



City of Santa Barbara

LAND DEVELOPMENT TEAM OVERSIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

3/16/2022

1:30 P.M.

This Meeting was Conducted Electronically
[SantaBarbaraCA.gov](https://www.santabarbaraca.gov)

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Eric Friedman, Chair
Alejandra Gutierrez, City Council
Mike Jordan, City Council

STAFF:

Eli Isaacson, Community Development Director
Renee Brooke, City Planner
Tina Dye, Chief Building Official
Ellen Kokinda, Administrative Analyst
Greta Walters, Administrative Assistant

NOTE: These minutes provide a summary of the meeting of the Land Development Team (LDT) Oversight Subcommittee. A recording of the meeting in its entirety is available at <https://www.santabarbaraca.gov/gov/cityhall/council/ldto/agendas.asp>.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Friedman called the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M.

I. ROLL CALL

Eric Friedman, Mike Jordan

Absent: Alejandra Gutierrez

STAFF PRESENT

Jose Barajas, Building and Safety Supervisor; Brenda Beltz, Associate Planner; Renee Brooke, City Planner; Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner; Ryan DiGuilio, Fire Marshal; Tina Dye, Chief Building Official; Jason Harris, Economic Development Manager; Tess Harris, State Street Master Planner; Adam Hendel, Principal Engineer; Eli Isaacson, Community Development Director; Ellen Kokinda, Administrative Analyst; Marisela Salinas, Senior Planner; Chelsey Swanson, Acting Supervising Transportation Planner; Greta Walters, Administrative Assistant

II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

No announcements.

A. Agenda Review

Ms. Brooke stated that there were no changes to the agenda.

B. Review, consideration, and approval of the State Street Advisory Committee minutes:

Motion: Approve the minutes of the State Street Advisory Committee meeting of October 14, 2021 as submitted.

Action: Jordan / Friedman

1. Comments from members of the public pertaining to the minutes:

Public comment opened at 1:31 P.M. and as no one wished to speak, it closed.

Vote: 2/0/0. (Gutierrez absent.) Motion carried.

C. Comments from members of the public pertaining to items not on this agenda:

Public comment opened at 1:32 P.M., and as no one wished to speak, it closed.

III. AGENDA ITEMS

A. Land Development Team Customer Engagement

Actual time: 1:32 P.M.

Ms. Brooke introduced Ms. Kokinda, who gave the Staff presentation. Ms. Kokinda provided an overview of the customer engagement process, which included feedback from focus groups, an analysis of service problems identified by customers and staff, and potential solutions for improving service for LDT customers.

B. Revised Public Counter Operations

Actual time: 1:51 P.M.

Ms. Kokinda gave the Staff presentation, which detailed operational changes to counter services, described plans to collect and analyze service data, and shared preliminary data on service types and times.

Committee Member comments:

Committee Member Jordan:

- Councilmember Jordan complimented the presentation and report out, and asked which staff member assists when an applicant is having trouble with a project and needs additional assistance. Ms. Brooke explained that supervisors and managers help with daily customer service concerns, but ultimately, the Community Development Director resolves more complex LDT matters. Mr. Jordan recommended having a single staff member receive customer service complaints. Mr. Jordan suggested having a receptionist in the lobby (or virtually) to direct customers appropriately. Ms. Brooke noted that one of the next steps for service improvements is to develop an LDT customer service strategy. She also explained that the new website will be configured in a more intuitive, user-friendly fashion than the current site.

Committee Member Friedman:

- Chair Friedman noted that one of the top challenges reported in the counter staff survey was staff not knowing who to contact for help or being able to reach them. Mr. Friedman encouraged the LDT management team to announce these operational changes through the typical communication channels.

C. Accela Optimization

Actual time: 2:13 P.M.

Ms. Brooke presented on customer challenges using Accela Citizen Access (ACA, the City's permitting tracking platform), such as unintuitive, inconsistent functions and insufficient access to property and project status. Ms. Brooke also reported on City Council's authorization to use \$250,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funds to improve user experience and enhance reporting tools.

Committee Member comments:

Committee Member Jordan:

- Councilmember Jordan encouraged LDT staff not to delay requesting assistance from Council in order to improve functionality and user experience.

Committee Member Friedman:

- Chair Friedman asked for an update on the Accela administrator position approved by Council to manage and oversee the platform. Ms. Brooke explained that the position was filled for a very brief time but the individual left soon after being hired. The position remains open for recruitment, with IT and LDT staff troubleshooting and assisting ACA users in the meantime.

Public comment opened at 2:24 P.M., and as no one wished to speak, it closed.

Committee Member comments:

Committee Member Jordan:

- Mr. Jordan observed that receiving updates on process improvements in a presentation similar to today's is preferable to reading about them in the Process Improvement Implementation chart.

IV. NEXT MEETING SCHEDULE ANNOUNCEMENT

Actual time: 2:26 P.M.

Ms. Brooke proposed that the next subcommittee meeting be held in June 2022, allowing time to implement and make substantive progress on additional improvements. She added that the June 2022 meeting could include an outline of plans for the next six months. Chair Friedman and Mr. Jordan agreed that receiving a presentation on accomplishments and a six-month work plan at the June meeting would be the best approach. Ms. Brooke noted that meeting less frequently allows more complicated process and policy changes to take effect. Chair Friedman asked staff to send potential dates in June to the subcommittee members.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Friedman adjourned the meeting at 2:30 P.M.

DRAFT