ACCESS PERMIT STAKEHOLDER RECOMMENDATIONS
STATUS REPORT FOR November 29, 2013

RECOMMENDATIONS	DESCRIPTION	BENEFITS	CURRENT STATUS
Improved use of technology & automation			
	Develop a comprehensive data base system to track & report progress on submissions	Timeliness Transparency	The database system is fully operationally for project data entry on all submissions effective April 1, 2011. Refinements to the database and process continue to ensure data integrity, timeliness, efficiency, and consistency, for monitoring and reporting opportunities. The web-based tool was posted online June 29, 2011. The feedback continues to be positive as people use the tool to check the status of projects. The staff is regularly directing customers to this location that has reduced the number of phone inquiries. Additional revisions and enhancements may be considered as suggested by customers to improve functionality for the system and resources. Tracking and monitoring of project data occur regularly with biweekly meetings to monitor workloads, data integrity, and timeliness of reviews. StateStat reporting of performance data began reporting in May 2011 and occurs monthly. Tracking of performance data shows the average review times for project submission and permit completion are ahead of goals (45 days for TIS, 30 days for plan reviews and 21 days for final permit processing) and continuing to improve. The performance goal was changed from 85% to 90% in anticipation of continued improved performance. The performance increased to 87% in FY 2012 and 87% in FY 2013. Changes were completed to improve the effectiveness of the database for use by staff and monitoring of projects. Implemented use of ProjectWise to improve communication with SHA offices by making electronic files accessible. Started pilot with two offices to resolve operational issues.
	Web based status reporting	Transparency Predictability	The web-based tool was posted online June 29, 2011 and feedback has been positive as people use the tool to check the status of their projects. Tracking and monitoring of project data occur biweekly to monitor workloads, data integrity, and timeliness of reviews. Tracking of performance data shows the average review times for project submission and permit completion are ahead of goals (45 days for TIS, 30 days for plan reviews and 21 days for final permit processing) and continuing to improve. The reporting elements include the SHA Project Tracking No., Route, Development name, type of submittal, project status, the date of the last submission and response dates, along with the reviewer’s name and phone number. The SHA project responses to developers and local government include links to the SHA status search page. This continues to be well received by customers.

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	Development of electronic permitting system	Timeliness Transparency	The SHA explored off the shelf permit software for sample format and information available in a system. The Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) is leading an effort for Central Business Licensing (CBL) a "one-stop licensing" system in Maryland. The SHA has been active in the CBL evaluation and information sharing process with DBED's consultant about the SHA permit process. The CBL effort contemplates the SHA permit elements in Phase 2 of the CBL effort projected for as early as the end of 2013. The SHA is exploring other permit systems for consideration. A meeting was held with the State's Computer Consultant to discuss off-the shelf permit applications. The meeting determined that a custom system would need to be developed to use database information. Consideration of this approach will occur after database changes to improve the functionality.
Improved communications customer service			
	Submission Review "triage" process	Timeliness Predictability Consistency	A triage process was defined and implemented (with refinements as needed) through direction and discussion with the AMD Office Engineer. The Office Engineer position was created to manage operations and improve accountability, timeliness, and predictability of the review processes. Full implementation occurred in 2011 and refinements in 2013improve the internal communication and processing of submissions. Currently, project submissions are previewed for obvious missing data, or issues that may delay the SHA review. Communication with developer representatives occurs when submissions are incomplete. The developer's engineers are contacted for supplemental information and/or advised that the review will be "On Hold" and held in abeyance until the missing information is submitted. The project records are adjusted to reflect the submittal received date for the missing information. The triage process has eliminated ineffective plan reviews cycles and an additional plan review saving at least two weeks on each project that was placed on hold, returned or delayed by an incomplete submission. The number of plan submissions has decreased from 10 to 12 on projects down to 4 to 6 for most projects. The number of TIS submissions has decreased from 6 to 8 down to 3 to 5. We expect continue reductions based upon educating the consultant community. Meetings with individual consultant firms on projects were conducted on a project-by-project basis to educate the firms on expectations for a complete submittal package.
	Improved County Coordination	Timeliness Transparency Predictability	The SHA included County representatives at every opportunity on project specific meetings and discussions for a joint agency approach. Pre-meetings with local governments prior to meetings with developers continue to keep SHA and the Counties on the same page. Participant feedback on the advantages of these pre-

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			meetings along with the combined meetings has been positive. Meetings were completed with local jurisdictions to inform them of staffing and organizational changes. Several staff changes to increase staff for a more effective organizational structure. A fourth Regional Engineer was added for improved workload distribution. The implementation of the Technical Review Team (100% staffed), and the Development and Permit Review Team (60% staffed) were fully implemented and are improving communication with customers. A revised organization chart was completed to identify future position necessary to improve customer service. The teams lost three staff members and efforts are underway to replace the staff. Regularly schedules meetings occur to adjust the internal review processes where necessary. Additional staff changes will continue as we moved towards full staffing. Coordination with counties and specific project coordination meetings continue with success in resolving issues. This provides the opportunity to understand refinements in coordination with counties. Meetings in six counties and two municipalities explored typical traffic issues that arise due to cross-jurisdictional regulations. Coordination with MACO and MML occurred in December 2012. The feedback indicated that the information cold be useful in coordination between agencies. The goal is to improve communication to provide traffic mitigation in a uniform manner that protects the safety and integrity of the roadway network
	Improved developer coordination – standing developer project scoping/technical review meetings	Timeliness Predictability Consistency	Coordination meetings occur on large and/or complex projects to improve communication. The State's first Fast Track Project was coordinated with all parties. SHA delivered on faster reviews while the developer team's response times were slower than expected. The practice of project specific meetings was implemented on case-by-case basis to ensure clear direction and decisions are made in a timely manner. This serves to reduce the number of review cycles. These coordination meetings continue to demonstrate the value of joint agency meetings early and continuously throughout the project. Implemented process to provide draft letters to the engineers, which allow them to confirm if they have questions or require clarification on comments. The draft letters serve to confirm that the engineer understands what is required to address the SHA comments. (This coordination is not intended to continue the negotiation process). Many projects required meetings to help educate developer teams on standards, practices, and policies. Consultant specific meetings occurred with firms to help provide direction on policies, practices, and standards to improve TIS and plan submissions.

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	Facilitation with other State/federal agencies	Timeliness	This is an on-going project specific effort as needed. The weekly Development Review meeting with the SHA Administrator is in place and used to identify and prioritize issues that involve state agencies outside of the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT). The Stakeholder Task Force process experience is being shared by MDOT and the SHA with other agencies through DBED's Fast Track efforts.
	Education & training	Timeliness Transparency Predictability Consistency	The education training sessions to provide ADA Training for consultant firms that perform developer design activities have reached out to over 85 people, including 46 firms and 6 counties. Additional training sessions will be scheduled statewide to assist firms in understanding and complying with ADA and bicycle requirements. These sessions have been well received and identified additional topics for future training or information posted on the web. Additional information was posted on the web such as Final Permit Application, updated FAQ's, and a plan submittal Checklist. The timelines for the process flow charts are being evaluated to establish reasonable turnaround times. The internal "How To" manuals for each county were finalized to assist SHA staff in the coordination processes. Some manuals revisions are needed due to changes at the local level. Four manuals were placed on the SHA intranet. The SHA will draft one overall internal process manual to share with our offices. Development of a user-friendly version will occur by 2014 to assist customer and developer team members. The Traffic Impact Study (TIS) Guideline team was established to evaluate the statewide TIS guidelines. The team met several times with discussion on draft changes to the guidelines. The SHA completed a review of the guidelines, which required internal coordination to resolve SHA concerns. The TIS Team will continue in 2013 to review guidelines to establish a revised version of the TIS guidelines that incorporates local requirements. Outreach meeting were held with several firms that conduct services on multiple projects. This was necessary to assist in providing guidance to improve the quality of submissions and reduce repeat comments the affect the number of review cycles. The meetings were well received with the firms suggesting other opportunities to improve communication. Revised plan checklist was added to the web pages to assist customers. Materials from various presentations were added online.
	Customer service performance measurement	Transparency	Customer feedback has been positive for the most part with the single point of contact, plan checklist, and web status page identified as good resources. Firms appreciate the one on one meeting to facilitate better communication.

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	Single Point of contact for applications	Predictability	The AMD single point of contact for all project coordination continues to be reinforced with customers. A single point of contact was also established in six of SHA review offices including four Districts to improve internal communication and processing. Additional single points of contact for other SHA review offices will also be established in the future. We have reinforced the need for single points of contact by the developer teams. This is necessary because of the confusion that occurs when there is not a single contact, which leads to project delays.
Improved Process Efficiency			
	Flow chart development	Timeliness Transparency Predictability Consistency	The flow charts are on the SHA web page and we continue to answer questions from customers about the processes and direct new customers to the website. Detailed narratives have been reviewed with minor modifications identified along with evaluation of the flow chart turnaround times for discussions with the customers prior to the Stakeholder Task Force. The charts will be modified to send a draft to the Stakeholder Team. The evaluation of performance data is providing real time information to assist SHA to define reasonable and attainable response times for the various steps in the flow chart. The response times are established at 45-days for a Traffic Impact Study, 30-days for a plan review submission (pre-permit reviews), and 21-days for processing competed permit packages. Based on this experience, adjustments to timelines may be necessary on the flow charts.
	"How-to" manuals	Timeliness Transparency Predictability Consistency	The internal "How To" manuals for each county were finalized to assist SHA staff in the coordination processes. The SHA will draft one overall process manual to share with offices. Development of a user-friendly version will occur as processes can be evaluated for information sharing to assist customer and developer team members. A customer version will be developed by February 2014 with revisions once all counties are completed.
	Permit related checklists	Timeliness Transparency Predictability Consistency	Checklists have been completed and are provided to customers as projects move through the review processes. The checklist is online for customer convenience and has been revised based upon suggestions. Based upon experience and questions, updates to the checklist will occur on an as needed basis. A revised checklist was developed and posted on the internet with response letters providing the link information. Continued to update the checklists based upon feedback. Additional checklists will be added by March 2014.

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	Formalized discussions	Timeliness Predictability	Drafts of SHA's response letters are regularly provided to the engineers to confirm if they have questions or require SHA to clarify comments. The draft letters are to confirm the engineer understands what is required and not to continue the negotiation process. The feedback shows acceptance of this opportunity to improve communication and avoid interpretation problems. This effort continues with meeting on some projects to resolve and/or clarify the details for a project. The meetings serve to reduce the number of plan submissions.