



**ACCESS PERMIT STAKEHOLDER RECOMMENDATIONS
STATUS REPORT FOR MARCH 31, 2012**

RECOMMENDATIONS	DESCRIPTION	BENEFITS	CURRENT STATUS
<i>Improved use of technology & automation</i>			
	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. Additional revisions and enhancements are necessary to improve functionality for the system and resources were identified to implement. The changes make it easier and enhance internal use of the database. 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 increased from 72% in 2010/2011 to 82% in FY 2012. %.
	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 response to developers and local government includes links to the SHA status search page. The use of this tool continues to be well received by customers checking the status of projects.
	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 later phases of the effort. SHA is exploring permit systems along with systems in use at the local government level.



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<i>Improved communications customer service</i>			
	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 2013 improve 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 6 to 8 for most projects. The number of TIS submissions has decreased from 6 to 8 down to 4 to 6. We expect continue reductions based upon educating the consultant community.
	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 have confirmed that SHA and the Counties are on the same page. All participants have provided feedback on the advantages of these pre-meetings along with the combined meetings. Meetings were completed with local jurisdictions to inform them of staffing and organizational changes. Several staff changes with supplemental consultant resources have been made toward a more effective organizational structure. The full implementation of the Technical Review Team and Development and Permit Review Team (75% staffed) were fully implemented in 2011. 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 five counties and a municipality explored typical traffic issues that arise due to cross-jurisdictional regulations. Coordination with MACO and MML are expected by the end of 2012. The goal is to improve communication to provide traffic mitigation in a uniform manner that protects the safety and integrity of the roadway network.



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	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.
	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 42 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. 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 2012 and 2013 to establish guidelines and educate consultants.



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	Customer service performance measurement	Transparency	Customer survey questions will solicit feedback for comparison of yearly performance.
	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.
<i>Improved Process Efficiency</i>			
	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.
	Permit related checklists	Timeliness Transparency Predictability Consistency	Checklists have been completed and are being provided to customers as projects move through the review processes. The checklist is online for customer convenience. Based upon experience and questions, updates to the checklist will occur on an as needed basis.
	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.



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Maryland Department of Transportation