



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT


LANETTA HAYNES TURNER

CHIEF OF STAFF

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MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable John P. Daley, Chairman, Finance Committee

From: Lanetta Haynes Turner 
Chief of Staff
Office of the President

CC: Annette C.M. Guzman, Budget Director
Department of Budget & Management Services

Date: November 3, 2022

Re: Request for Information from FY2023 Budget Hearing

The following information is provided in response to questions posed at the Office Under the President (OUP) budget hearing held on October 24, 2022.

Request ID# 1014-01

There have been a series of audit findings and subsequent recommendations for OUP offices in connection with funding and budget. Commissioner Degnen has requested that an update on the status/resolution of those recommendations for the Cook County Law Library, Animal and Rabies Control, Veterans Affairs, the Department of Emergency Management and Regional Security, the Department of Building and Zoning, along with the Department of Budget and Management Services, be provided.

Response:

Cook County Law Library

Finding: We recommend that the Law Library complete training for all staff on processing transactions into iNovah for the credit card service and conduct a cost benefit analysis on automating the photocopier revenue collection process.

Response: The Law Library's public copier credit card readers were fully activated on December 6, 2021. Technical issues with Access Services credit card reader were resolved in April 2022 and new internal documentation for this process was completed and approved October 2022. In addition, a training was developed and completed by all staff on processing transactions into iNovah for the credit card service. Lastly, a cost benefit analysis on the photocopier revenue collection process concluded that the only location where volume was sufficient to offset the cost equipment was the Daley Center.

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Animal and Rabies Control (ARC)

Finding: The process of recording funds received for tag sales and summer clinics is highly manual and involves redundant processes.

Response: This process has been eliminated as ARC employees no longer perform this task. ARC has now implemented the “Partners in Prevention” program whereas no funds are exchanged.

Finding: Animal Control’s current process to allocate revenue in iNovah Point of Sale, is to simply lump all tag sales revenue under the 1yr tag sales. Under this process, no transactions are posted under 3-year tag sales and therefore no revenue gets allocated to this code.

Response: After thorough contract negotiations with Hyland, without resolution, ARC will seek to explore a new vendor and move forward with the software upgrade/modernization project. This process will be addressed in our new system requirements. Based on this new course of action, the completion date will be later than initially expected. Because of this delay, ARC will meet with Revenue to explore a possible interim solution. ARC is currently working to engage in the procurement process and an improved timeline will be provided with the next quarterly status update.

Veterans Assistance Commission of Cook County (VACCC)

A representative of the Auditor’s office confirmed that all issues from the most recent VACCC audit were resolved. The new superintendent of the VACCC has since requested a follow-up audit as a transition of best practice to ensure that policies and procedures stay current and in compliance.

Department of Emergency Management and Regional Security (EMRS)

Finding: The County Auditor issued a detailed report concerning the planning and implementation of the Elliott Data System. The audit report found five specific components that were missing/not implemented and provided recommendations for each component on how best to achieve compliance.

Response: EMRS has been providing the County Auditor with quarterly updates on their progress in the implementation of all five components of the Auditor’s recommendations. The most recent report submitted on August of 2022 detailed the considerable progress in addressing the Auditor’s recommendations including the complete revision of EMRS inventory policy and procedure document that includes a detailed syntax guide to all the data fields used in the Elliott Data Systems. The procedure document also provides details on the process that EMRS uses to procure and inventory grant-funded assets. They have also made considerable progress in working with the Sheriff to inventory thousands of interoperable radios, as well as being on track to complete this effort by the end of 2023.

Department of Building and Zoning:

See Attachment A – DBZ Audit Response 2020

Attachment B – DBZ Work Policy Handbook

Attachment C – DBZ Final Audit Report 2021 Inspection and Permit Process

Department of Budget and Management Services:

See Attachment D – DBMS Audit Recommendations & Response

Request ID# 1014-02

Commissioner Gainer has requested a list of the people serving on the Equity Fund Task Force.

Response:

See Attachment E – Equity Fund Participation List

Attachments:

Attachment A – DBZ Audit Response 2020

Attachment B – DBZ Work Policy Handbook

Attachment C – DBZ Final Audit Report 2021 Inspection and Permit Process

Attachment D – DBMS Audit Recommendations & Response

Attachment E – Equity Fund Participation List



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DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND ZONING

TIMOTHY P. BLEUHER

COMMISSIONER

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Department of Building and Zoning 2020 Audit Response

Audit Recommendations and Departmental Responses:

- Develop a written policy and procedure manual for building permit and inspection process. The manual should include detailed policies and procedures to clearly define the step-by-step process and responsibilities.

Completed and attached.

- Analyze the current permit deposit process and provide updated, consistent, and clear instruction.

The office policy is in place with respect to deposits taken in for the permits and staff is aware of these policies. The permit requirements posted on the department's website also make clear that a deposit is required when applying for a permit.

- Implement and generate quarterly reports on inspection completion status.

Since 2018, when this audit was first conducted, the department has improved control on ensuring all active business occupancies and multi-dwelling units are inspected annually. The department's workflow system periodically checks to make sure no annuals are missed and that, before the fiscal year ends, all inspections that are not yet completed get finalized so that they can be invoiced for that same fiscal year.

The department has requested from the Bureau of Technology to create such capabilities in "BZWorkflow" of all active multi-dwelling and business registries which have incomplete or unscheduled annual inspections. We believe this will allow the department to identify and complete all required inspections. We will utilize this recommendation to highlight incomplete and pending inspections in the department's workflow.

- Consistently and actively reconcile payment reports received from the Department of Revenue against annual inspection payment reports generated from BZ workflow.

The department has put into place system enhancements to check the unpaid invoices for annual inspections. In the case of business occupancies, if the annual inspection invoice is unpaid, the business will not have the renewed and required certificate of occupancy and will then be issued a violation. For multi-dwelling units, the annual registration occurs every year in addition to the annual inspection and both must be paid and in good standing. If not, a violation will be issued. For unpaid invoices for annexed properties, closed businesses and the like, the department will work with the Department of Revenue in attempting to collect those fees.

- Develop controls over segregation of duties to help prevent the same employee from being able to approve more than one process.

Completed.

- Permit payments received by the Department of Revenue should be automatically verified in BZ workflow system.

In October of 2020 an enhancement was made to the department's workflow system in which the department's cashier and zoning administrator receive an email each morning with a list of invoices paid in the past 24-hours. More employees can be added as needed.

Every night BZ workflow queries iNovah for payments of all invoices. If paid according to iNovah a filled gold star shows up next to the invoice. The BZ workflow indicates the invoices that are paid and processed by the Department of Revenue.

- Develop controls over the segregation of duties for the check handling process.

Since the pandemic, in working remotely, the department continues to encourage online payments. While this is completed by the majority of the department's customers, it does occasionally receive physical checks.

The only way this can be obtained is for the department to serve as a satellite office for the Department of Revenue. This would mean that the department acts independently and would need to process all our payments for all invoices that would have to be made out to the department. We do not feel that is viable given we only have one designated cashier.

COOK COUNTY BUILDING AND ZONING WORKPLACE POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL



Executive Assistant I

- Provides executive support to the Building and Zoning Commissioner
- Prepares general and confidential memoranda and materials as required
- Manages Commissioner's calendar
- Monitors time and attendance and maintains accurate time records (CCT)
- Processes payroll and generates pay period reports (Oracle EBS)
- Acts as liaison between employees and management
- Screens calls and visitors for the Building Commissioner and handles routine matters and/or delegates to the corresponding departments
- As the Human Resources liaison handles various aspects of the hiring/termination process, including paperwork, scheduling, and managing of interviews, as well as all onboarding processes
- As the Human Resources liaison handles all employee related matters including but not limited to leaves of absence, FMLA, COVID related emergency matters as well as other confidential and/or personnel issues
- As the Procurement Liaison manages all aspects of procurement for the department including but not limited to, purchasing, processing invoices and payment for items procured as well as professional training, memberships, and other events. Attends monthly meetings. Systems used include Oracle EBS, Prodagio, Bonfire and Polaris
- As the Procurement Liaison, manages new contracts, amendments, expiring contracts and several aspects of this process
- Reviews and processes all paperwork for yearly Capital Equipment/Project requests. Attends yearly kick off and follow up meetings
- Reviews department inventory (downtown and field offices) and updates all paperwork for the yearly county wide IT and equipment inventory requirement
- Coordinates with the Budget Department, generates required reports by calculating figures and entering corresponding information, collates materials, prepares necessary documents, and completes processes to assist Management in balancing the upcoming budget cycle (Preliminary and Executive budget)
- Prepares paperwork for management's business plans and buying plans (if necessary) for future projects
- As salvage coordinator, completes paperwork and enters work orders into the FAMIS system to have items removed for salvage. IT items require an extra process with BOT.
- Coordinates and schedules meetings (field and virtual) with townships as part of the yearly outreach program
- Oversees and enters work orders/schedules routine or emergency maintenance of all office equipment including multiple function devices and postage meter equipment

- Prepares, distributes accordingly and uploads to files and/or required permit files: tree removal letters, permit extension invoice letters, permit extension letters, early start letters, permit revocation letters and permit voided letters amongst other correspondence
- Manages any print orders (PGS) as required for inspections tags, business cards and maps amongst other items.
- Acts as re-entry captain for County-wide COVID-19 precautionary processes. Attends required virtual meetings
- Acts as Assistant Warden for the safety team. Attends bi-yearly meetings
- Serves as Spanish interpreter/translator only in very basic, preliminary conversations and only in emergency case scenarios
- Assists in other departments such as permit control, contractor registration and front desk as needed
- With assistance, coordinates the department annual holiday party as well as other department events (Prior to COVID)
- Oversees special projects assigned by the Commissioner
- Performs other tasks as assigned by the Commissioner

Deputy Commissioner

- Records Management Liaison
- Process travel reimbursement for Inspectors
- Process and approve tree removal request from constituents
- Approve department Oracle EBS procurements
- Approve permit extension invoice letters/permit extension requests
- Approve timecards for payroll and employee time off requests
- Star Management Liaison for department
- Attend yearly outreach with townships
- Answer inquiries from Commissioners on constituents' requests
- Oversee all office duties on a day-to-day basis.
- Administer the final approval of all permits that are ready to be issued
- Manage and respond to emails from info.bnz mailbox
- Run reports on revenue generated from the department in iNovah
- Manage and approve yearly Capital Equipment requests and IT inventory
- Works with Budget department to evaluate the department's needs for upcoming budget cycle
- Fill in for any department that needs assistance
- Handle irate customers at counter or disgruntled callers. Assist with questions that employees are not qualified to answer.
- Go out on site visits on properties that are having issues
- Organize and attend meetings at township offices on township issues
- Review and sign Demolition and Expenses tax forms
- Re-entry Captain for COVID precautionary processes
- Safety team member

Assistant to Commissioner

A) Violations

- 1) Reviews all permits and signs off as Violations Examiner.
- 2) Supervises Building and Zoning (B&Z) Violations division and is B&Z representative who appears in Administrative Hearings (AH) and Circuit Court (CC) to testify and provide to the court updates on compliance status). Violations Department is responsible for (but not limited to) the following:
 - a) Approval of violation inspections performed by field inspectors
 - b) Service check for all violations (AH and CC)
 - c) Mailing out of violations letters
 - d) Maintains list of 30-day violation letters by month and provides to counterpart for continuation of violations workflow (AH)
 - e) Liaison to the SAO regarding all AH and CC violations.
 - f) Entering continuance dates in Bzworkflow for all AH and CC violations
 - g) Maintains violation compliance rate spreadsheet
 - h) Maintains Active CC violations spreadsheet
 - i) Regularly updates and advises the Building Commissioner on the status of violations

B) Annual Inspections

- 1) Liaison between B&Z administration and South and North side task force inspectors
- 2) Supervises employees who assist task force inspectors in scheduling and dispatching annual building inspections (Administrative Analyst(s).
- 3) Supervises employee who approves mails out annual inspection invoices (Administrative Assistant).
- 4) Supervises employee who mails out elevator Certificate of Inspection placards for display.
- 5) Maintains spreadsheet of approved annual inspections for “metrics” reporting.

C) Dispatching of inspections

- 1) Administrative Analysts and I work directly with the Chief Building inspectors to dispatch field inspectors on requested building inspections on a daily basis. This includes permit inspections, violation inspections, re-inspections, annual inspections, etc.
- 2) Supervises employee who dispatches daily pre-start permit inspections.

D) Rental Dwelling Ordinance

- 1) Supervises employees who oversee the Rental Dwelling Division. Duties of the Rental Dwelling Division include but are not limited to the following:
 - a) Reviewing and Responding to Rental Dwelling emails/calls
 - b) Printing and mailing of Annual Rental Dwelling Invoices/Licenses
 - c) Maintains Rental Dwelling registry
 - d) Dispatching and service check for Rental Dwelling violations

E) Vacant Building Ordinance

- 1) Administers and oversees the Vacant Building Ordinance (VBO). Duties of the administering the Vacant Building Ordinance include but are not limited to the following:
 - a) Approving new customers
 - b) Approving registrations and renewals
 - c) Responds to all phone calls/emails from customers with questions regarding VBO registrations.
 - d) Liaison to participating municipalities who have IGA's (Intergovernmental Agreements) regarding this Ordinance with Cook County.

Chief Architectural Plan Examiner

1. Review submitted permits in accordance to adopted codes, ordinances and regulations for architecture and mechanical. Complete review comments to be posted to Cook County website for reference.
2. Provide preliminary review for site engineering drawings and coordinate reviews of with engineering consultants. Perform as liaison between applicant and engineers.
3. Coordinate review with other departments under Building and Zoning.
4. Upon completion of review, provide close out documentation including feeing the permits.
5. Answer all inquiries from telephone calls, emails, letter, and walk-in in a timely manner related to permits' architectural, mechanical, and engineering issues.
6. Acting as a liaison with other governing agencies related to permits, and on related subjects of architectural, mechanical, and engineering.
7. Provide consultations and feedback for any request from Building and Zoning Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner.
8. Maintaining the relevancy of the published information and governing documents for permitting process.
9. Supervising Building and Zoning Architect staff.
10. Provide technical and subject matter supports in field/site.
11. Maintaining the relevancy of the published information and governing documents for permitting process.
12. Supervising Building and Zoning Architect staff.
13. Provide technical and subject matter supports in field/site.

Building and Zoning Architect

1. Review submitted permit in accordance to adopted codes, ordinances, and regulations for architecture and mechanical. Post review comments to Cook County website for reference.
2. Provide preliminary review for site engineering drawings and coordinate reviews of with engineering consultants.
3. Coordinate review with other departments under Building and Zoning.
4. Upon completion of review, provide close out documentation including feeing the permits.
5. Answer all inquiries from telephone calls, emails, letter, and walk-in in a timely manner related to permits' architectural, mechanical, and engineering issues.
6. Provide technical and subject matter supports in field/site.
7. Acting as a standby liaison with other governing agencies related to permits, and on related subjects of architectural, mechanical, and engineering.
8. Provide secondary consultations and feedback for any request from the Building and Zoning Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner.
9. Provide consultation to the relevancy of the published information and governing documents for permitting process.

Building Code Administrator

- Oversees Permit Control
- Assist in overseeing Contractor Registration
- Approve timecards for payroll and employee time off requests
- Attends/Supports outreach permit workshops with townships
- Answer inquiries from Commissioners on constituents' requests
- Oversees front office duties on a day-to-day basis.
- Acts as Liaison between Permit Control and Plan Examiners/Inspectors
- Monitors emails for permit control and CR mailbox
- Monitors Permit Control Active Permit List
- Works with department leads to evaluate the department's needs
- Fill in for any department that needs assistance
- Handle irate customers at counter or disgruntled callers. Assist with questions that employees are not qualified to answer.
- Go out on site visits on properties that are having issues when needed
- Safety team member

Zoning Administrator

Roles and responsibilities

Permits:

- Oversea permit process for all Full and Express and e-permits.
- Handle critical issues brought up by staff and applicants.
- Zoning Approval of all permits that went for ZBA & County Board decision.

Business Occupancy:

- Approve business that have applied for Liquor license & Video Gaming License for compliance with Zoning Ordinance.
- Issues the Certificate of Occupancy to business that have complied with all requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

Contractor Registration:

- Run Annual Registration of active Contractors in our system for coming years registration renewal.
- Getting them printed and handing over to the three Contractor Registration Staff for mailing and updating renewals.

Billboard Registration:

- Run the Annual Billboard Registration for all active Billboards in our system.
- Mailing the invoices to the Billboard owners.
- Processing payments when received by checks.

Zoning Cases:

- Meet/call/email with the applicants and work with them throughout the application process.
- Process all Zoning cases that are received by our office.
- Attend Public Hearings and address any issues or questions that arise at the hearing.
- Provide support to the ZBA in processing the Zoning cases and at the hearing.

A. Variances:

- i. Ensure they are complete and comply with the application requirements set by our Zoning ordinance.
- ii. Enter it in the Workflow. The system assigns a number.
- iii. Create Invoice for the case and send it to the applicant to pay online.
- iv. Forward the case to the Commissioner in whose district the subject property is located.

- v. Forward the case to the Zoning Board of Appeals to set public Hearing.
- vi. After the decision letter is received update permit comments and grant zoning approval.

B. Administrative Adjustment:

Variance requests that are less than 10% of the regulations as to location of structures or as to bulk requirements may be granted by the Zoning Administrator without referral to the Zoning Board of Appeals and without a public hearing.

- i. Process these variances as per the requirement of the Zoning Ordinance.
- ii. Issue Decision letter and process any pending permits.

C. Special uses/Special Use for Unique Use:

- i. Process the case and enter it in Workflow. The system assigns a number.
- ii. Create Invoice for the case send it to applicant to pay online.
- iii. Forward the case to the Commissioner in whose district the subject property is located.
- iv. Open the case for six county agency's reviews and comments.
- v. Close the case after two weeks and after all comments are logged in.
- vi. Forward the case to ZBA for Public Hearing.
- vii. After the decision letter is received processing any pending permit or Business Occupancy request and grant zoning approval.

D. Map Amendment:

- i. Process the case and enter it in Workflow. The system assigns a number.
- ii. Create invoice for the case and send it to applicant to pay online.
- iii. Forward the case to the Commissioner in whose district the subject property is located.
- iv. Place the case on the Cook County Board agenda (Legistar) to be formally referred to ZBA.
- v. Open the case for six county agency's reviews and comments.
- vi. Close the case after two weeks and after all comments are logged in.
- vii. Forward the case to ZBA after the County Board refers it to ZBA to schedule a public hearing.
- viii. After the decision letter is received process any pending permits and or Business Occupancy application and grant zoning approval.

E. Extension of Time for Variances and Special Use cases:

Variances & Special uses are valid for one year from the date they are granted. In case of Variance if a permit is not applied and issued within that one year the applicant can request an extension of time. In case of a Special Use if a Business Occupancy is not established within that year the applicant requests an extension of time.

- i. The application is online, and they should submit the request before the expiration date on the case.
- ii. The request is processed, and a written explanation is required along with a fee.
- iii. The request is uploaded to the files of that case and the invoice is created and sent to the applicant to pay online.
- iv. The request is then forwarded to ZBA in case of Variance and to CCB in case of Special use.

Review, advise and process all the following as and when they are applied for.

- Farm exemption
- Home based Business Occupancy
- General Business License
- Current Zoning Verification
- Municipal Boundary clarification
- Annexation updates to properties in our Jurisdiction
- Subdivision Application.
- New Billboard Location
- New Marijuana dispensary and cultivation sites
- Ongoing work in Updating the Zoning Ordinance.

Bureau of Technology- Geographic Information System

- Department liaison with BOT
- Work with GIS team in updating the Municipal Boundaries of the County.

B&Z Online Application-BZ Workflow:

- Constantly working on ways that the system can be updated and enhanced.
- New modules are in the works like public facing Contractor Registration & Home-Based Business Occupancy for the upcoming year.
- Work with the Consultant on updating and enhancing the system.

- Test the updates and enhancements in the test system and approve them for updates to the production site.

Website Content Manager-[Building and Zoning \(cookcountyil.gov\)](http://cookcountyil.gov)

- Department liaison for content management of the B & Z website
- Post Items to the CCB agenda for approval
- Post Items to Zoning and Building agenda for referring zoning cases to ZBA

Administrative Analyst I – Zoning

Daily Tasks

- **Zoning Certificates**
 - Primary role administering departmental review processes for all ZCs
 - Receiving/handling of all ZC applications
 - Researching properties for the following:
 - Zoning district
 - Property size
 - Property type
 - Accessory structures
 - Plats of survey
 - Flood zone risk
 - Permit/violation/zoning/business occupancy history
 - Coordinating invoicing and payment
 - Correspondence with applicants
 - Issuance of ZCs
- **General Business Licenses (B&Z aspects only)**
 - Primary role administering department review processes for all GBLs
 - Reviewing GBL submittals for compliance of use with zoning district
 - Coordinating the completion of home-based business occupancy affidavits for eligible at-home businesses
 - Reviewing business occupancy status for businesses in commercial/industrial zoning districts
 - Providing instruction to applicants on how to apply for certificates of BO
 - Recommending approval or denial of all GBL applications
 - Occasional coordination with DOR staff
- **Business Occupancy Certificates**
 - Support role in coordination with Zoning Administrator
 - Entering information from BO applications into Workflow
 - Saving and uploading all project documents
 - Reviewing BO applications for completion
 - Correspondence with applicants
 - Coordinating payment of application fees
 - Coordinating annual occupancy inspections with B&Z staff
 - Issuance of certificates of BO

Additional Support of Workflow

- **Permit intake and zoning review**
 - Support provided during peak months, from May to November
 - Entering and reviewing all permit information
 - Reviewing submitted documents for completion

- Saving and uploading all project documents submitted at intake
- Coordinating deposit payments
- Reviewing permit applications for zoning compliance
- Correspondence with applicants
- Ad-hoc troubleshooting with applicants, as they reach out for assistance with other aspects of their permit review

Other Tasks

- Legislation
 - Researching best practices and general practices of neighboring jurisdictions
 - Drafting revisions to zoning ordinance as needed
 - Coordination with departmental leadership and interdepartmental partners
- Departmental Support
 - Developing and revising forms as needed
 - Supporting the creation of an inventory of scanned plats of survey
 - Assistance with filing, organization, archiving of documents
- Interdepartmental Projects
 - Department of Revenue Online License Portal
 - User-testing liquor license portal
 - Providing guidance and feedback on usability for B&Z reviews
 - GIS
 - Providing guidance on B&Z mapping needs
 - Zoning Board of Appeals
 - Attendance at ZBA meetings
 - Backup support to Zoning Administrator when necessary

Zoning Plan Examiner I

Core Responsibilities

INTAKE - Enter new permit applications into the system

INTAKE - Ensure critical information and data is complete

INTAKE - Upload and organize, name documents

INTAKE - Check permit history, past violations, unpaid inspections

INTAKE - Charge Deposit Fee

ZONING - Review Drawings for setback, FAR, impervious surface compliance (critical professional task)

ZONING - Request approvals from outside agencies (townships and HOA's)

ZONING - Assist customers with zoning and permit process questions (critical professional task)

ZONING - Update department documents and forms based on code changes or new efficiencies

- All the above tasks can be done remotely without the need for in-office resources

Alternate Responsibilities

ZONING - Assist with zoning variance applications

ZONING - Gather or research information requested for violations or by FOIA official

ZONING - Generate and issue letters of zoning compliance when core staff are unavailable

OFFICE - Assist with organizing and filing in archive room

- Most of the above tasks can be done remotely except for tasks requiring use of the records storage.

Interchange Responsibilities (Performing tasks of other employees that is within my knowledge set)

CASHIER - I perform this function when our cashier is absent.

PERMIT CONTROL - I upload documents to the files when permit control capacity is reduced. This task is very similar to the intake task above. I do not perform contractor reviews unless all backup staff are absent. In this case, I receive authorization from the contractor registration dept and a supervisor prior to complying a permit control comment.

- Most of the above tasks can be done remotely except for cashier tasks where checks are received at the office. Otherwise, most payments are received online and permit placards are sent by email.

Zoning Plan Examiner II

1. E-Permits:

- A. Check for E-Permits in the active list.
 - i. They show up as “Never” in the Last Update field in the active list.
 - ii. Check to see if all the fields are filled by the applicant.
 - iii. Check if deposit is paid.
 - iv. Check to see if any documents were uploaded
 - v. Fill out any blank fields with information from the uploaded documents
- B. Review:
 - i. Pin Number Search {Global Search} for past Permits, open Violations, BO or MDU if any.
 - ii. Use Cook Viewer to locate the parcel and review the characteristics
 - iii. Check FEMA Floodplain maps to identify if the parcel is in FEMA Flood Plain or Floodway.
- C. Zoning review:
 - i. Review for past Permits and zoning if any granted
 - ii. Review for Zoning Ordinance compliance
 - iii. Flag if Variance or Special use is needed
 - iv. Flag if new BO is required
 - v. Flag if new MDU registration is required
 - vi. Send an email to the applicant with permit information and the link to track the permit status

2. Intake Permits:

- D. Intake Processing
 - i. Create Permit record by entering the PIN and saving
 - ii. Enter all fields of data from the documents submitted
 - iii. Create invoice
- E. Intake Review
 - i. Pin Number Search {Global Search} for past Permits, open Violations, BO or MDU if any.
 - ii. Use Cook Viewer to locate the parcel and review the characteristics
 - iii. Check FEMA Floodplain maps to identify if the parcel is in FEMA Flood Plain or Floodway.
- F. Zoning Processing:
 - i. Need any additional documents needed- Topographic Survey, Landscape Plan, Address Authorization
 - ii. Need any Outside Agency approvals or waivers (Township, HOA, Env permit etc.)

G. Zoning review:

- i. Review for past Permits and zoning if any granted
- ii. Review for Zoning Ordinance compliance
- iii. Flag if Variance or Special use is needed
- iv. Flag if new BO is required
- v. Flag if new MDU registration is required
- vi. Send an email to the applicant with Permit information and the link to track the status and pay deposit.

Bookkeeper IV

- Check permits on active list twice a day, if they are paid e-mail the person the permit placard with inspection list and issue instructions and inspector contact information.
- Create final invoice for permits and e-mail to the applicants.
- Send out e-mails to applicants notifying them that their permit invoice is 60 days past due and give them payment instructions and information.
- E-mail certificates of compliance to applicants when their permits are finalized
- Respond to e-mails, explain the temporary occupancy process, and create the invoice for the applicant.
- Once paid, note the account and expiration date of the temporary occupancy, and e-mail the applicant letting them know the expiration date as well.
- Create invoices for permit extensions and e-mail them to applicant, upon payment inform Commissioner's Executive Assistant.
- For payments that are sent into the office, apply payment to invoice (permits, annual inspections, billboard, elevator, etc.) and attach payment coupon and walk the checks across the street to revenue.
- If payment is sent into the office without invoice, print out the invoice and attach it to the check.
- Respond to e-mails from coworkers and applicants for permits and payments.
- Correct and update timecards, run and reconcile reports for payroll as backup.

Administrative Assistant I - Front Desk

- Answers main telephone for department, routes calls to correct department
- Opens all mail and sorts to correct department
- Assists with insurance updates for contractors
- Works with contractor registration on bonds
- Answers general email inquiries
- Processes Child Support Affidavits

Administrative Assistant I - Contractor Registration

- Assists general contractors in their registration of trades
- Handles all walk-in contractor registration issues
- Oversees cr.bnz mailbox
- Mails out registration renewals yearly
- Makes sure all contractors on permits are current and have a valid registration
- Assists permit control in updated open permits with contractor information

Administrative Assistant I - Permit Control (2 positions)

- Permit Control Email- upload all emails to the permit file to be reviewed by reviewer departments (Plumbing, Zoning, Electrical and Architectural). If documents are regarding Permit Control deficiencies, review the document and address as needed. Review letters of intent for correct information, with correct trades listed and correct authorized signatory. Verify certificates of insurance and Child Support Affidavits. For roofing contractor registrations, ensure that roofing licenses are all updated. Ensure registration payments are received.
- Answer phone calls and/or call customers when needed regarding Permit Control deficiencies.
- Permit Control Active List- review the permits that are listed in the active permit list.
- Review and sign off on permits if all deficiencies have been complied and all the necessary information is up to date.
- Update permit control deficiencies
- Document and process bonds

Administrative Assistant I -Contractor Registration

- Manages departmental public mailbox
- Assists with contractor registration email inbox
- Assists with contractor registration mailings and contractor registration walk-ins.

Administrative Assistant I - Skokie

- 1) Dispatching all permit pre-start inspections
- 2) Service checks/respondent info to non-D&H/non-Rental Dwelling violations
- 3) Customer Service Satellite Office

Administrative Assistant I- Violations

- 1) Approves all MDU & BO Annual inspections
- 2) Prints and mails all MDU and BO Annual inspections*
- 3) Prints and mails all Annual sign and elevator inspections (and pressure test invoices) *
- 4) Prints and mails all AH 30-day violation letters
- 5) Maintains list of 30-day violation letters by month and provides to counterpart for continuation of violations workflow
- 6) Does initial violation check on permits to determine if fee should be added

Administrative Assistant I- Violations

- 1) Mailing out Administrative Hearings Notices of Ordinance Violation (court dates)
- 2) Sending a copy of NOOV to AH for the court file
- 3) VBO- Approving new customers/maintaining spreadsheet
- 4) Service check for all Circuit Court violations
- 5) Mailing out Circuit Court violations letters
- 6) Entering continuance dates in Bzworkflow for all AH and CC violations
- 7) Maintains violation compliance rate spreadsheet
- 8) Maintains Active CC violations spreadsheet
- 9) FOIA request backup
- 10) Mails out elevator Certificate of Inspection
- 11) Customer Service- contacting customers and respondents as it relates to violations, vacant building registry, FOIA, elevator inspections, etc.

Administrative Analyst I – Rental Licensing Program

- 1) General dispatching of inspections
- 2) Dispatching of all Northside annual inspections
- 3) Reviewing and Responding to Rental Dwelling emails/calls
- 4) Printing and mailing of Annual Rental Dwelling Invoices/Licenses
- 5) Maintains Rental Dwelling registry
- 6) Dispatching and service check for Rental Dwelling violations
- 7) Dispatching and inspector follow-up of all "old" issued permits
- 8) Assisting Chief BLDG inspector in re-assigning inspections from recently retired inspectors
- 9) Backup Cashier
- 10) Customer Service related to the Rental Dwelling Ordinance

Administrative Analyst I – Rental Licensing Program (Skokie)

- 1) General dispatching of inspections
- 2) Dispatching of all Northside annual inspections
- 3) Reviewing and Responding to Rental Dwelling emails/calls
- 4) Printing and mailing of Annual Rental Dwelling Invoices/Licenses
- 5) Maintains Rental Dwelling registry
- 6) Dispatching and service check for Rental Dwelling violations
- 7) Dispatching and inspector follow-up of all "old" violations
- 8) Assisting Chief BLDG inspector in re-assigning inspections from recently retired inspectors
- 9) Customer Service related to the Rental Dwelling Ordinance

Chief Building Inspector

Chief Building Inspector reports directly to Commissioner of the Building and Zoning Department, works closely with other Chief Supervisors.

Attends all schedule meetings, zoom, Microsoft teams etc. Works with Cook County, township officials and the public.

Supervisor and coordinates inspections with Building inspectors, HVAC inspectors and Elevator inspector.

Makes sure permits, complaints, annuals, and inspections are completed in a timely matter and has monthly meeting with inspectors on new policies per the president of cook County, cook county commissioners, and commissioner of the building zoning department, makes sure inspectors are on time and report any issues in the field of high importance during work hours and after work hours.

Chief Building Inspector also supervises all early inspections, preforms inspections, and assigns inspectors to townships under his authority.

Checks on field employees and is in contact with employees during work hours. Testifies in court when needed writes violations also approves and complies all violations, permits, pre-permits daily. Makes phone calls answer voicemails logs inspections in the computer for department review.

Building Inspector:

Building Inspector reports directly to the Chief Supervisor of Building and Zoning Department. enforces all codes related to residential, commercial, industrial, and public. Inspects all zoning issues, complaints, according to zoning laws of Cook County. Inspectors answer phone calls, emails, complaints, and checks calendar on a regular daily basis logs inspection in the computer for department review. Call's contractors, deal with public including but not limited to township officials Cook County agencies and Commissioner of Building and Zoning. Performs inspections for that day. work closely with other inspectors, reports to supervisor during the work hours and writes violations. When directed will cover other townships due to illness, vacation etc.

Ventilation Inspector:

Ventilation inspectors reports directly to the Chief Supervisor of Building and Zoning Department oversees and schedules all annual inspections, task force inspections, and performs all HVAC inspections residential, commercial, industrial, and public. Performs and reports all heat and air conditioning complaints for the day. Answers and responds to all email, phone calls, also answer customer code questions, performs various computer tasks during the day and logs inspections in computer for department review. works with other inspectors on residential, commercial, industrial, and public permits. Reports to supervisor during work hours.

Elevator Inspector:

Elevator inspector reports directly to the Chief Supervisor of Building and Zoning. oversees all elevator inspections in unincorporated Cook County including but not limited to elevators, escalators, dumbwaiters, handicapped lifts, and material lifts. performs all annual inspections for elevators residential, commercial, industrial, and public buildings. Schedules all inspections and log inspections in computer for department review. returns phone calls, emails, and works with contractors for inspections. Reports to supervisor during work hours. The duties addressed above can be changed or revised according to Commissioner of Building and Zoning and Chief building supervisor of building and Zoning department at any time.

Chief Electrical Inspector

Job Scope:

- Oversee and assigns daily electrical inspections to my inspectors
- Ensure that all work is done in a safe and workman like manner
- Approve electrical inspectors time sheets / approve time off request
- Turn in weekly inspection reports to commissioner/ deputy commissioner
- Monthly meeting with commissioner and his staff
- Monthly meeting with my staff keeping them informed on job performance
- Monitor the processing of permits on the electrical plan review desk
- Make sure that permits are being reviewed and processed in a timely manner
- Address any issues that may arise with my inspectors with a permit
- Consult electrical contractors on electrical installation, answer questions that they might have
- Advise homeowners/ business owners on our permit process, code violations
- Explanation of code compliance
- Attend job meetings for large construction projects
- Attend up to date training sessions on our related work field (Electrical Safety)
- Oversee and assign Annual Billboard Inspections
- Review and approve Annual Sign Inspections
- Advise Commissioner and implement “work stoppage” on Dangerous & Hazardous job sites

Electrical Inspector

Job Summary:

Conducts electrical inspections in connection with properties, renovations, and construction within the jurisdiction of the Cook County Department of Building and Zoning. Inspects and approves electrical installations in new building construction in compliance with the Cook County Electrical Code; advises as to measures to be taken in meeting stated requirements; issues violation notices and work stoppage notices where required.

Job Duties:

- Communicate effectively with the public (homeowners, electrical contractors, architects, etc.) both orally and in writing. On larger projects, meets with owners, architects, general and electrical contractors before the job starts to ensure a thorough understanding of the electrical code as it applies to the project. Answers electrical code questions from contractors during field inspections or via telephone. Conveys solutions to contractors on how to comply violations of the Cook County Electrical Code. Answers questions from architects via telephone or email on how to make their drawings code compliant.
- Reads and interprets electrical installation plans and blueprints. During the permit review process, permit deficiencies are entered on the Building and Zoning website enabling the permit applicants to continually correct drawings and documents until a code compliant version is accepted. Before going to the jobsite and when on the jobsite, the electrical inspector reviews the drawings. At the jobsite a comparison is made between the approved drawings and the work being done on site. Any deviation from the approved drawings or incorrect wiring methods and materials results in a violation that must be corrected.
- Ability to prepare work reports detailing electrical inspection assignments. Coordinate's inspection assignments with the Chief Electrical Inspector to ensure proper scheduling. Documents details of inspections at various stages of building construction. Writes violations when necessary. Complies violations when all electrical code violations have been remedied.
- Performs annual inspections on businesses and billboard signs. Inspects multi-dwelling units. Ensures that businesses, billboard signs, and multi-dwelling units have no electrical code violations, especially ones directly related to life safety such as properly functioning exit/EM lights and smoke/carbon monoxide detectors.
- Registers electrical contractors. For the initial registration, electrical contractors must comply with the electrical contractor registration requirements. They must annually update all required documents in addition to paying the annual registration fee.
- Monthly meetings with the Chief Electrical Inspector. Attend monthly meeting with the Chief Electrical Inspector to discuss work and electrical code related issues.

Chief Plumbing Inspector

Report directly to Building Commissioner

Supervise plumbing inspectors

Assign townships to inspectors

Schedule inspectors

Approve all inspections and violations

Attend job meetings

Attend Monthly Chief meetings

Approve time sheets

Approve travel vouchers

Ensure all townships are covered in case of absence or illness

Approve or deny vacation requests

Resolve any code or violation discrepancies

Has final say on Code issues

Plus all of the duties of plumbing inspector.

Plumbing Inspector

Report directly to Chief Plumbing Inspector.

Clock in at office

Answer E-mails

Answer voice mails

Perform all phases of plumbing inspections on site

Meet with contractors

Review permits and plans before inspections

Perform annual inspections

Answer complaints and write violations if necessary

Re-inspect violations

Appear in Circuit Court if needed

Post inspection reports

Calculate mileage vouchers

Patrol and inspect in his assigned Townships

Plumbing Plan Examiner

Report to main office

Report to Chief Plumbing Inspector

Answer voicemails and Emails

Consults with contractors

Attends job meetings when required

Reviews Plumbing permit plans

Fees plumbing permits

Assists field inspectors with permit information

Registers new plumbing contractors

Responsible for yearly contractor registration updates

Reviews active permit applications for updates

Releases permits when all requirements are met

Assists applicants and contractors to aid with permit process

Works closely with electrical Plan examiner when required

Answers code questions



Office of the County Auditor

Mary Modelski

Cook County Auditor

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TONI PRECKWINKLE

PRESIDENT

**Cook County Board
of Commissioners**

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17th District

January 15, 2021

The Honorable Tony Preckwinkle, President

Board of Cook County Commissioners

118 N. Clark Street, Room 537

Chicago, Illinois 60602

Dear President Preckwinkle and Board of Commissioners:

We have conducted an audit of the Department of Building and Zoning Inspection and Permit Process, in accordance with the [Cook County Auditor Ordinance](#).

Our scope and objectives for this audit were designed to assess the effectiveness of the internal controls in place to ensure the adequate inspection of all registered Business Occupancies and Multi-Dwelling Units. Along with reviewing the controls for the permit issuing process for Fiscal Year 2018. Our fieldwork was conducted June through September 2019.

Please refer to the following audit report for the results of the audit. The audit report contains seven recommendations. The Executive Summary provides an overview of the audit and recommendations.

We express our appreciation for the cooperation of the Department of Building and Zoning staff extended to Tsira Lashkarava during our audit. We have discussed our recommendations with the Department of Building and Zoning staff and would be pleased to discuss them in greater detail in order to assist the Department of Building and Zoning with their implementation of our recommendations.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marry Modelski

County Auditor

CC: Tim Bleuher, Commissioner, Building and Zoning

Samuel Banks, Assistant to the Commissioner, Building and Zoning



COOK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY AUDITOR

Building and Zoning Inspection and Permit Process

Internal Audit Report

Draft Report Date:
January 15, 2021

Issued By:
Mary Modelski, County Auditor

Audit Conducted By:
Tsira Lashkarava, Field Auditor V
Julie Stack, Audit Supervisor

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of the County Auditor completed an audit of the Inspection and Permit process of the Building and Zoning Department of Cook County. The objectives of our audit were designed to assess the internal controls over the inspection and permit process and ensure proper internal controls are in place. This was accomplished by gathering, reviewing and testing relevant supporting documentation to reach a conclusion on each of our audit objectives. The scope of the audit included testing inspections and permits issued during Fiscal Year 2018.

The following recommendations were provided to strengthen controls and improve operational efficiency:

- Develop a written policy and procedure manual for building permit and inspection process. The manual should include detailed policies and procedures to clearly define the step by step process and responsibilities. ([Recommendation #1](#))
- Analyze the current permit deposit process and provide updated, consistent and clear instructions. ([Recommendation #2](#))
- Implement and generate quarterly reports on inspection completion status. ([Recommendation #3](#))
- Consistently and actively reconcile payment reports received from Department of Revenue against annual inspection payment reports generated from BZ workflow. ([Recommendation #4](#))
- Develop controls over segregation of duties to help prevent the same employee from being able to approve more than one process. ([Recommendation #5](#))
- Permit payments received by the Department of Revenue should be automatically verified in BZ Workflow system. ([Recommendation #6](#))
- Develop controls over segregation of duties for the check handling process. ([Recommendation #7](#))

The recommendations noted were presented to the Building and Zoning Department. Please refer to the Recommendations section for more detail on the recommendations with the management responses, corrective action plans and estimated completion dates.

BACKGROUND

The Building and Zoning Department is under the Bureau of Economic Development. The main responsibility is inspecting buildings and properties annually as well as issuing building permits according to the applicable building codes and zoning ordinances in the unincorporated Cook County areas, as well as, properties owned by the Cook County Forest Preserve District.

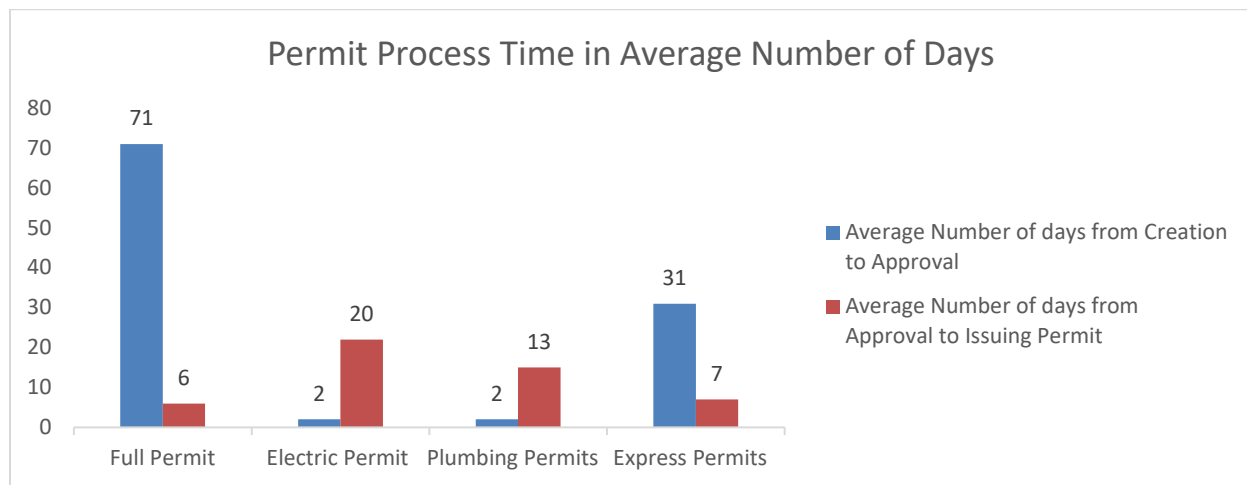
The following are the mandates and key activities of the Department of Building and Zoning:

- Inspect annually, semiannually, or otherwise, such buildings, structures, uses, equipment, sites, or parts thereof relating to theatres, churches, daycare centers, restaurants, other assembly buildings and all multi dwelling units.

- Develop and administer rules and regulations governing the erection, construction, alteration, demolition, or relocation of all buildings and structures and issue permits within designated single family, general residence, commercial, industrial, and public zoned districts of unincorporated Cook County.

For electric and plumbing permits, for Fiscal Year 2018, 89% of the permit issuing process time is spent on the period between approval and issuing of permit. Also, the average number of days spent to approve express permits is higher than the average number of days spent to approve full, electric, and plumbing permits.

The graph below displays data in average number of days by type of permit:



Note:

- **Creation** – when contractor applies for permit and it's registered in the BZ Workflow system.
- **Approval** – after relevant units in the department (zoning, electric, plumbing, architects, etc.) approve permits.
- **Issuing Permit** – after permit fee has been collected and processed in BZ Workflow system and permits/placards are mailed to applicants.

The BZ Workflow is an on-line permitting system that automates the entire permit process from beginning to end and allows its users to track permits online. Enhancements, such as an active permit list, is built into the system. This enhancement generates an active permit list queue for staff members, which ensures they timely respond to all active permits.

Actual revenue collected by the Department of Building and Zoning was \$3,013,645¹ for Fiscal Year 2018 and approved and adopted budget for the same year was \$4,359,712².

The Department of Building and Zoning is required to uphold the following ordinances and codes in the process of inspection and permit issuing:

¹ Annual Appropriation Bill Volume 1, Fiscal Year 2020, Cook County.

² Annual Appropriation Bill Volume 2, Fiscal Year 2018, Cook County.

- 2009 International Building Code
- 2012 International Mechanical Code
- 2009 International Residential Code
- 2015 International Energy Conservation Code
- 2014 State of Illinois Plumbing Code
- 2014 Cook County Electrical Code
- Illinois Accessibility Code
- Cook County Zoning Ordinance
- Cook County Land Development Ordinance
- Cook County Zoning Use Certificate Ordinance
- Billboard and Off-Premises Outdoor Advertising Signs Ordinance

AUDIT SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The scope and objectives of this audit were to determine if the inspection and permit issuing process were handled in accordance with the established policies, procedures and applicable building codes and zoning; as well as, assess the internal controls in place. The scope of our audit was for the period of December 1, 2017 through November 30, 2018.

The audit objectives were primarily to determine the following:

- Determine whether written policies and procedures are in place to conduct proper inspection and process permits.
- Verify internal controls exist for permit deposits and are consistently followed by all employees.
- Verify all registered units are inspected and inspection fees are received, in accordance with the Cook County ordinance, for Fiscal Year 2018.
- Verify internal controls for the permit issuing process are complied with by all employees.
- Ensure permit process time is timely and effective.

The following procedures were performed to assess the objectives:

- Requested policies and procedures that regulate the permit and inspections processes.
- In the Building and Zoning Department, physically observed and interviewed staff in charge of permit and inspection processes, to ensure internal controls are in place and operating effectively.
- Through observation, verified the permit deposit process was regulated and consistent.
- Requested all registered business occupancy and multi-dwelling unit data and annual inspection data and traced a sample of annual inspections through the assigning and inspection process to ensure the selected registered units were inspected.
- Requested and verified a sample of active permits to ensure the permit issuing process is timely and effective.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #1:

We noted that the Building and Zoning Department does not have written policies and procedures. Written policies and procedures establish internal controls and ensuring that there is a clear understanding of the duties and responsibilities. By not maintaining a written policies and procedure manual, misunderstandings may occur when there is an employee absence or turnover.

We recommend development of a written policies and procedure manual. The manual should provide quick reference and instructions for employees and document the control system in the office. The manual should include descriptions of the assignments, duties and also identify positions who have the authority to approve different types of recurring and nonrecurring transactions. These written procedures ensure that in the event of employee absence, new employees have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.

Management Response

A document was created at the initial launch of our online system although it is now outdated with all the enhancements to the system that have been made since that time as well as a restructuring of divisional duties within the Department. We will update this document and make available for disbursement and use for employees by the month of September of this calendar year.

Estimated Completion Date

September 2021.

Recommendation #2:

The Building and Zoning Department does not have written policy and procedures for collecting deposits when issuing permits. For example, the department requires a \$25 deposit if applying for a permit online. Deposits for those who walk in or email can be \$100 or sometimes \$500 depending on the scope of work. Some permits like electric, plumbing, etc. do not require deposits even though they can be applied by walking in or emailing. Additionally, the staff members who oversee the intake of the permits have the ability to decide the amount of the deposit for the permit when applied by walking in. The department does not have a clear and consistent approach when requiring deposits for issued permit.

We recommend the Department of Building and Zoning analyze the current deposit process and provide updated, consistent and clear instructions. The instructions for collecting deposits should be communicated to the permit applicants by posting the new policy on the website and/or emailing registered applicants. Management of Building and Zoning should provide a copy of the revised procedures and policies manual to all employees, especially those in charge of the intake process.

Management Response

The office policy is in place with respect to the deposits taken in for permits and employees are aware of these policies. The permit requirements posted on the Department's website also clearly states that a

deposit is required when applying for a permit. The amounts are also posted online. In addition, as stated in the first response, this updated manual will also include the procedures for handling of deposits.

Estimated Completion Date

September 2021.

Recommendation #3:

County regulations require the Building and Zoning Department to conduct annual mandatory inspections for all business occupancies and multi-dwelling units in unincorporated Cook County. Business occupancies and multi-dwelling units are registered in the BZ Workflow system. We selected a sample of the population of business occupancies and multi-dwelling units registered in the BZ Workflow system, to verify inspections were completed. We found that in Fiscal Year 2018, 80 out of 171 (47%) business occupancies and 33 out of 60 (55%) multi-dwelling units inspections tested were not completed.

Office of the County Auditor randomly reviewed 13 Property Index Numbers that were not inspected in Fiscal Year 2018 with the Building and Zoning Department, 7 out of 13 Property Index Numbers tested were not supposed to be inspected. According to the Department Building and Zoning, some of these Property Index Numbers that are registered in the inspection field do not require an annual inspection by regulation, exceptions include:

- Property Index Number registered as active, but the business has been closed since 2017.
- Property Index Numbers registered is a courthouse and only elevators are inspected annually.
- Property Index Numbers registered is no longer in unincorporated Cook County, due to property being annexed.

The rest of the Property Index Numbers that were discussed with the Department of Building and Zoning included a high school, church, and cemetery were just missed, hence not inspected for the Fiscal Year 2018.

We recommend Building and Zoning evaluate planned inspection statuses at least quarterly, to ensure that they have maximum coverage. If an issue arises, management should be notified right away to adjust the annual inspection plan accordingly and conduct inspections for all units registered in accordance with regulations. Property Index Numbers that are registered in the inspection field but do not require an annual inspection, due to being annexed or other regulations, should be flagged accordingly in the BZ Workflow system.

Management Response

Since 2019, when this audit was first conducted, the Department now guarantees that all active business occupancies and multiple dwelling unit buildings are inspected annually by the end of each fiscal year. The field inspector's management is regularly contacted to make sure no annuals are overlooked. Before the termination of each fiscal year all inspections that are still awaiting inspection are completed so that they are invoiced for that same fiscal year.

We have already requested from the Bureau of Technology the creation of search capabilities and prompts in our permitting system ("BZWorkflow") of all active multi-dwelling buildings and business

registries which have incomplete or unscheduled annual inspections. We are confident that this will allow us to identify and complete all required annual inspections before the end of the fiscal year.

This office will take the recommendations being made here to flag incomplete and pending inspections in our workflow/permitting system.

Estimated Completion Date

September 2021.

Recommendation #4:

The Building and Zoning Department collects a fee for each inspection conducted for business occupancies and multi-dwelling units. We tested a sample of business occupancies and multi-dwelling units and found in Fiscal Year 2018, 21 out of 91 (23%) business occupancies and 19 out of 27 (70%) multi-dwelling units that were inspected are still unpaid. The 40 exceptions, or 5% sample of the population, totals \$10,080 of uncollected fees for Fiscal Year 2018.

Building and Zoning should, at least quarterly, reconcile payment reports received from Department of Revenue with reports generated from BZ Workflow. Identify unpaid invoices and apply late fees to the amount owed, if applicable. Identify the Property Index Numbers (unit) as an unpaid customer and impose restrictions on future permit requests for the Property Index Numbers and owner until such time all payments are received. Administrative hearings can be held for unpaid invoices that are overdue for a long period of time.

Management Response

The Department has already put in place the enhancements necessary to the permitting system to check the unpaid invoices for annual inspections.

In case of business occupancies, if the annual inspection Invoice is not paid, the business will not have the renewed certificate of occupancy and will be issued a violation.

For multi-dwelling units, the annual registration occurs every year in addition to the annual inspection. Both must be paid and in good standing, if not a violation will be issued. In addition, where applicable, a late fee will be applied.

As of late 2020 the Department no longer has an outside collection agency through the Department of Revenue that handles collections of some of our unpaid fees. We will work with the department to see if an outside agency can expand their scope to include all our unpaid fees. Regarding closed businesses, unpaid invoices, annexed properties, monies due that are not coming in and how to write off debt, the Department is currently meeting with representatives from the Department of Revenue to enact appropriate actions and to ensure consistency with processes of other similar County agencies.

Estimated Completion Date

September 2021.

Recommendation #5:

BZ Workflow is a permit tracking system that automates the permitting process. Our testing revealed that in 16 (17%) instances permits were not approved by the designated employee. Segregation of duties decrease the risk of employees committing errors or engaging in fraudulent activity.

We recommend that the Building and Zoning Department analyze the current permitting procedures and document who oversees and approves each permit issuing step. Segregation of duties should be implemented to help prevent the same employee from being able to approve more than one process.

Management Response

Immediate changes were made based on this recommendation to the workflow/permitting system to segregate duties of some delegated departmental employee approvers. Employees no longer have permissions to approve multiple reviews of a permit to ensure segregation of duties and proper oversight.

Estimated Completion Date

Completed.

Recommendation #6:

Our testing of the population of permits issued in Fiscal Year 2018 revealed 25% of the permit process time is spent on the approval and issuing of permits. Once the permit is approved, an employee must verify that the fee is received by the Department of Revenue and issue the permit placards to applicants, either by mailing or physically issuing. The BZ Workflow system does not automatically notify the Building and Zoning employee when payment is received by Department of Revenue to promptly issuance of the permit. Instead, the Building and Zoning employee must manually check the payment status in the BZ Workflow system for active permits. This manual process delays the issuing of permits, since the employee in charge of payment verification is also assigned other tasks.

We recommend the Building and Zoning department review and analyze the current permit issuing process, including collection of payments and consider adding the new enhancement to the BZ Workflow system, that will notify the staff member in charge when the payment for permit is received by Department of Revenue. In addition, we recommend the Building and Zoning Department implement a permit payment collection policy, where it's clearly stated that relevant staff member must check the active permit list at least once a day for payment status.

Management Response

An enhancement to the department's permitting system was made in late 2019 so that specific employees (currently the department cashier and the Zoning Administrator) can get an email each morning with a list of invoices paid in the last 24-hours. More employees may be added to this mailing so that they can process the awaiting permits such as contractor registration, inspections, etc.

Estimated Completion Date

September 2021.

Recommendation #7

The Department of Building and Zoning does not have appropriate check handling procedures implemented. Also, there is no segregation of duties when the same staff person performs all of the check handling functions, which creates a control weakness. These functions are accepting, processing, and depositing checks. The lack of proper internal controls and segregation of duties increases the risk of mishandling of funds, errors, and potential theft. There is also a risk of no paper trail, which makes it harder to identify irregularities and errors.

We recommend the Department of Building and Zoning implement Check Handling Policies and Procedures and/or follow Department of Revenue Check Handling Policies and Procedures. The intent of these procedures is to provide guidance to the units that are responsible for collecting, depositing, recording, reconciling, and safeguarding checks received from customers for services provided. Opening mail/accepting checks, endorsing checks, preparing deposits, and reconciling should be distributed among personnel so one person is not responsible for all aspects.

When a check is received an acceptable form of receipt must be used, which should be numbered sequentially for all deposits and forms of payment. Checks should be endorsed immediately upon receipt and kept in a secure location such as a safe, locked drawer or secured deposit bag until they are deposited. A check deposit should be made frequently, ideally once a day, depending on the number of checks. Upon completion of the deposit, a receipt should be collected. All deposit receipts should be reconciled against departmental receipts log. Departmental receipt logs must be maintained for the purpose of documenting a permanent record of incoming checks. At the end of each business day, a physical count of all checks received must be completed by the responsible supervisor and the amount must be reconciled to the receipt log. The receipt log must be signed and dated by a management designee, other than the individual who performed the physical count and reconciliation to the receipt log and must be stored in a secured area at the end of each day. Any discrepancies must be reviewed and approved by the manager.

In addition, we are aware that the Department of Building and Zoning is currently accepting online payments. We suggest that the department continues encouraging customers to pay online and use the Kiosk available on the office premises. In addition, Building and Zoning can have customers mail checks directly to the Department of Revenue by posting the Revenue address on issued invoices.

Management Response

The Department always encourages paying online and since the department began to work remotely, because of the current pandemic, we have further encouraged our customers to pay for their invoices online. While a majority do and have done so, we still receive some checks that needs to be processed.

Staff has contacted the Department of Revenue to assist our office in getting the check handling process consistent and in line with similar County agencies.

Estimated Completion Date

September 2021.

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Adriana	Morales	Cook County Sheriff's Office
Ahmadou	Drame	Illinois Justice Project
Aimee	Ramirez	The Chicago Community Trust
A'Keisha	Lee	Southsiders Organized for Unity and Liberation (SOUL)
Aldine	Wilson	Cook County 4th District Commissioner Stanley Moore's Office
Ali	Abid	Cook County Offices Under the President, Justice Advisory Council
Angela	Rudolph	Grand Victoria Foundation
Angelica	Chavez	Field Foundation
Anna	Lee	The Chicago Community Trust
Annette	Guzman	Cook County Offices Under the President, Dept. of Budget and Management Services
Anthony	Scalise	Cook County 11th District Commissioner John P. Daley's Office
Audrey	Harding	Cook County 1st District Commissioner Brandon Johnson's Office
Avik	Das	Cook County Offices Under the President, Justice Advisory Council
Bob	Dean	Center for Neighborhood Technology
Brent	Adams	Woodstock Institute
Brian	Ceci	Cook County 6th District Commissioner Donna Miller's Office
Briana	Payton	Chicago Community Bond Fund
C.J.	Hawking	Arise Chicago
Caitlin	McElroy	Cook County 15th District Commissioner Kevin B. Morrison's Office
Caitlyn	Costello	Cook County Offices Under the President, Dept. of Budget and Management Services
Cate	Readling	The People's Lobby
Christina	Rivero	Cook County Offices Under the President, Office of the President
Denise	Barreto	Cook County Offices Under the President, Office of the President
Diane	Viverito	Cook County 9th District Commissioner Peter N. Silvestri's Office
Dom	Tocci	Cook County Offices Under the President, Bureau of Economic Development
Eli	Williamson	leave No Veteran Behind
Elissa	Bassler	Illinois Public Health Institute
Elizabeth	Schuh	Cook County Offices Under the President, Bureau of Economic Development
Era	Laudermilk	Cook County Public Defender's Office
Esther	Franco-Payne	Public Welfare Foundation
Garien	Gatewood	Illinois Justice Project
Gianna	Baker	Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance
Gillian	Darlow	Polk Bros. Foundation
Gina	Massuda Barnett	Cook County Dept. of Public Health
Irene	Sherr	Cook County Offices Under the President, Bureau of Economic Development
Jason	Hernandez	Cook County Sheriff's Office
Jennifer	Hill	Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County
Jennifer	O'Flaherty	Cook County 17th District Commissioner Sean M. Morrison's Office
Jeremy	Rosen	Shriver Center for Poverty Law
Jessica	Fujan	National Nurses United
Joanna	Trotter	JPMorgan Chase
Joel	Johnson	TASC
Julie	Kaviar	Cook County 14th District Commissioner Scott R. Britten's Office
vacancy	Vacancy	Cook County Commissioner Alma Anaya's Office (previous staffer was Jeylu Gutierrez)

Julie	Biehl	Children and Family Justice Center, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law
Patrick	Combs	Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership
vacancy	Vacancy	Cook County Commissioner Bridget Gainer's Office (previous staffer was Kara Highfill)
Kathryn	Bocanegra	University of Illinois at Chicago Jane Addams College of Social Work; Attorney General Office (Advisory)
Kendra	Freeman	Metropolitan Planning Council
Kenyatta	Land	Cook County 1st District Commissioner Brandon Johnson's Office
Khadine	Bennett	ACLU of Illinois
Kiran	Joshi	Cook County Dept. of Public Health
La'Mont	Williams	Cook County 3rd District Commissioner Bill Lowry's Office
Ianetta	Haynes Tuner	Cook County Offices Under the President, Office of the President
LaSaia	Wade	Brave Space Alliance
Lawrence	Benito	Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Leo	Smith	Chicago CRED (READI Chicago)
Lisa	Bly-Jones	Chicago Jobs Council
Lisa	Schrantz	Cook County 1st District Commissioner Brandon Johnson's Office
Luvia	Quinones	Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Arudi	Masenjilla	Cook County Offices Under the President, Office of the President
Margie	Schaps	Health and Medicine Policy Research Group
Mary Rita	Luecke	Cook County 13th District Commissioner Larry Suffredin's Office
Melva	Brownlee	Cook County 2nd District Commissioner Dennis Deer's Office
Michael	McCarthy	Cook County Offices Under the President, Dept. of Budget and Management Services
Morgan	Diamond	Young Invincibles
Nicole	Robinson	YWCA Metro Chicago
Otis	Story	Cook County Offices Under the President, Office of the President
Patricia	Fron	Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance
Paula	Wolff	Illinois Justice Project
Rachel	Rubin	Cook County Dept. of Public Health
Rebecca	Shi	Illinois Business Immigration Coalition
Rev. Rachel	Birkha hn-Rommelfa nger	Chicago Jobs Council
Rich	Monocchio	Housing Authority of Cook County
Rudy	Urian	Cook County 8th District Commissioner Luis Arroyo Jr. 's Office
Ryan	Washabaugh	Cook County 6th District Commissioner Donna Miller's Office
Sean	Garrett	United Way of Metro Chicago
Sharon	Bush	Grand Victoria Foundation
Sharon	Legenza	Housing Action Illinois
Tom	Lyons	Office of the Chief Judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Adult Probation and Pretrial Operations
Vaughn	Bryant	Metropolitan Family Services (CP4P)
Warren	Callahan	Cook County 4th District Commissioner Stanley Moore's Office
Will	Tanzman	The People's Lobby
Xochitl	Flores	Cook County Offices Under the President, Bureau of Economic Development