



RESOLUTION

URGING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO EXPEDITE THE HIRING OF DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND PERMITTING PERSONNEL TO FACILITATE THE TIMELY ISSUANCE OF BUILDING PERMITS AND REDUCE THE BUILDING PERMIT BACKLOG.

WHEREAS, the efficiency of the building permit approval process has a significant impact on the economic activity and growth of the City and County of Honolulu ("City"); and

WHEREAS, building permits issued by the Department of Planning and Permitting ("DPP") during the 2021 calendar year generated a total construction value of approximately \$2.6 billion; and

WHEREAS, the Office of the City Auditor found in Report 20-10 (January 2020) that the DPP does not effectively administer the permitting process for timeliness, and as a result, permit applications are subject to extended review times and excessive review cycles, which result in processing backlogs and extensive delays; and

WHEREAS, the DPP reported that as of August 15, 2022, 3,449 permit applications were in the initial processing or pre-screen phase, 4,780 permits were in the plan review phase, and 1,113 permits were approved to be issued but were awaiting pick-up by the applicants; and

WHEREAS, at the September 22, 2022, meeting of the Zoning and Planning Committee, the DPP distributed and discussed Departmental Communication 690 (2022) ("D-690 (2022)"), which indicates that during the period from January 1, 2022 to August 31, 2022, the average residential building permit processing time was 246.6 days, including:

- 110 days – pre-screen review queue,
- One to 10 days – pre-screen review,
- 81 days – code and ordinance review queue,
- 34 days – code and ordinance review, and
- One to 10 days – permit approval and issuance; and

WHEREAS, D-690 (2022) indicates that under the new Robotic Process Automation system that will automate the online building permit application pre-screening process and potentially reduce building permit application pre-screening to a one-day turnaround response, the total average processing time for residential building permit applications will be reduced to 167 days, including:



CITY COUNCIL

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

No. 22-261

RESOLUTION

- One day – pre-screen review queue,
- One day – pre-screen review,
- 129 days – code and ordinance review queue,
- 34 days – code and ordinance review, and
- One day – permit approval and issuance; and

WHEREAS, according to a DPP representative, the 129-day code and ordinance review queue under the new automated system can be reduced with the addition of more trained staff to process building permit applications; and

WHEREAS, the DPP has 396 budgeted positions, including 350 approved positions, for Fiscal Year 2023, and 87 DPP positions are currently vacant; and

WHEREAS, the DPP takes an average of approximately two months, from position posting date to start date, to fill a position; and

WHEREAS, a report on the City's recruitment timelines by the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative found, however, that prior to the posting of a position, the City's "approval to fill" process takes an average of 62 days; and

WHEREAS, in order to fill staffing needs and reduce backlog, certain State of Hawaii government agencies have issued Requests for Proposals soliciting the services of staffing agencies for the provision of temporary relief workers; and

WHEREAS, the City Council believes it is in the public interest that the DPP be provided with additional staff to facilitate the timely issuance of building permits and reduce the building permit backlog; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that the City Administration is urged to expedite the hiring of Department of Planning and Permitting staff to facilitate the timely issuance of building permits and reduce the building permit backlog; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Administration is requested to consider issuing solicitation documents pursuant to Chapter 103D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for the services of a staffing agency to provide qualified relief workers to assist in reducing the backlog of building permits at DPP; and



CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

No. 22-261

RESOLUTION

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Managing Director, the Director of Human Resources, and the Acting Director of Planning and Permitting.

INTRODUCED BY:

A. Iyola

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

NOV 04 2022

Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers

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