

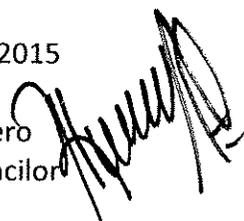


# MEMORANDUM

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DATE: October 14, 2015

TO: Roger Randolph  
City Clerk

FROM: Regina Romero  
Ward 1 Councilor 

SUBJECT: Planning & Development Services

I would like to request 30 minutes on the November 4<sup>th</sup> Mayor & Council study session meeting agenda to discuss Planning and Development Services Department (PDS) administration.

PDS has come a long way over the past several years. Mayor & Council has worked to encourage streamlined development processes and incentivize the right kind of growth for Tucson.

We are well-positioned at this time to envision a new PDS, with the help of community stakeholders. I'd like to opportunity to discuss some options for moving PDS forward. This would include:

- 1) Appointing a stakeholder group to create a new vision for the department and make recommendations on relevant criteria that will help the city select the next PDS director
- 2) Establishing a building official position, or a PDS ombudsperson. This role will allow one contact person to follow projects from start to finish, facilitating the connection between the City of Tucson and developers

I look forward to continuing the conversation about how we can continue to improve our development services department, and support smart growth in our community.

cc: Mayor & Council  
Michael Ortega, City Manager  
Mike Rankin, City Attorney  
Albert Elias, Assistant City Manager  
Jim Mazzocco, Interim Director – Planning & Development Services



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# MAYOR & COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

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November 4, 2015

Subject: Discussion of Planning and Development Services Department Administration (City Wide) Page: 1 of 1

Issue – Council Member Romero asked for a discussion of Planning and Development Services Department’s administration. With recent retirements and departures of senior staff at the Planning and Development Services Department, there is an opportunity to consider options on moving forward with updating the organization.

City Manager's Office Recommendation – It is recommended that considering stakeholder participation and an ombudsman role to follow projects should be part of the on-going assessment of the department’s future.

Background – Planning and Development Services is comprised of 90 staff members. This number is a reduction from a high point in 2008 where there were 138 staff members. The department added code administration, administrative staff, and planning review staff from the former Department of Urban Planning and Design in 2009 and added Code Enforcement Division from Housing and Community Development in 2013. While there are numerous policy changes over the last ten years such as a simplified zoning code, updated parking and residential subdivision standards, flexible redevelopment standards, flexible infill overlays and more emphasis on design review, there is still more room for process and organizational improvements.

Present Consideration(s) – With the retirement and departure of the PDSO director and the Building Official, these positions are now being occupied by interim director, Jim Mazzocco and interim building official, Clayton Trevillyan. There is currently a department assessment occurring that will involve input from city-wide stakeholders, staff, and other jurisdictions. The assessment report should be completed in the first quarter of Calendar Year 2016. Stakeholder groups and other participants will have ample time to provide input into the future of the organization and also recommend best practices on improving customer service.

The goal of this assessment is to improve customer service and reduce overall costs.

Plan Tucson Considerations – This item relates to the Element of Government and Participation, and is supported by the following policies:

- G8 – Support a representative and balanced multi-jurisdictional, regional approach to short term and long-term planning
- G9 – Coordinate consistent and integrated policy, program and project planning across City departments.
- G10 – Establish a repository of City planning documents and policies that can be accessed easily by the public.

Respectfully submitted,

Albert Elias  
Assistant City Manager

Attachment: Memo from Council Member Romero dated October 14, 2015

SS/NOV04-15-177