LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES
Planning Commissioners
Academy

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Building Departments Role In
Reviewing Private Development

What is a Building Department?

- Plans Examiners
  - Licensed Design Professionals – Structural
  - Trade Experience
  - Certified - International Code Council (ICC)
- Building Inspectors
  - Trade Experience
  - Communication & Customer Service Skills
  - Certified - International Code Council (ICC)
- Permit Technicians
  - Communication & Customer Service Skills
  - Certified - International Code Council (ICC)
**The Building Official**

- Manages building plan review and inspection process
- May coordinate the entire review process
- Issues the “Building Permit” and “Certificate of Occupancy”
- Responsible for compliance with Title 24 and any local requirements

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**Why are Building Departments Necessary?**

- Health, Safety and Welfare of the General Public
  - Earthquake
  - Fire
  - Environmental
  - Consumer Protection
- Mandated by State Law
  - California Health and Safety Code
  - California Code of Regulations Title 24
  - California Government Code
  - California State Housing Regulations
  - California Code of Regulations Title 25
- Federal Law
  - 1991-2010 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
What is Title 24?

- 13 Parts
- California Building Standards Commission and ICC
- Development Agencies:
  - Division of the State Architect (DSA)
  - Office of the State Fire Marshal
  - Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
  - Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD)
  - Development Energy Commission
  - Building Standards Commission

What is the “Building Permit”? 

- Definition varies by local jurisdiction
- A “license” to build per the approved plans
- Typically not issued unless all local agencies approve
- Partial approvals – Foundation to Grade
- Issued by Building Official
- May not be all inclusive
Building and Zoning – Coordination Required

- Zoning typically yes or no answer
- Building Codes – it depends....
- Building Department reviews prior to Planning Commission

Issues:
- Fire Walls, Party Walls and Property Lines
- Occupancy Groups
- Fire sprinklers – closer to the lot lines

What is the “Certificate of Occupancy”?

- Permission to occupy the structure
- All life safety items must be approved
- “Temporary Certificate of Occupancy” (TCO)
- Only the Building Official can issue
- Other regulations and requirements may be tied to the CO
Typical Process Flow

Who is Responsible for the Development Review Process?

- Building Official
- City Engineer
- Fire Marshal
- Planning Manager
- Health Department
- Community Development/Public Works Director
- City Manager/CEO
- City Council/Board of Supervisors
- All of the above

TQM – Everyone Working together
Who is Responsible for Field Compliance?

- Building Inspector
- Code Enforcement Officer
- Fire Marshal
- Planners
- Construction Inspector/Public Works
- All of the above

Each may have a specific or multiple roles

Conclusion

- Departments and Systems can vary
- End results must not vary
- Everyone has an important role in the process - TQM
- Customer driven focus
- Early Building Department involvement may save time and money
- Solid communication and teamwork = Successful outcomes
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