



CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Development Applications and Approvals Branch

JANUARY 2018

In order to better understand the needs of our customers a survey questionnaire together with a response was concluded December 2016. This provided an opportunity to initially engage with our customers on how best to deliver a customer focussed service.

The previous survey covered three main categories:

- The Building Plan Application process,
- On-line and IT support systems,
- Customer Interface and Access to information.

The complete response and other info can be found on our website

<http://www.durban.gov.za/DAABulletin>

The purpose of this communication is to share the successes and highlight improvement areas, based on your input, and to inform on future developments.

The focus is on the Development Applications and Approvals Branch only with specific regard to the Building Plan process.

Based on response to our survey we identified the need to reduce the time taken from submission of an application to a decision being made. With this in mind we developed a model with the intention of reducing the average time taken from 28 calendar days to 16 calendar days. In order to achieve this, the Development Applications and Approval Branch reviewed and revised work queue sequencing and further eliminated non-essential department input.

AVERAGE Time Taken	
North	14.3
South	3.6
Central	16.6
Inner West	12.0
Outer West	9.5
TOTAL AVERAGE	11.2 days

Whilst this does not appear to be a significant change, the results reflected a substantial reduction in time taken for the Development Applications and Approval Branch to provide a decision. After piloting process changes, the changes and enhancements were rolled out in all regions in early 2017.

Statistics based on the first 25 applications per region over a recent 3 month period, revealed that the average overall time taken has been reduced even further than anticipated to an average of 11.2 days. This refers to both 30 and 60 day applications.

It must however be clear that 11.2 days is an average as some applications are more complex than others and may take a little longer. Notwithstanding initial successes, intentions are to further reduce the time taken whilst still maintaining a high quality of compliance assessment.

These positive results have been achieved notwithstanding the inability to fill vacancies in certain regions, and various other challenging constraints.

In order to further improve our service the cooperation of the architectural professional must not be underestimated. This requires that only complete and compliant applications are submitted. For example this means ensuring that where necessary AMAFA consent has been obtained and is included with the submission, and that all other information required confirming compliance has been provided.

International best practice suggests that only complete applications should be allowed to enter the system.



Please take this 2 minute survey to contribute these improvements

<https://goo.gl/forms/nU41p9ArczE7tq1w1>

What lies ahead:

Both medium and long term projects are already underway. These include re-defining the roles and responsibilities across all departments and to reform departmental processes, the aim being to provide a customer centric service inclusive of all associated departments throughout the building plan application cycle. These and associated interventions will contribute further to eliminate time wastage and increase efficiency.

The development of an effective IT system is in progress which we anticipate will further reduce timeframes. The system will also provide the customer with progress status and updates. We also plan to provide comprehensive on-line information that will be useful to our customers.

Thank you once again, and we look forward to further constructive and positive engagement in the future.

Please take the time to participate in our on-line survey by clicking on the link above.