring to using
125 maps, charts or graphs and keep a true and accurate record of all proceedings by
126 receiving/admitting the evidence into the record.

127 h) requiring that some evidence supports the findings. Evidence should be substantive
128 and supported by and be in the record.

129 i) ensuring that the Council only consider the evidence presented at the hearing.

130 j) requiring that the reasons for motions, decisions and votes are stated for the record.

131 **Committees – Committee Assignments -Boards and Commissions**

132 The use of topic or issue-specific committees is common for city councils. Committees
133 provide councilmembers with the opportunity to thoroughly consider particular items of
134 business then recommend action on those items to the full council.

135 Committees may reduce the amount of work each councilmember must perform and
136 may reduce the length of council meetings.

137 Committees of three or more enable citizens to participate in the committee meetings.
138 Task forces or *ad-hoc* committees may be used to investigate and resolve specific
139 concerns that once addressed are disbanded.