
Construction Services Center (Division of BCS)

- Reorganized the Construction Services Center.¹
- Reduced the turn-around times for commercial plan review:
 - Reviews are made in less than six (6) working days for most projects.
 - Reduced time for commercial permits, from 15 to 7 weeks.
- Streamlined the Residential review process by consolidating the permit processes of seven different City agencies under a single management.²
- Implemented express residential permitting of small residential projects, additions, remodeling and driveways which can be reviewed and permitted in 1-2 days.
- Provided next day permit issuance for all faxed permit applications.
- Updated the minimum qualifications of the City's residential building plan examiners to reflect the State of Florida Building Plan examiner certification requirements.
- Implemented the Customer Service Enhancement Fund to maximize service to customers.³
- Revamped the Express Permit Hotline.⁴
- Implemented Construction Services Enhancement Program.⁵
- Purchased forty-five (45) computers to implement the Inspector Mobile Office Project.⁶
- Completed inspection of several significant commercial construction projects.⁷
- Created a new position class - *Residential Comprehensive Plan Examiner* - providing a comprehensive review of both Building and Site Codes, thereby expediting permit issuance and maximizing staff efficiency.
- Upgraded/reclassified Inspector and Chief Inspector positions, providing greater review and inspection of site codes, expedition of inspection reviews and maximization of staff.
- Succeeded in implementing Plumbing and Electrical Service Enhancement Fund Program.⁸
- Developed Construction Inspection Manuals and implemented a procedure requiring pre-construction and pre-final meetings on all large commercial projects in order to review all information.⁹
- Improved Plan on File Procedures- allows contractors to permit projects using plans placed "on file" that will be constructed multiple times.
- Launched the "InstaFax" On-demand Service, which provides customers with 24-hour access information regarding the status of any construction project.
- Implemented a streamlined process to effectively administer hundreds of conditional Certificates of Occupancy and automated the TECO power release process.¹⁰
- Purchased over 50 cell phones for Division Inspectors as well as the Fire Inspectors.¹¹
- Implemented Complaint "C" Team program to improve the complaint processing system.¹²
- Improved City's Federal Emergency Management Agency Community Rating.¹³
- Developed a public outreach campaign to promote City standards and requirements.¹⁴
- Published Residential Review Guide, available to Contractors and Homeowners.
- Initiated implementation of the Hansen Information System Project (2003).¹⁵
- Created "Enhancement Funds", an innovative funding source to purchase new inspection team vehicles equipped with lap top computers that enable on-site inspection results.

Construction Services Center Notes

- ¹ The reorganization emphasized a "Customer Satisfaction" approach to business operations. Construction Services Center houses the Plans Exam and Permitting Division and the Inspectional Services Division. The Construction Services Center provides a single location for acquiring residential and commercial, electrical, building, plumbing, mechanical, and zoning permits. Personnel from the Parks (7), Public Works (3), Stormwater (8), Sanitary Sewers (3), Water (2) and Solid Waste (1) departments are assigned to the Service Center for permit issuance tasks related to requirements of those departments.
- ² The reorganization resulted in an expedited plan review and permit issuance operation.
- ³ The fund has paid for new equipment such as computers, cell phones, MapInfo® software, and voice response equipment for faster, more convenient service for all customers. Funded by a permit fee increase, that provides a new permit, plan review, code enforcement, subdivision review and inspection software system. The enhancement program will also provide a new neighborhood center in the New Tampa area to handle permits, plan review and inspections, as well as other neighborhood functions.
- ⁴ Allows for both voice and fax permit capabilities that utilize credit card payment capabilities, and created a one-stop center for the issuance of all express permits.
- ⁵ This program was designed to fund the following projects: construction of the New Tampa Construction Services Center, installation of new Internet-ready permitting and inspection software, and purchase of new laptop computers for the Inspector Mobile Office Project. All projects will significantly enhance the level of service provided to customers.
- ⁶ Computers were purchased to provide mobile data services for Inspectors to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the inspection process.
- ⁷ Some projects include: Stoval Hi-Rise Condominium, Ybor Apartment Complex, International Plaza Mall, K-Force Office building, Shiners Hospital addition, Office Hi-Rise on Boys Scout Boulevard, Raymond James Stadium, Downtown Marriott Courtyard, Bayshore Apartment Hi-Rise, St. Joseph Children's Hospital, Harbour Island Office Hi-Rise, University of Tampa Dorms/Parking Garages, Police Precinct and Headquarters Building, Home Depot (2), Busch Garden "Gwazi" Rollercoaster, Saks Fifth Avenue, 2-Muvico 20-plex Movie Theatre, 8-story Office Buildings on MLK, 4-story Hilton Hotel in Ybor, Lifelink Office building, Crescent Office Hi-rises, Municipal Parking Garages, Centro Ybor, Marriott Waterside Hotel, Intermedia Office Complex, Channelside Entertainment Center, Harbour Island Apartments, Westshore Mall Expansion, Super Wal-Mart, Lowes, among others.
- ⁸ This program collects surcharges on plumbing and electrical permits for the expressed purpose of buying a total of eighteen (18) new trucks for both the plumbing and electrical inspectors. The program, which was fully supported by industry, has resulted in staff being able to keep up with the high demand for inspection services.
- ⁹ The procedure and information has resulted in contractors and subcontractors being better informed as to the City's requirements, resulting in a more efficient construction process. The Inspectional Services Division (ISD) has conducted literally hundreds of pre-construction and pre-final meetings on large commercial construction projects.
- ¹⁰ This has resulted in considerable savings for the customer when closing out their projects while at the same time assuring the City that the projects fully comply with all regulations.
- ¹¹ This has resulted in a significant improvement in the daily operation of the construction process since the inspectors are readily available to answer questions, make appointments, etc.
- ¹² Involved training a specific group of inspectors to work in conjunction with city investigative staff for a more efficient and effective complaint processing system. In addition, forms were modified in order to automate the citation and permit application process by utilizing combined forms which serve as both a notice of violation and a permit application all in one.
- ¹³ Rating increase from Class 9 Community to Class 7 community whereby Flood Insurance premiums are discounted 15%.
- ¹⁴ ISD effectively participated in public outreach events i.e. Building Officials Association of Florida Annual Educational Conference and Trade Expo, Governor's Hurricane Conference, Hillsborough County Hurricane Expo, International Building Safety Week at West Shore Mall, Institute for Business and Home Safety Annual Conference, SBCCI Annual Conference, Florida Home Show, Southeast Builders Conference Trade Show, Good Community Fair and HCPHCC Table Top Exhibit. IDS also published an entire series of public service handouts regarding FAQ's, Common Code Violations, Inspection Requirements and more, as well as expanded the Building a Safe House public education program series by developing and presenting seminars at Home Depots, Neighborhood Associations, etc. The programs have benefited both the construction industry and general public.
- ¹⁵ System will replace current legacy system with a state-of-the art permitting and land management software system that will provide enhanced customer service and greater staff efficiency.